

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC036		
Name of Service:	Ballydehob Community Playgroup		
Address of Service:	Greenmount Road, Ballydehob, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P81 FW14		
Name of Registered Provider:	Hannah Vaughan		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	05/09/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM 18
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Social Work Dept, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, West Cork P81 PD78		
Inspection undertaken by:	M Carney		
Title:	Early Years Inspector		
Authority to Inspect			
The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).			
Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable		

Description of service

Ballydehob Community Playschool is registered to provide an early year care and education setting for children aged from 0 to 6 years. It offers a full day care, part time, sessional and an after-school service.

It operates from 08:00am to 18 :00pm daily.

The service is situated in a renovated single storey national school on a perimeter road in the rural village of Ballydehob in west Cork. The premises consists of 2 large care rooms, toilet and nappy changing facilities, a designated sleep room, multiple outdoor play areas and staff room/kitchen and office.

The service benefits from some off-street parking at the adjacent national school.

Staffing

The registered provider is the manager but does not work directly with the children.

There are a further 13 childcare professionals attached to the service, 12 of which had certification of Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in a childcare course, ranging from Level 5 to Level 8.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well- being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, staff members and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,*
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*

(c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and

(d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The registered provider managed the service but did not work directly with the children. A deputy manager had been appointed to deputise as required.

(b)

On the day of the inspection both the registered provider and the deputy were on the premises to facilitate the inspection process. Review of the staff roster indicated that the manager or deputy were on the premises for the duration of service provision.

(2)(a) & (b)

There were 14 adults in total attached to the service. Each of the staff members files were examined and the following information was obtained –

There were 25 written references from past employers with 23 records of validation attached.

There was 1 written reference from a source that the register provider considered to be from a reputable source on file, this too had a record of validation attached.

(c)

There were 14 up to date Garda vetting disclosures on file, dated from April 2022 to August 2022.

(d)

Police vetting was available for 3 adults who had worked or lived outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for a period of 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training were on file for 12 adults ranging from Level 5 to Level 8.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) & (b)

1. Two written references with records of validation were not made available in respect of 1 adult.
2. Two written references did not have records of validation attached.

(d)

Police vetting from outside the jurisdiction of Ireland was not available in respect of 1 adult.

(4)

Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) was not available in respect of 1 adult working in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

The manager stated the following –

1. & 2.

That 2 written references with records of validation have been obtained.

A copy of the said references and validations were submitted.

(d)

Police vetting in respect of 1 adult was obtained.

A copy of the police vetting disclosure was obtained.

(4)

Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) certification was obtained and placed in file.

A copy of said certification was submitted.

Summary Comment

Documentation was submitted to the early years office. It was reviewed and found to adequately address the Requirements of the non-compliant elements of Regulation 9.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

- (1)
On the day of the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (2)
In the creche there were 11 children aged from 15 months to 2.3 years, 9 were attending on a full day care basis and 2 children were attending on a sessional basis. There were 4 staff present.
- In the playschool there were 23 children in total aged from 3 to 4 years, 14 of the children were categorized as sessional and 9 were attending on a sessional basis.
- There were 4 staff present.
- The adult child ratios were correct.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*

- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- Of the 34 children attending during the morning session, a total of 25 enrolment forms were reviewed to ensure that they obtained information in relations listed above.
- The following elements of the Regulation were compliant –
- (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (i).

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(h)
- Eight enrolment forms did not have details of the children's immunisation status recorded.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation

- The manager stated the following –
- (1)(h)
- The enrolment forms have been updated. Going forward, a designated staff member will ensure that all sections of the enrolment forms are completed when returned.
- A copy of a completed form was issued, and the letter sent to parents requesting that their children's immunisation schedules are recorded.

Summary Comment

The documentation submitted to the early years office was reviewed and found to meet the Requirements.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (i)

It was reported and evidenced by the registered provider that the service had in hard copy and digitally the relevant information of the service in respect of Regulation 16.

