

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC096		
Name of Service:	Child's Play Educare Cloughduv		
Address of Service:	Rycourt Manor, Aherla, Cloughduv, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P14 RX27		
Name of Registered Provider:	Louise O'Sullivan		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date(s) of Inspection:	04/07/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	42	PM 31
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork		
Inspection undertaken by:	C Stokes		
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		

Description of service

This private full day care service was established in 2013 to cater for children aged 6 months to 6 years of age from 7.30 am to 6pm Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. The service offers full day care, part-time care, sessional care, ECCE and school age care in four care rooms. The service also has two designated sleep rooms, sanitary areas, and a designated kitchen. The service has a large outdoor play area to the rear.

Staffing

The registered provider is service based and operates the service with the designated person in charge. In addition, there were 8 adults working directly with the children, with major awards in Early Childhood care and education.

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 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.

Additional Information

- An Immediate Action Notice was issued on the day of inspection, in respect of two significant safety issues which required immediate remedial action. The water temperature recorded at a children's sink measured 53.1 degrees Celsius, 10 degrees above the maximum safe temperature of 43 degrees Celsius and this posed a scalding risk to a child. Secondly, in the toddler room when this room converted entirely for sleep, a room temperature of 24 degrees Celsius was recorded, which was above the range of 16 to 20 degrees for a sleep room. The registered provider corresponded with supporting evidence within 24 hours to state that these issues had been addressed.
- A fire officer referral was made regarding the fire safety in the service to assess the keypad locks on internal doors from inside the occupied care rooms which formed part of the fire exit routes.
- A referral to Better Start Quality Improvement Service was made following this inspection, in respect of development of the outdoor area. A previous referral was made in 2022 however, the registered provider did not engage at that time. However, there was a willingness and agreement for a repeat referral to be made on the day of inspection.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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 registered provider was the named person in charge of operating the service.

(b) In addition to the registered provider, there was a deputy person in charge (Manager) present

(2) (a)(b) There was 1 new adult working in the service since the last inspection in 2022. This staff recruitment file was examined as part of this inspection. When this recruitment was reviewed two written and appropriately validated references were available

(c) A completed record of Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau was available for the adult new to working in the service since the last inspection.

(d) Police vetting for this adult was not required as the adult had not lived outside the jurisdiction for a period exceeding 6 months.

(4) A certificate of qualification in Early Childhood care and education at QQI level 5 on the National Qualification framework was on file for this adult

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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children.

(2) The following rooms which were in operation met the adult/child ratio

Room	Age range	adults	children
Baby/Wobbler	1 under 12 months, 5 over 12 months	2	6
Toddler	3 under 2 years, 7 over 2 years	3	10
Preschool	2 and a half to 4 years	3	26

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

- Meals and snacks were served no more than 3 hours apart on the day of inspection and water/drinks were observed to be readily available in the baby/wobbler and preschool rooms.

- Nappy changing occurred in the baby/wobbler room every two hours and as necessary as described by staff and observed on inspection.
- Many children in the preschool room were independent using the toilet and staff supported these children appropriately. Toilet training was ongoing in the toddler room and children were allowed take their time.
- Children in the baby/wobbler room had access to a sleep room with 4 cots adjacent to their care room to meet their need for sleep on demand. A second sleep room was available and utilised by both baby/wobblers and toddlers. This room had 6 cots. Older toddlers, over 2 years of age slept at a designated time after lunch on stackable beds in their care room which converted to a sleep room for all children at this time. The staff advised that children in the preschool room do not have a sleep routine but can rest as required.
- Children in all rooms were observed to have access to the outdoor area for mobility on the day of inspection.
- There was a calm and engaging atmosphere in the rooms and staff in the baby/wobbler room were observed trying to assist a child to settle into the service in a sensitive manner.

Physical and Material Environment

- The three rooms in operation were child friendly, bright, and spacious and laid out in special interest areas with materials largely accessible to the children.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available in each room, with highchairs available in the baby/wobbler room.
- The environment of the baby/wobbler room was noted to be laid out with impact absorbing matting and several activity centres and instruments were readily available for the children.
- Childrens artwork was on display at children's eye level.
- The outdoor area was spacious and had interest areas including a sandpit, playhouse, climbing area, slide etc. The development of this space was under consideration according to the manager on the day of inspection.

