

Ardara Community Childcare: A Story of Excellence in Early Years Education

There are some early years settings that stand out immediately — not because of polished marketing or social media, but because their commitment to children can be felt in every room, every interaction, and every learning experience. Ardara Community Childcare is one of those places.

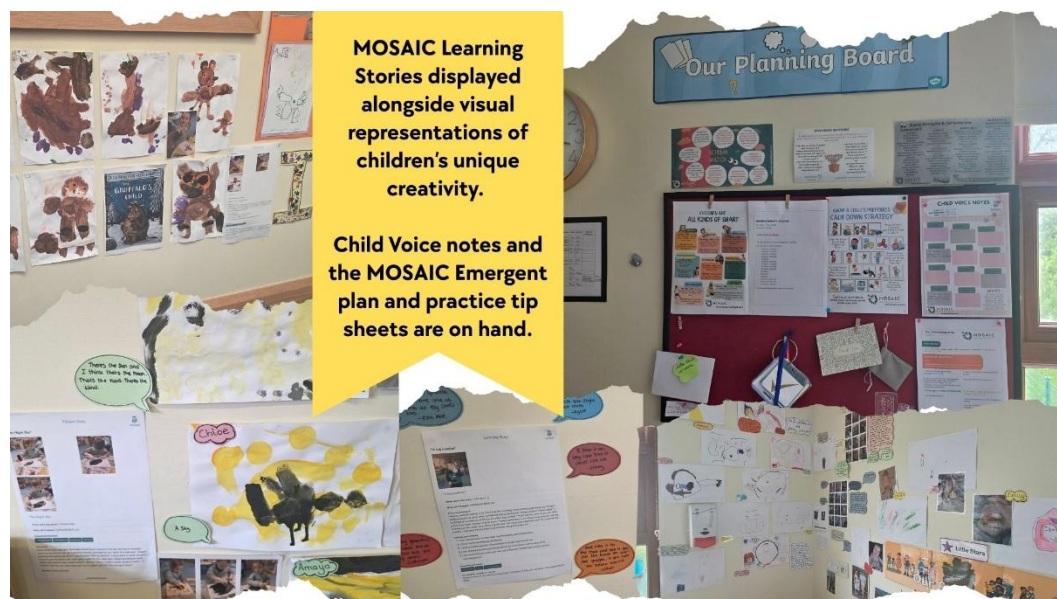
Recently, the team achieved the highest possible outcome of excellence across all four quality domains during their Early Years Education Inspection carried out by the Department of Education. This is a remarkable achievement that reflects dedication, hard work, and authentic child-led practice.



Leadership That Inspires Excellence

At the heart of this success are the people behind it. Under the expert leadership of Manager Sinead Hanlon and Deputy Manager Bridget Barrett, the educator team has built a culture rooted in collaboration, continuous learning, and an unwavering focus on children’s wellbeing and development. Their leadership has inspired a team approach where educators are encouraged to reflect on their practice, embrace change, and continually strive for improvement.

A Four-Year Journey with MOSAIC – embedding the system and participating in tailored training



A major part of that journey has been the implementation of the MOSAIC Child-led Documentation System. Sinead recognised Mosaic's potential more than four years ago as a way to streamline documentation while strengthening child-centred practice. However, she is quick to acknowledge that meaningful change takes time. Rather than rushing implementation, the team committed themselves to a gradual process of training, reflection, and professional development. Over the years, educators refined their approach together, growing in confidence and consistency while developing a deeper understanding of child-led learning using the MOSAIC method and system.

Welcoming Inspection as an Opportunity to Learn

That philosophy was evident throughout the inspection process. Sinead describes inspections not as something to fear, but as opportunities to learn and improve. The inspector praised the warm and authentic relationships between educators and children, noting how staff responded thoughtfully to children's interests and individual needs. The setting's learning partnership with parents was also highlighted, particularly the timely sharing of learning stories and updates and in real time.

What stands out most was the authenticity of the practice. Children's creativity is valued without the use of template art activities. Curriculum planning is not dictated by rigid timeframes or rushed activities, allowing children the time and space to fully engage in meaningful play. The service also prioritises children's rights and privacy by avoiding the public sharing of children's images on social media platforms, choosing to share images through the encrypted MOSAIC system instead.