(j) The registered provider stated that both the creche and the playschool used a logbook for the recording of medications that had been developed by an agency allied to childcare provision. On inspection of the playschool recording book, it was found that the correct information had been accurately recorded. The most recent recorded administration of medication was May 2023.

(k) Both the creche and the playschool had a record book to detail any accidents or incidents that had occurred in the service. The last recorded entry was in October 2022 which involved a minor incident.

The information had been relayed to the parents as evidenced by the counter signature.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

Compliance Information

- The parents and guardians supplied their children with all their meal and snack requirements whilst attending the service.
- Meals were offered in a timely manner, with the children sitting comfortably both in highchairs and low seating in a social way so as to enjoy their snacks and meals with their friends.
- Staff members sat with the children in the creche room and assisted with feeding.
- The children were given ample time to eat at their own pace and chat with their friends.
- Single use bibs or wipeable bibs were used for younger children to protect clothes whilst eating.
- Toileting was supervised by staff members and children encouraged to independently wash hands, flush toilets and dispose of paper towels.
- Nappy changing was carried out in a flexible manner.
- Child height coat hooks were installed in the hall to allow the children to independently store and organise their personal belongings.
- Spare clothes were stored for the children in the event of spillages.
- Protective boots were available for the children to wear in the outdoor play area.
- In the playschool a large unit provided cubby space for the children to change into indoor soft shoes.
- Rest areas were available to the children in both the creche and the playschool to permit the children to opt out play activities and relax if they so wished.
- The children had direct access to multiple secured outdoor play areas which provided ample opportunities for gross motor skill play, change of scenery and fresh air. It was reported by staff members that the children were taken out to the outdoor play gardens several times during the day.

Physical and Material Environment –

- Ballydehob Community Playschool occupied a period 2 class national school which had been suitably renovated to provide a childcare setting. It was clean, bright, airy and well maintained.
- The rooms had openable windows that allowed for that allowed for natural light and ventilation.
- Each room was suitably furnished with clean and well-maintained child sized tables and chairs, highchairs, and low chairs.
- The rooms were suitably furnished with open shelving, mobile cabinets and box storage units to store and display, and to allow the children easy access to the wide range of play materials and equipment.
- The playschool had generous clear floor space for free play, floor activities and large group circle time.
- In addition, the playschool had a 2-storey castle that provided a soft furnished space for rest, relaxation and browsing the wide range of displayed books.
- The creche was laid out in a manner sympathetic to the age group attending with a cordoned off area for the younger attendees. The room was uncluttered and provided materials and equipment to encourage fine motor skill play, sensory play, and activity apparatus entice to safe movement such as the strollers.
- Both care rooms had generous supplies of tabletop activities, arts and crafts, pretend play such as dress up, and large and small construction items. There were small figurines, animals, dinosaurs and musical instruments freely accessible for the children to enjoy.
- The walls of the playrooms had colourful murals depicting scenes such as fairy woodlands, there were family photographs and balloon birthday charts pleasing displayed for the children to admire.
- The service provided wrap around outdoor play areas. The creche children had direct access to a secured playground which was laid with critical fall matting for the children’s comfort and safety. A centrally placed climbing frame was clean and in a state of good repair.
- There was a playhouse, water table with accessories, benches for rest and a wall mounted chalk board.
- The playschool had access to a hard surfaced area for the use of ride on toys, there was a basketball net, sand table with buckets and spades.
- To the front of the premises the area was laid to lawn and furnished with a large wooden tee pee and adjoined swing.
- There was evidence of planting with large sunflowers on display.
- The service had recently purchase additional items to expand the children outdoor play entertainment.

Supporting Relations around the Children.

- The generous adult child ratios allowed for the close supervision of the children with staff members engaging in one-to-one activities, individual guidance during toileting and facilitation of small group play in the outdoor play areas.
- Staff members were kind and patient with each child, talking to them at their level and maintaining good eye contact so as to read their cues and expedite caring or play experiences.
- The service was closely integrated with the local community and had invited guests to visit and share their skills and talents with the children, for example they had a talk on the life of bees, accommodated an animal road show and enjoyed entertainment from a clown and balloon modelling artist.
- Likewise, the setting was closely associated with the neighbouring national school, extending an invitation for the service to share some of their extracurricular activities for example the jazz festival.
- Staff members working with the children in the creche maintained daily information on each child to share with parents, such as food eaten, toileting, rest and activities enjoyed.
- Communication with parents about service issues was active both by a hard copy and digital applications.