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 service provided meals and snacks in accordance with full day care guidelines, two meals and two snacks were offered. The menu plan on display on the day of inspection indicated the morning and afternoon snacks and the main hot meal of the day. In addition, the registered provider advised that yoghurts, fruit, and crackers were offered for the late afternoon supper.

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:

- Blind cords were observed to be secured on the day of inspection.
- External doors and internal doors were secured. The internal doors to the care rooms were secured by keypad access. While the internal doors were secured to prevent unauthorised access, a referral to the Fire Officer was made to assess the compliance with Fire Safety Regulations as the exit from the care rooms was also by way of the keypad mechanism as some of the doors formed part of the fire exit route in case of emergency.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing before some meals and snacks was observed.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered; however, staff were competent in describing medication storage and administration.

Outing:

- No outings were observed. The service had an outings policy.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. On the day of inspection an Immediate Action Notice was issued in respect of a water temperature of 53.1 degrees at a children's sink, other temperatures recorded at children's sinks included 47 degrees and 48.8 degrees which all exceeded the maximum safe temperature of 43 degrees Celsius. The issue of high-water temperatures at children's sinks was noted on the previous inspection of 10th March 2022. Actions stated by the registered provider in her CAPA response failed to prevent a recurrence of this issue. These actions included that a plumber had resolved the high-water temperature and that the temperature would be regularly monitored in the future.
2. The outdoor area was not presented in a safe condition, there were briars growing over the wall and easily accessible by children. There was a digging area which was covered by fencing lying horizontally which posed a trip hazard and there was an appearance of poor maintenance and with for example, unkempt grass, a collapsed abandoned tent, discarded yoghurt cartons in the sandpit and rubbish strewn around the grass. This posed a safety risk to children and may lead to rodent activity.
3. In the vacant room, chipped laminate bookshelves may present a risk of injury to a child. The issue of chipped laminate furniture was noted on the previous inspection of 10th March 2022. Actions stated by the registered provider in her CAPA response failed to prevent a recurrence of this issue. Following the last inspection, the registered provider actions as stated in the CAPA were that the chipped veneered furniture had been removed and that staff would check the condition of the furniture.

Safe Sleep:

4. On the day of inspection, the sleep room temperatures were not within the safe range of 16 to 20 degrees Celsius. In the toddler room which converted entirely for sleep, 4 children were sleeping on stackable beds and a temperature of 24 degrees was recorded. In the baby/wobbler room a temperature of 22.2 degrees was recorded and in the toddler cot room a temperature of 21.9 degrees was recorded. An Immediate Action Notice was issued in respect of the temperature in the toddler room while 4 children were sleeping on stackable beds with 2 adults present in the room supervising them. Furthermore, there was no natural ventilation in the baby sleep room and in the two toddler sleep rooms, staff were not observed to take any additional measures to address the high room temperatures.
5. There was a lack of adherence to the services safe sleep policy in practice on the day of inspection. Children in the toddler sleep room were observed to be wearing a hoody, tights, socks in their cot. The warm outer layer of clothing had not been removed.

6. There was an issue with recording the sleep room temperatures noted on the day of inspection, the room monitor in the service was showing 22 degrees and the staff had 10-minute checks in the toddler room recorded at 18 and 19 degrees. This was also the case in the toddler sleep room, while 6 children under two years slept in their cots. While the records for the last 8 weeks were examined, the service had not recorded a sleep temperature above 18 and 19 degrees Celsius. Notably, while the services room thermometer measured 22 degrees, the inspectors thermometer measured 24 degrees Celsius. Therefore, the issue of accuracy of the thermometer and precision of recording the room temperatures both were contrary to what was found on inspection.
7. There were four cots in the baby/wobbler sleep room, and 3 of the 4 were located too close together as the minimum of 50cm space between cots was not maintained- the cots were positioned with 5 to 10cm space between them.
8. Storage was located inappropriately in the baby sleep room where a large cardboard box, smaller box of materials and a plastic bag of storage were observed on the day of inspection.

