

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC094
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Name of Service:	Charleville Community Childcare CLG
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Address of Service:	Broad St., Charleville, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P56 RX62
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Name of Registered Provider:	Anita O'Connell
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	29/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	71	PM	No. 41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork
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Inspection undertaken by:	F Collins & S O'Brien
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Title:	Early Years Inspectors
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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

Charleville Community Childcare CLG is a full day care service located in the town of Charleville in North Cork. Access to the service is from Baker Street and the entrance is identified with separate entrance and exit paths. The service consists of a purpose built two-storey building and a converted house. Both buildings are separate but located on the same premises. There is no dedicated parking for the service, with street parking available. The house consists of one large playroom downstairs and a smaller room upstairs which is used for the sole purpose of school aged care provision and a kitchen used for baking for the children also located in this building. The house facilitates a sessional service in the morning and the school age service in the afternoon and during holiday time. The main building facilitates the pre-school services only and consists of four care rooms three downstairs and one upstairs. Full day care, part time and sessional services are offered from this main building. There are toilet facilities both adult and child, a kitchen, a staff room, a large entrance area, two offices and a meeting room upstairs for parents and staff. There is a secure outdoor play area and a room outside which is a room accessible from outside that consists of soft matting and outdoor play equipment but contained in a room so the younger children can use this facility during bad weather.

Staffing

The service employs 32 adults and there were 16 adults present on the day of inspection working directly the children. Also present were the person in charge and the deputy person in charge, two administration staff, a cleaner, two chefs and two staff on community employment schemes.

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. The inspection 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, deputy 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
- (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 service had a designated person in charge and a deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection. In the event the person or deputy person in charge were not on the premises a named person able to deputise was available.
 - (b) The person in charge or a named deputy person in charge were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear structure in the service that identified the management structure. Each care room had a room leader, childcare workers and where required had staff employed under the Access and Inclusion Model Scheme. The service was accommodating adults on a community employment scheme.

- (2)
- Thirty-two adults work in the service, all 32 files were assessed for completeness.
- (a) Of the 64 references required 42 validated references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Of the 64 references required 22 validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were on file for all 32 adults who work in the service and have access to children.
 - (d) Police vetting was available and translated for seven staff who had resided outside the country for greater than six consecutive months and have access to children.
- (4) Twenty-three adults held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the national qualifications framework or a qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent.
- The non-qualified adults who were working with the children were supervised at all times.
- The remaining staff that did not hold relevant qualifications and were not providing care to the children and were employed as cooks, cleaners, maintenance and office administration.

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 reviewed on inspection:

- Infection Control policy.
- Managing Behaviour policy.
- Inclusion policy.
- Authorisation to collect children policy.

The policies contained the information required to guide staff on best practice.

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) All five care rooms were in operation on the day of inspection. There were adequate staff available to the children in attendance.

(2)

- The Creche room, which had children attending aged between 1-2 years, the adult child ratios were correct in the care rooms as observed throughout the day. Three qualified adults and an adult on a community employment scheme were caring for nine children.
- Montessori room 1: (children aged between 3-4 years) had three qualified adults caring for eighteen children.
- Montessori room 2: (children aged 2-4 years) had four qualified adults caring for twenty children.
- Montessori room 3: (children aged between 1-2 years) attending in the morning and were cared for by three qualified adults. There were three children being cared for by 2 adults late in the afternoon.
- Montessori room 4: (children ages between 3-4 years) had three qualified adults caring for fourteen children. In the afternoon there was three adults caring for eleven children.

The staffing as indicated by the roster and was available on the day of inspection allowed each care room to have sufficient staff to allow the staff to take their breaks ensuring that there were adequate staff remaining to care for and supervise the children.