Implementation of Programme of Care.

- The service implemented a play-based pedagogy. It was evidenced in the playschool documented long term and short-term planning that allowed for the children's emergent interests for example, new babies.
- Large group time described activities such as hand wash and sneeze practices and being nice to gently integrate the new children to the room.
- Pictorial daily timetable displayed in both care rooms detailed that there was sufficient time allocated for free play, outdoor play, meals, rest and relaxation.
- There was evidence of the children's journals to illustrate topics, arts and crafts and activities that the children had been accomplished.

Non-Compliance Information

Basic Needs of the Children:

1. The ambient room temperatures of the care rooms were hot and registered above the recommended range, which is 18 to 22 degrees Celsius. The creche registered at 23.5 degrees Celsius and the playschool registered at 24.4 degrees Celsius.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

1. The manager stated that the room temperatures will be added to the daily checklist and recorded each day to ensure that they comply with the recommended ranges. Wall mounted temperature gauges have been installed to assist staff with assessment and have been trained to operate the fan when required.

A photograph the wall mounted temperature gauges was submitted along with a daily checklist template and a photograph the fan to evidence that the non—compliance had been addressed.

Summary Comment

Submitted documentation was examined and found to meet the Requirements.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- Ballydehob Community Playschool operated a healthy eating policy which was observed to be adhered to by the healthy, nutritious and varied meals eaten at snack time and lunch time.
- All food and drink items were supplied by the parents and guardians.
- Hot meals were offered to each child attending on a full day care basis, for example pasta bakes, stews, potatoes, meat, potato, and vegetable dinners.
- Children in both the creche and playschool had access to their own labelled drink bottles.
- The playschool delegated a helper to assist with the setting of the table for lunches and snacks when plates, place mats and cutlery were made available.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The external entrance was suitably secured so as to prevent a child leaving the premises and to restrict unauthorised access.
- Internal doors were also secured so that the children were unable to access storage areas or potential hazards such as cleaning products.
- Emergency exits were cleared signed and unobstructed.
- Staff members personal belongings were store out of reach of the children and were able to enjoy hot drinks or lunches in the staff kitchen which was not accessible to the children.
- Visibility strips had been applied to glazed doors to prevent a child from crashing into the glass.
- Cables and flexes were not accessible to the children.
- The 5 highchair harnesses were in good condition, clean and well maintained.
- Openable windows were not accessible to the children and the roller blind in the sleep room did not have a cord attached.
- The outdoor bins were suitable secured and not accessible to the children.
- Toys, play equipment and materials were found to be clean, well maintained with no visible hazards such as pinch or crush points.

Infection Control:

- The service was clean and well maintained. It was reported by the registered provider that the cleaning tasks were carried out by the staff members and a clean as you go policy was in operation.
- Sanitising units were placed out of reach of the children for adult use.
- Good hand washing practise were observed with children washing hands after using the toilets, after messy play and prior to lunch.
- The children had access to sufficient chid sized toilet and child hight installed wash hand basins. They were clean and well maintained.
- Step ups and potties were available and stored off the floor when not in use.

- Additional sink units were installed in the care rooms to provide additional facilities for hand washing and clearing up after messy play.
- There was 2 nappy changing rooms which were furnished with changing units and clean changing mats. They were clean and well maintained and steps were provided to permit ambulant children to walk up to the unit with adult assistance.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water was available and reregistered at 37.2 degrees Celsius throughout the service.
- Liquid soap, and paper towels were available for hand washing purposes and strategically places hand washing posters were visible to the children to prompt the correct hand washing technique.
- Adults had their own toilet facility.
- There was ample storage space in the toilet accommodation for the children's individual toiletries and nappies.
- Soothers were stowed in a clean and suitable manner within bespoke storage.
- Non-contact bins were available for the storage of used nappies.
- Protective gloves and a single use apron were observed being used by a staff member during nappy changing and it was observed that both the adult and the child washed hands after the procedure.
- Non-contact pedal bins were situated throughout the service.
- Tissues were available to the children for nasal hygiene.