Documentation That Brings Learning to Life

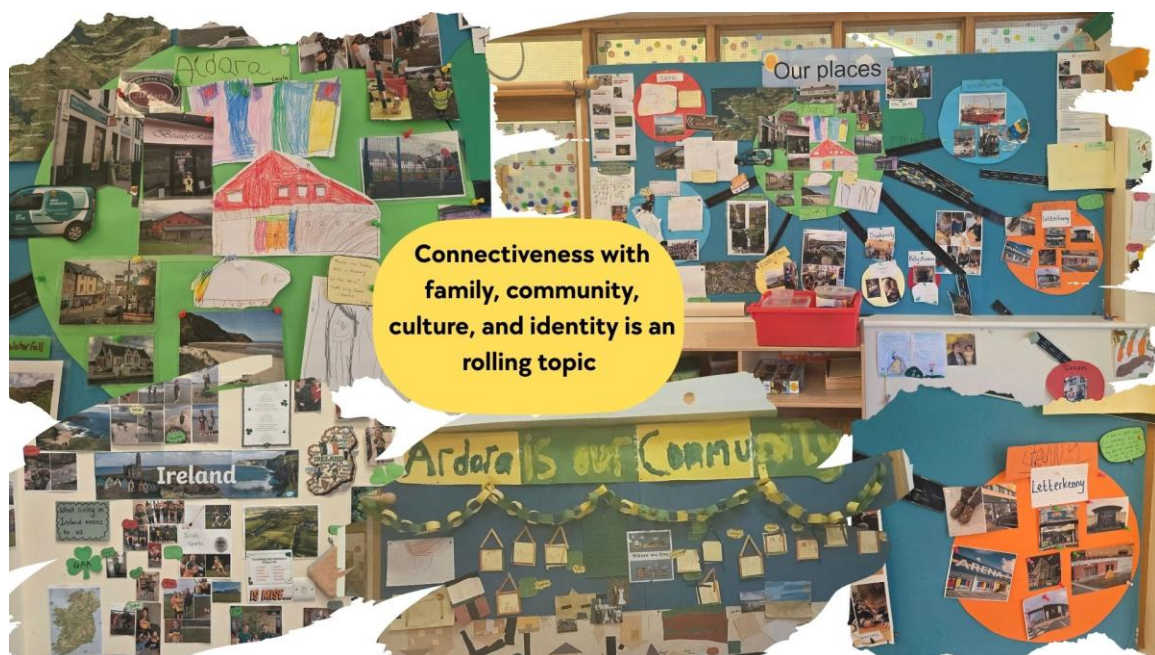


A recent visit to Ardara Community Childcare brought the full potential of MOSAIC to life. Moving through the rooms, it was impossible not to notice the sense of calm purpose and engagement among the babies, toddlers, and preschool children. Documentation filled the walls, but not in a performative way. Learning stories, photographs, and displays captured children's thinking, conversations, and evolving interests. Meaningful topics had grown organically over months, shaped by the children themselves and deeply connected to their everyday experiences and community.

The MOSAIC emergent curriculum plans were visible throughout the setting, reflecting children’s current fascinations and ideas. In the baby and toddler rooms, educators demonstrated a strong understanding of schema play, using observations, stories, photographs, and videos to support and extend children’s schematic interests in meaningful ways. Mosaic training resources such as child voice notes, learning story trackers, and guidance materials were not simply displayed — they were actively embedded into practice.

A Team Motivated by Curiosity and Reflection

Perhaps most importantly, the educators themselves spoke about how MOSAIC had transformed their approach. Rather than relying on pre-planned activities or themes, they now approach practice with curiosity and reflection, constantly asking themselves why children are interested in something, what it means, and how they can best respond. This mindset has created a learning environment that feels responsive, dynamic, and genuinely centred around children.



More Than an Inspection Result

For us at MOSAIC, the success of Ardara Community Childcare is about far more than achieving excellent inspection outcomes. As we continue in our work to have MOSAIC recognised as an educator system that supports child wellbeing and learning outcomes – not administration or funding deliverables, it strongly validates our work.

Sinead and Bridget generously conclude ‘We couldn’t have done it without MOSAIC’. But the success is all theirs. The entire team have not only done themselves proud, but they have also given us the motivation to safeguard the MOSAIC principles of keeping children front and centre of our work.



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