(8) The roster provided to the inspectors by the person in charge identified that a minimum of two staff were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

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) A sample of six children's files were reviewed from each of the five care rooms (30 records in total), all forms were completed with the information outlined from (a) to (i)

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:

- Children were observed handwashing before mealtimes. Staff supported and encouraged children to be independent, developing each child's self-help skills.
- Children were supported with toileting if needed and staff were observed caring for children in a respectful manner during toileting and nappy changing. Nappy changing took place on a scheduled basis and when required.
- Snacks and meals were served to the children at appropriate times throughout the day. Children were observed eating snacks that were provided by their parents, guardians or in the younger care rooms snacks were provided by the service. The service also provided additional food if needed. Dinner served on the day of inspection consisted of mashed potatoes, with sweetcorn and mince served in gravy. Additional food was available should any child ask for more or indicate that they were hungry. Individual water beakers were available to the children throughout the day and were stored on child height tables/shelves.
- Individual care plans were available for the children who required them. It was clear the staff had a good understanding of each child's specific needs and ensured the needs of the children were being met within the care rooms.
- Transitions between activities were relaxed and children were given visual and sound cues to when they would tidy up for the next activity. Visual schedules and LAMH sign language were used to communicate with children which supported the transitions and communication between staff and children in Montessori room 4, for the younger children clean up songs were sung to indicate the transition to other activities or to mealtime.
- The children were observed freely moving around the care rooms and a choice of what activities they would like to partake in was available to all.

- Children in the Creche room were facilitated with sleeping when they indicated the need for same with adequate cots available in the sleep room and an additional cot was in the care room if required. Children who required settling to sleep were comforted as they tried to sleep.
- The children in Montessori room 3 slept after dinner time on stackable beds or floor beds as required. The staff sat between the children comforting them as required and the children that did not require sleep were observed to be playing in the room outside with one of the staff.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff sat with the children during mealtimes and allowed the children time to enjoy their food, making mealtimes a relaxed time of the day.
- The staff in each care room used a key worker system to allow for children to develop relationships with the staff and for the staff to form an understanding of each child's likes and interests, this also supported the parents in communicating with eh staff about their child.
- The staff were observed speaking to the children in a kind and respectful manner and listened to the children's voice. This was observed during mealtime when the children were asked what food they would like to put on their plate.
- The staff discussed the importance of communication between the service and the parents and guardians of each child which allowed for the needs of each child to be met and supported.
- Family and community walls were on display in the care rooms and children were observed speaking to each other about their family and local communities.
- Information on the younger children was sent home daily on a note of the food eaten, the times each child slept and when they had wet and soiled nappies. This system was also used if additional supplies were required in the service.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The care rooms were well equipped with toys and equipment that was suitable to the age and stage of the children. The equipment and resources were stored on child height shelves for the children to easily access.
- Farm animals, zoo animals and kitchen and construction areas were available to the children to promote imaginary play.
- Resources such as sensory boxes with leaves, rice, pasta and sand were available to the children to support sensory development.

- Activities such as construction bricks, jigsaws and shape sorters were available in each care room to promote fine motor development.
- Colouring materials were available for cognitive development.
- There was a quiet corner in each of the care rooms was available for children to sit and read story books. Staff were also observed to read stories to the children.
- The sheltered outdoor area was available to the children daily which gave the opportunity to get natural air.
- The outdoor space was used for brief times on the day of inspection due to the poor weather. There was access to ride on toys and climbing resources such as slides and an activity centre to promote risk taking and gross motor development.
- There were also a wooden Tipi and Boat where the children could climb in which promoted pretend play.

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 and external doors were secured with electromagnetic or coded keypads. This prevented children from accessing unsafe areas such as the kitchen and offices and prevented unauthorised adults entering the service and gaining access to the children.
- The children attending Montessori 4 were supervised while using the stairs in the service. Staff stood at the top and bottom of the stairs and one child was allowed on the stairs at any one time to ensure the safety of the children. Children were encouraged to use the child height handrail to prevent falling. The staircase was adequately lit and was in good condition.
- Velux windows were not accessible to children in Montessori 4.
- Flexes and cables that were assessed were out of reach of children and were in good condition.
- Medication was stored in its original packaging, in a container which was out of reach of children in Montessori room 1 and stored on shelving out of reach of the children in the Creche room. Medication was clearly labelled for staff if required or in the event of an emergency.