Administration of Medication:

- It was reported that the staff members were familiar with the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a child requiring medications.
- There were currently no children attending the service that required medications.

Safe Sleep:

- The service provided a separate sleep room furnished with 4 standard cots that were suitably spaced and away from fall hazards such as the windowsill.
- Sleep room temperatures were initially recorded at the outset of the inspection at 23 degrees Celsius but proactive staff members employed an electric fan and implemented immediate measures to reduce the temperature prior to a child being out to sleep. At this time the temperature measured 21 degrees Celsius.
- The room was suitably dimmed using a roller blind.
- The cots had well fitted mattresses.

- Clean bedding and cellular blankets were provided, and it was stated that each sheet and blankets were laundered after each use.
- A child was observed being settled, shoes and tight clothing were removed, and the child was placed on his back.
- Sleep records were reviewed and found to be correctly maintained; detailing 10-minute physical checks observing the child's position, colour and breathing.

Fire Safety:

- The fire doors were unobstructed.
- Fire cylinders were tethered to the walls.
- In conversation with the person in charge it was reported that staff were familiar with the procedures that are required to be followed in the event of a fire

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1.Children having their nappies changed in the creche room had access to nappy sacks which posed a risk of strangulation.

Infection Control:

2.The sleep room was used for the storage of a slide which posed a risk of cross infection.
3.Two of the mattresses were not wipeable and did not have mattress protectors in place to protect the sleeping children that were cot sharing from cross infection.

Safe Sleep:

4. It was observed that 2 children under the age of 2 years were sleeping in sleeping bags on play mats with inserted pillows which posed a risk of suffocation.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

The manager stated the following –

1. The nappy sacks have been stowed out of reach of the children. Staff members have been trained to adhere to this safety practice.

A photograph of the nappy sacks stored in a high shelf was submitted.

2.The slide has been removed from the sleep room. Staff members have been trained to cease storing apparatus and equipment in the sleep room.

A photograph of the cleared sleep room was submitted.

3. Wipeable mattresses have been ordered and the sleep policy updated to state that only wipeable mattresses are to be used.

A scanned purchase order confirmation was issued and dated 25 September 2023.

4. Sleeping mats which incorporated pillows have been made obsolete and new floor beds have been purchased. Parents have been informed of the new TUSLA guidelines and are now given the option to allow their children over the age of 15 months to sleep on floor beds with their written consent and following a risk assessment. A copy of the purchase order confirmation and an updated copy of the service safe sleep policy was submitted.

Summary Comment

The above documents were reviewed and found to adequately address the non-compliances.

The Requirements have been met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-
(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and
(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider stated that each staff member had completed first aid training and that 3 staff members had completed first aid responder training (FAR) with an expiry date of October 2023. The registered provider evidenced that a refresher course had been booked.

(a)&(b)

Each care room had their own first aid box. The first aid box in the playschool was inspected and found to be stocked with the required requisites.

The first aid boxes were stored out of reach of the children but accessible to the staff members.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-

(a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and

(b) the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The service maintained a record of the fire drills that had been carried out. The last recorded fire drill had taken place on the 12 July. It was explained that the service was closed for the month of August and would resume fire drills in September when the children had settled.

(b)

Fire records informed that the service had detailed list of all the firefighting equipment installed in on the premises.

The most recent service of the firefighting equipment, emergency lighting and fire alarm systems had taken place on the 09 February 2023.

(4)

Fire evacuation routes were displayed throughout the service to provide staff members with visual directions of the route to be taken to evacuate the premises in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The service displayed an insurance certificate to indicate that up to 45 children were fully insured to attend the service on a full day care basis.

The expiry date was in March 2024.