

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC080
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Name of Service:	Newtownshandrum Community Playschool CLG
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Address of Service:	Newtownshandrum, Charleville, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P56 EE63
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Name of Registered Provider:	Maria Shanahan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	06/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork.
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Collins
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	N/A
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Description of service

Newtownshandrum Community Playschool CLG (formerly known as Busy Kids) is a sessional service located in the rural village of Newtownshandrum outside Charleville in North Cork. The service is located in a prefabricated building on the premises of the primary school. There were 19 children present on the day of inspection.

A service is provided to children aged between two years and 10 months and six years, with the majority of children not attending until after their third birthday. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 12:30 hours.

A registered school age service is also provided on the premises in a different room.

The premise is a detached, single storey prefabricated structure with two care rooms of which one room is used for the pre-school. There is an entrance hallway, adult and children's toilets and the service has access to the outdoor play facilities of the primary school when the school children are not on break.

Staffing

The service has two staff who work directly with the children, both of whom have been working in the service for many years. There is a named relief staff member who can work in the service should the need for relief be required. This person operates the school aged care service.

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16,19,22,23,25,26 &28.

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) There was a named person in charge in the service when the inspector arrived and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (b) The roster indicated that there was a person in charge on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.
- (2) There were two staff working and one relief staff available to the service and their files were assessed:
 Of the three files assessed six references were required:
- (a) Not applicable as complete references were not from past employers.
- (b) Two references were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) In the three staff files assessed the required Garda Vetting disclosure was available for all three staff and were dated within the last three years in line with Regulatory Notice EYI-RN12.3, Renewal of Garda Vetting.
- (d) Not applicable as no adult had lived outside of the country for greater than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) All three staff were appropriately qualified between Level 5 and Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (a) One reference on file from a past employer for one adult was not dated or validated.
- (b) Three references on file from reputable sources were not validated by the registered provider.
- Not ensuring the references obtained for staff working with children are correctly assessed may allow for staff that are not suitable work with children have access to them.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (a) The reference from the past employer has been validated.

(b) The three references from reputable sources have been validated.

The registered provider has committed to ensuring all references are available, validated and on file prior to staff commencing in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2) Copies of all four validated references have been received.

Summary Comment

The requirements for this regulation have been met following receipt of the corrective and preventive action form and the evidence submitted.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there were adequate staff working in the service at all times.

(3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained. There were two adults working directly with 19 pre-school children attending on the day of inspection.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) There were 24 children enrolled in the service of which no more than 22 children attend at any one time and on the day of inspection, 19 children were attending. All 24 enrolment records were available. Twelve of the enrolment records for the children who were in attendance were reviewed.
- (a) – (i) The enrolment forms were complete and up with date with parents and registered providers signatures, all relevant information and details required to ensure adequate care for 11 of the 12 records assessed.
- (3) (c) The records were available to the early years inspector for review.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) (h) One of the records assessed did not have a record of immunisations if any given to a child. Not ensuring all relevant information is available to the service may hinder the appropriate care delivered in the event of an infectious disease occurrence in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) (h) The child's record has been updated with details of their vaccination status. All children's records will be assessed prior to them starting in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) (h) A copy of the vaccination record has been received.

Summary Comment

Following receipt of the corrective and preventive action form and the evidence submitted the requirements for this regulation have been met.

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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)
(h) The attendance of each child was recorded daily.
(i) The staff roster was the same daily and the staff signed in/out, records of this were the same as the staff roster.
(k) An accident and incident record was reviewed and the details of the accident, the staff signatures and the parent/guardian signatures were all recorded.

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

BASIC NEEDS:

The basic needs of the children were met in the service.

- The children ate their snacks at a scheduled time after outdoor play. The children that required assistance with opening boxes and food coverings were assisted as needed. Snacks were healthy and nutritious and there were drinks of water available to the children at all times.
- The children were reminded to use the toilet when needed but most children were observed to be self-sufficient with toileting. The children were reminded to wash hands following each visit to the toilet.
- The faces of the children were cleaned as necessary after snack time and when noses were needed to be cleaned.
- The children were dressed appropriately when going outside, they had coats/jumpers as needed.
- There was a rest area available to the children and this consisted of a soft mat. This area was not observed to be used on the day of the inspection.
- The mobility of the children was encouraged with children moving about freely in all of the spaces accessible to them.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The children received the support they required from the staff in the room. Individual support was provided with certain activities and large group support was offered when explaining what to do or when telling stories.
- A staff member circulated between the four tables at snack time and helped the children with their food and also held conversations about the day, the food and activities inclusive of new babies in some of the children's families.
- Transitions were managed well with staff informing children when they were moving from one activity to the next such as when moving from free play to outdoor play. The routine for the day was well understood by the children with them observed to anticipate the next activity. An example of this was observed when children could easily wait when some children were slower at eating snack and the children who were finished read a book. When all the children were ready the person in charge told a story or was asking questions about the children's walk in the sensory garden.
- The service supported a language rich environment with the children encouraged to talk about the activities and to tell stories.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The indoor environment was set up into areas of interest, accessible shelving with adequate resources for the numbers of children attending was available to them. This equipment included Montessori equipment, shape sorters and arts and crafts equipment to help develop fine motor skills and coordination.
- There was space for children to move about freely with no restriction, the space was uncluttered and free from any excess equipment.
- The indoor environment consisted of a large playroom with four child height tables and suitable chairs which were used for tabletop activities and for snack time. The chairs were light enough for the children to move themselves for circle time and when returning to the tables to play. This encouraged the children to be self-sufficient and independent.
- Tabletop activities of colouring, jigsaws, small and large bricks and shape sorters were observed, there was also a garage area, kitchen, home area, library and rest area and a work bench.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