- The toys and equipment assessed were in good condition and were safe for the age group of the children using them.
- Pinch and crush point finger protectors were attached to the doors in the care rooms to prevent injury to children.
- Children were observed playing in the sheltered outdoor area which was secured and safe for the children to use.
- Each of the highchairs used had appropriate safety harness in use, this ensured each child safety to prevent them from falling from the highchair.
- No blinds or blind cords were accessible to the children.
- The storage facilities were out of reach or not accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- There was hot water available in the sanitary areas and hand basins in the care rooms and the range of water temperatures were between 25.9°C to 38.8°C. This would allow for comfortable hand washing for children and staff. Liquid soap and paper towels were available at each sink used by staff and children for hand washing.
- Staff were observed wearing gloves and aprons while caring out nappy changing and were observed to wash the hands of the children and themselves after each nappy change.
- Children were observed to wash hands before meals and after outdoor play and after messy play activities.
- Infant formula and perishable food items were stored in the fridge preventing the food from spoiling.
- Laundry for the cots and floor/stackable beds was laundered on a frequent basis.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection. The staff discussed specific care plans for children who required medication to be administered daily, and staff outlined the procedures that were in place. Previous episodes of administration of medication were completed according to the administration of medication policy.

Safe Sleep:

- The children attending the Creche room were allowed to sleep as needed and safe sleep checks were completed every 10 minutes, additionally staff could observe the children through the viewing panel. The sleep room was at the appropriate temperature of 20.1°C when a child over the age of 1 year was sleeping.
- Children under the age of 2 years that had graduated from sleeping in a cot were placed to sleep on a floor bed that met the safe sleep guidelines for that age group.

Fire Safety:

- All fire exits were unobstructed and in the care rooms allowing for the fast evacuation of the service in the event of an emergency.
- Firefighting equipment was fixed to the walls where required and out of reach of the children.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. It was observed that a child did not have their hands washed after nappy changing in Montessori 4. The policy indicated the children, and staff should wash hands following nappy changing and this posed a risk of cross infection to the child and to others in the service.
2. A staff member was observed to change a nappy in Montessori room 3 and following this with the gloves used for changing the nappy, open the stair gate and the door to outside to dispose of the soiled nappy, this posed multiple opportunities for contamination of surfaces and therefore the risk of cross infection.
3. The mattresses used in the cots in the Creche room were covered with material, a sheet was used when a child was sleeping however the material mattresses could not be cleaned effectively between each child, a waterproof mattress protector would need to be used when cloth mattresses are used. Not being able to clean the mattress effectively between each child poses a risk of cross infection between the children using the cots.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The staff have been met and the importance of handwashing has been outlined to them. This has been addressed at a staff meeting and through conversation with individual staff and management.
2. The staff have been met and the importance of handwashing has been outlined to them. The infection control policy and the nappy changing policy has been recirculated to all staff by email. Direct observation will also be carried out by management.
3. Waterproof mattress protectors have been purchased for each cot and will be changed for each child and as necessary. Information and discussion has taken place with the staff regarding mattress protectors.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

The CAPA response from the registered provider is accepted as proof that the requirements for this Regulation have been met.

Summary Comment

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

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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

Compliance Information

(1) The staff were observed using an attendance record book in each care room for checking in and out of the children.

(3) (a) The inspectors were asked to check in and out of the service on a visitor book which was approved by the person in charge on arrival and departure to the service. A staff checking in and out record was also available for review.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The children were primarily supervised by sight in the care rooms. It was observed that children in the Montessori room 4 were supervised by sound while using the sanitary facilities. Staff were aware of when the children were out of sight and were available to support the children if needed.

Supervision of the younger children when using the outdoor classroom was by direct sight on each child.

The supervision in the care rooms was ensured by the service having adequate staff available to the children.