

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC056		
Name of Service:	Beginnings Creche		
Address of Service:	Mahon Drive, Mahon, Cork, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	T12 Y180		
Name of Registered Provider:	Margaret McKee		
Service type:	Full Day, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	11/07/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM 14
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440		
Inspection undertaken by:	V. McCarthy		
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
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Description of service

Beginnings Creche is a nonprofit operated service, which is registered to cater for children aged 0 - 6 years. It provides full day care, part-time care and sessional care which includes the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The service operates out of ground floor rooms situated in the local family resource centre that were purposely adapted as a childcare setting. The service consists of three care rooms namely the Baby room, the Toddler room, and the Preschool room. There is also a kitchen/dining room, an office, a storeroom, toilet facilities, a sleep room and an enclosed outdoor play area. Daily opening hours are between 8.30am to 4pm Monday to Thursdays and 8.30am to 3pm on Fridays.

Staffing

On the day of inspection, there were 6 adults on the premises including the person in charge and all were working directly with the children. The registered provider was not service based.

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 person in charge, staff 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*

(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 service had a named person in charge and a deputy that could deputise as required.
- (b) The person in charge was on duty when the inspector arrived at the premises and remained on duty for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)
- There were 5 new adults working at the service since the previous inspection carried out on 13 July 2021 and therefore the inspector focussed on these files to assess vetting.
- (a) There were 9 references and required validations available on file from past employers in respect of the 5 adults.
- (b) There was 1 reference and required validation from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of each of the 5 adults.
- (d) Not applicable as no adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months.
- (4)
- A copy of a childcare qualification as listed on the National Qualifications Framework was available on file in respect of each of the 5 adults.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies were assessed by the inspector and were found to be detailed and in compliance with the regulatory requirements:

- The Outings Policy
- The Healthy Eating Policy

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children.

(2) On the morning of the inspection there were 6 adults working across the 2 operational care rooms with 14 early years children present.

- Baby room – there were 3 children aged between 1 and 2 years attending full day care service with 1 adult in attendance. The children and adult assigned to this room also spent time in the Toddler room or outdoor play area where they interacted and played with the older children.
- Toddler room – there were 11 children attending full day care service of which 8 were aged between 2 and 3 years and 3 were aged over 3 years with 5 adults in attendance.
- Preschool room – was not operational during the inspection.

(8)(a) The staff rotas indicated that 4 adults were on the premises when the service opened at 8.30am and that 4 adults would be on the premises at closing time.

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

(1)(a)

- The children's need for rest, relaxation and comfort was met as a rest area consisting of a combination of soft matting, cushions and soft couches were available. The children were able to use the rest area as they chose for play or quiet time.
- The children's need to use the toilet was promptly and sensitively attended to. The independent use of the toilet by the older children was encouraged and supported as appropriate by the adults and the younger children had their nappies changed regularly.
- Hand hygiene by the children was supported and encouraged by the adults who supervised the children when they washed and dried their hands before eating, after outdoor play and after using the toilet and nappy changing.
- The children were provided with regular opportunities to play outside daily in the designated outdoor area and during the planned outing to the local park. The children were dressed appropriately in light clothing when they played outdoors.

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

- All food for the children’s meals was prepared in the kitchen at the Family Resource Centre and served to the children in the dining room situated beside the Toddler room. The person in charge informed the inspector that a box of fresh fruit was delivered to the premises weekly and that the adults sliced and served seasonal fruit to the children twice daily.
- During the inspection, the food ate by the children was appetising and healthy. The adults served pasta, bolognese and peas to the children at the dinner meal. A variety of fresh fruit and crackers were served to the children at their snack break.
- It was noted that depending on the age and development of each child the food provided was either mashed, lumpy or chopped as appropriate.
- Drinking water was always accessible to the children. The children’s individual bottles or beakers of water were stored on low shelving in the care room and on the table in the dining room. Any child that was thirsty throughout the day or required additional fluids could easily access a drink as they chose.
- The inspector observed that the weekly menu were displayed in the kitchen area of the dining room.

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 main entrance door leading into the premises was kept secured to prevent the unauthorised access by an adult or the leaving of an unsupervised child.
- The outdoor play area was secured by high fencing and a secured gate.
- The doors leading into the kitchen, office area and storeroom were kept secured and were not accessible to the children.

- The cleaning agents in each care room were stored on high shelves out of children's reach.
- The low-level glass panels throughout the premises were fitted with visibility strips.
- The fan in the Toddler room was stored on a high shelf that was not accessible to the children.
- The cleaning agents beside the nappy changing mat were stored on a high shelf that was not accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Daily and weekly cleaning templates were available for review.
- Regular handwashing by the children was carried out before snack and mealtimes and after toileting, messy play and outdoor play.
- Crockery was used by the children during their snack and dinner meal breaks.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper dispensers were available at the wash hand basins. The water temperature was recorded between 20.8°C and 30.4°C during the inspection.
- Children's bags and belongings were stored off the floors on wall hooks or in individual shelving units.
- Wipes, nappies and barrier creams were individually labelled and not for communal use. They were stored on individually labelled shelves.
- A box of paper tissues was available for any child who required a tissue to facilitate their nasal hygiene.
- Pedal operated bins were available throughout the premises to facilitate safe hygienic disposal of used paper towels.
- The glass panels that were at child height throughout the premises were maintained clean by the adults.
- The adult's handbags and jackets were stored in the secured office or storeroom.

Outing:

- The service was conducting an outing when the inspector arrived at the premises. There were 6 adults caring for 14 children and they were on route to the local park which was located close by to the premises.
- It was noted that the children were adequately supervised whilst going and coming from the park with 1 adult leading the group and 1 adult remaining to the back of the group. The older children held the adult's hands, and the younger children were safely strapped into buggies and were pushed too and from the park.
- Each child was clearly visible going, coming and whilst in the park as each child was wearing a yellow high vis top over their clothes.
- The adults always supervised the children and confined them to a play area in the park.

- The person in charge carried a bag containing a charged working mobile phone, contact details for the children’s parents, the roll book, a first aid box, a box of tissues and a supply of drinking water.
- Each child’s parents had signed a consent form for outings to be carried out.
- The service had adequate insurance cover for outings to be carried out.

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 service provided evidence that 6 adults had training in first aid response (FAR) and that one of these adults was always on the premises.

(2)

(a) There was a fully equipped first aid box available on the premises and it was stored on a high wall mounted rack in the Toddler room out of children’s reach. A second equipped first aid box was available for any outings carried out by the service.

(b) The first aid boxes were always available on the premises.

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 fire fighting 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) Records of monthly fire drills carried out at the service were available on file. The last fire drill was carried out on 12 June 2023.
 - (b) Records regarding the number, service and type of fire equipment were maintained on file. The fire equipment was last serviced in October 2022.
- (4)
- The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on file and in each care room.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) Records regarding an up-to-date service for the wired smoke alarm were not available for inspection. The records demonstrated that the wired smoke alarm was last serviced during October 2020.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)(b)
- The wired smoke alarm was serviced on 13 July 2023. The person in charge stated in the corrective action and preventive action (CAPA) form submitted on 24 July 2023 that she will ensure that the wired smoke alarm is serviced annually in future.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(b)

A copy of the maintenance service regarding the wired smoke alarm was submitted to the inspector on 24 July 2023.

Summary Comment

The documentation submitted by the person in charge relating to the non-compliance was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.