- The staff had a schedule of what activities would be done daily. There was a schedule in place and the children were aware of what activities inclusive of going outdoors and when snack time was happening. The children appeared happy with the schedule.
- The children were observed to have the opportunity to learn through play, their gross motor development was supported through outdoor play, walking through the sensory garden and playing soccer and with pins and bowling balls.
- Fine motor development was supported through play with arts and crafts, colouring and when building blocks, using shape sorters and board threading activities.

OUTDOOR AREA

- The outdoor area consisted of a tarmac covered area owned by the national school but which the pre-school children had access to outside of the schools break times.
- Balls, bowling pins and hoops were taken outside for outdoor play activities.
- The newly developed sensory garden was used as a nature trail in the morning and stories of the birds, the planting of fruit (raspberries) and vegetables (potatoes and lettuce) were discussed. All of these supported the development of the children offering them different sensory, cognitive and fine motor experiences.

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

The snacks served in the service were provide by parents/guardians. The food as consumed was in keeping with healthy food choices and included fruit/vegetables, sandwiches, crackers and yogurts. Water was the only drink available in the service.

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 internal doors to the staff toilet were secured and accessible to the staff only.
- The windows in the service were not accessible to the children and were at a height out of reach of the children.
- There were no full-length glass doors or low glazed panels that could cause an injury to a child.
- There were no highchairs in the service and all toys and play equipment assessed were safe and free from pinch and crush points.
- The shelving units were low and did not pose a risk of being pulled down by a child.
- The electric cables assessed were in good condition.
- The storage facilities were out of reach of the children and the waste was inaccessible both indoors and outside.
- The temperature reducing medication was kept in its original container and stored in the kitchen.

Infection Control:

- There was hot water available in the sinks in the children’s toilet, in the adult toilet and in the sink in the care room.

- There were liquid soap hand towels available for use at each sink. Children were reminded to wash hands after going to the toilet, after coming in from outside and when their hand were dirty following play activities.
- The perishable items contained in the children's snacks were stored in the fridge and were handed out at snack time, this prevented contamination and the growth of potentially harmful bacteria.
- Tables were cleaned with suitable disinfectant after messy play and before snack time.

Administration of Medication:

- The emergency medication was stored on a high shelf and was in date should it be needed.

Fire Safety:

- The fire extinguishers were safely tethered to the wall and the fire exit doors were clear and not blocked.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

Compliance Information

- (1) The person in charge had a system of signing the children in on arrival with the time of arrival and when signing the children out signed them out with time of departure recorded.

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 insured that the two staff working in the service and the relief staff member were trained in first aid responder (FAR) and were immediately available to the children.

(2)

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school at all times and was stored in the school aged care room in a high press.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) The sterile bandages in the first aid box were out of date. Out of date dressings are no longer sterile and therefore are not available for used on an open wound in the event of an accident.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (a) The sterile dressing have been replaced and the registered provider has committed to ensuring that the first aid box is checked regularly and any items relaced as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2) (a) A copy of the receipt of the purchase of the products has been received.

Summary Comment

Following the corrective and preventive action process the requirements for this regulation have been met.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(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 fire drills that took place in the service were all recorded and the last fire drill took place on the 20.05.2024 with evidence that drills take place monthly observed.
- The firefighting equipment (Fire extinguishers) were last serviced in Sept 2023.
- (2) (c) The records as referred to above were available for review on the day of inspection.
- (4) The procedure to follow in the event of a fire was displayed near the door in the hallway.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) (b) The smoke detection system was last serviced in 2022 with no updated service record for the fire alarm system available. Not ensuring that the fire alarms are in working order may delay the evacuation of the building in the event of a fire.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) (b) The fire alarm/detection system has been serviced and the registered provider has committed to checking the fire alarm system regularly. The system was serviced on 17.06.2024.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) (b) The certificate of service has been received.

Summary Comment

Following the corrective and preventive action process and the receipt of the service record the requirements for this regulation have been met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was insured to operate as a sessional service with a maximum number of children set at 22. The expiry date of the insurance was 27.03.2025.