Infection Control:

9. There was a strong malodour in both nappy changing areas throughout the day. This may give rise to the spread of infection.
10. The pedal on the foot pedal operated nappy disposal bin was broken, this may give rise to the spread of infection as the lid needed to be lifted by hand.
11. The sink in both nappy changing areas was not observed to be clean, and this may lead to the spread of infection. The issue of cleanliness and hygiene of children's sinks was noted on the previous inspection of 10 March 2022. Actions stated by the registered provider in her CAPA response failed to prevent a recurrence of this issue. The registered provider had informed in the CAPA response that this sink had been cleaned with stain remover and that it would be maintained in a clean and presentable condition.
12. On the day of inspection 19 stackable beds were stored on the floor in the front hall of the service, several car seats (x3) and car seat bases were stored on top of these. This created an infection control issue which may lead to the spread of infection, in addition, it may be a safety hazard if children attempted to climb the beds.

13. There was a mop stored inappropriately in the adult toilet which may give rise to cross infection and the spread of infection. The issue of storage of a mop in a sanitary area was noted on the previous inspection of 10 March 2022. Actions stated by the registered provider in the CAPA response which advised that cleaning equipment would be stored in the sluice room, were not implemented and led to a recurrence of this issue.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & evidence submitted

General Safety:

1. The registered provider responded to state that a plumber had rectified the water temperatures and photographic evidence of the water temperature was submitted. The mixer valve was replaced and a practice of checking and recording the water temperatures on a newly purchased thermometer was established.
2. The outdoor area was addressed according to the response from the registered provider to state that the briars were cut, the lawn is cut on a bi-weekly basis, a daily tidy up of outdoor equipment and litter is conducted by staff and a practice of deep clean of toys and equipment is now in place. Photographic evidence was submitted to support this.
3. The laminate furniture was replaced and a practice of checking the furniture during daily cleaning was introduced to address this issue. Photographic evidence was submitted by the registered provider.

Safe Sleep:

4. New fans and a wall thermometer are in place, dark blinds have been removed and a practice of opening windows is now practiced regulating the sleep room temperatures according to the registered provider who submitted photographic evidence of the fans and thermometer.
5. The registered provider responded to state that staff remove outer layers of the children's clothing before being placed in their cot for sleep and the sleep policy has been updated accordingly. Staff are being retrained on the updated sleep policy according to the registered provider. This updated policy was not submitted by the registered provider.
6. The registered provider responded to state that a new online application is being used to accurately maintain the sleep room temperature records daily and the fans are now in place to help regulate the temperatures in line with the regulations.

7. The registered provider advised that the cots in the baby sleep room have been moved to ensure a space of 50cm between them and a photograph of this was submitted as supporting evidence. The registered provider stated that markers are now in place to indicate the appropriate position of the 4 cots.
8. The registered provider advised that the storage in the baby sleep room has been removed and relocated and a photograph of this was submitted as supporting evidence.

Infection Control:

9. The registered provider stated that all bins in the nappy rooms were replaced with specific nappy bins which trap odours by having a sealed cover on the top of the bin. Soiled nappies are also put in a fragranced nappy bag and removed. Photographic evidence was submitted of the newly purchased bins.
10. New nappy bins are in place and the nappy room is disinfected after every nappy change to limit the spread of infection.
11. A new daily cleaning checklist has been introduced which ensures that sinks are disinfected after every handwash and cleaned thoroughly every evening and bins are emptied 3 times per day.
12. A new purposely designed stackable bed storage was purchased to prevent cross infection and safe storage of the stackable beds. Photographic evidence of this purchased was submitted by the registered provider.
13. The registered provider advised that the mop was removed from the toilet area and new hangers were purchase for the storage of the mop in the sluice room. A picture of the toilet area free from the storage of cleaning equipment was submitted as evidence.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence provided by the registered provider was assessed and deemed acceptable in meeting the regulatory requirements of this regulation.