

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC134			
Name of Service:	Dripsey Pre-School Playgroup			
Address of Service:	11 Millview Terrace, Model Village, Dripsey, Co. Cork			
Eircode:	P12 EP93			
Name of Registered Provider:	Triona Sheehan			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date(s) of Inspection:	07/12/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	n/a

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440
Inspection undertaken by:	Ms. M. O'Reilly
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

Dripsey Pre-School Playgroup is a registered community based early year sessional service in operation since 1985. This service provides education and care to children from 2 years 10 months to 6 years and for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The current opening hours are from 09:15am to 12:15pm each day Monday to Friday.

Staffing

Dripsey Pre-School Playgroup operates from a converted two storey semi-detached house located in a residential area in the village of Dripsey, Co Cork. There is one main playroom divided in two by a partition. There is a second small playroom that the children have access to also located on the ground floor. The children have no access to the first floor. There are adequate children's and adult toilet facilities in the service There is a partially covered outdoor play area to the rear side of the premise.

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.

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 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) There was a named designated person in charge
- (b) The person in charge was present when the inspector arrived on the premises on the day of the inspection and remained for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)
- The Inspector concentrated on vetting the two adults working in the service this included the registered provider/person in charge and a new staff member to the service that commenced in October 2023.
- (a) There were four references with a corresponding written validation on file from past employers in respect of the two adults.
- (b) Not applicable as there were no references from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) A completed Garda vetting disclosure was received for the two adults.
- (d) Not applicable as no adult had worked outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months
- (4)
- The two adults that worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at all times.

(3) On the day of the inspection: the following adult child ratios were observed

There were 14 children aged between two years and ten months to to six years with two adults in attendance.

The adult child ratio was correct on 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.

Compliance Information

(1) A sample portion of 11 children's registration forms. were reviewed and found to contain the elements of information as required by Regulation 15 (a) to (i) inclusive.

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;

Compliance Information

(h) There was a drop off and collection time record where the parent/guardian recorded their signature when the child arrived at the service and again when the child was picked up from the service.

(i) There was a weekly staff roster in place that indicated when each staff member commenced and finished each day in the service.

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 service promoted healthy eating and the food and drink provided by the parents and guardians for the mid-morning snack was observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Independent use of the toilet was encouraged. The staff members were observed to supervise and assist where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying, and the children were supported and encouraged prior to eating and post toileting.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The activities fostered the children's confidence in language development as observed on day of inspection through speech and singing various Christmas songs and at story book time.
- Children's behaviour was managed in a competent and positive way and the adults were observed to support the children and handle any minor behavioural issues promptly. The adults supported children to be sociable and respectful towards each other and spoke and listened to them in a calm and sensitive manner.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The room had a range of play based materials and equipment that offered stimulation, exploration, and imagination. They were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving which nurtured independence, facilitated choice, and encouraged curiosity, spontaneous play and movement.

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

On day of inspection the food provided by the parents/guardians for the mid-morning snack were observed to be healthy and nutritious with age-appropriate size quantities of food for example freshly cut fruit such as strawberries and sandwiches, and yogurts with water to drink.

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:

- Access to the main entrance door was adequately secured that prevented unauthorised access by an unauthorised person or exit by a child.
- Emergency fire exit door was unobstructed.

Infection Control:

- Personal waste including used tissues and all cleaning waste was appropriately disposed of in foot operated pedal bins in the service.
- The children had access to sufficient toilets and wash hand basins.
- A supply of liquid soap, paper towels and thermostatically controlled hot water and bins for disposal of paper towels were available in the service.
- Hand washing was observed prior to mid-morning snack and after going to the toilet.
- A written cleaning record was available where high contact areas were cleaned daily after each session.
- Perishable foods were refrigerated in the service refrigerator.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The windows in the service when open were not adequately secured to prevent a child exiting or falling out and to prevent unauthorised access.
2. The oil heating tank located in the outdoor play area was not adequately secured increasing the potential safety risk to the children when playing outdoors in the service.
3. Moss was visible on the all-weather ground surface tiles located in the outdoor play area increasing the potential risk of a slip hazard to the children when playing outdoors.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

In the written response, the following was stated by the registered provider/person in charge:

General Safety:

1. Restrictive opening devices were installed on all windows in the early years service.
2. A wooden cover has been installed around the oil tank preventing the children having any access to this oil tank when playing in the outdoor play area.
3. The all-weather surface in the outdoor play area has been cleaned.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographic evidence of the restrictive opening devices installed on a number of the windows in the service was submitted and deemed satisfactory.
2. Photographic evidence of the newly installed cover around the oil tank was submitted and deemed satisfactory.
3. Photographic evidence of the recently cleaned all weather ground surface in the outdoor play area was submitted and deemed satisfactory.

Summary Comment

The written response and photographic evidence received was examined and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23 General Safety 1,2,3 of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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) One staff member held a certified, First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificate.

(2) (a) There was a sufficiently stocked first aid box available in the service, which was safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) At all times when the service was in operation, first aid supplies were accessible to the adults if in the event that a child may require treatment.

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) A record of monthly fire drills carried out was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place on the 10th November 2023
 - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced on the 8th October 2023 and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced on the 8th November 2023.
- (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 in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had certification to confirm insurance cover for a total of 22 children.
Insurance cover expires on the 27/11/2024