

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC145		
Name of Service:	Eyeries Playgroup Ltd		
Address of Service:	Eyeries Village, Beara, Eyeries Village, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P75 CK49		
Name of Registered Provider:	Christina Healy		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	22/05/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Child & Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, West Cork, P81 PD78		
Inspection undertaken by:	M Carney		
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		

Description of service

Eyeries Playgroup Ltd is a community-based service which provides a sessional early care and education for children aged from 2 to 6 years.

It operates from 09:30am to 13:00pm daily.

The service is situated within a cabin style structure in the centre of Eyeries village on the Beara peninsula.

Facilities include a large playroom, toilet facilities and an outdoor play area.

Ample car spacing in the in the village allows for the safe arrival and departure of the children with their families.

Staffing

The registered provider has employed 3 adults to work directly with the children. An additional adult has been employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)

Each adult has Quality Qualification's Ireland (QQI) in childcare training.

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 II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C (2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Compliance Information

(1)
The service had duly notified the Agency in writing of changes in circumstances in respect of their registration details for example, change of registered provider details.

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)

This was a community service, and the registered provider did not work within the service, however an adult had been appointed as the person in charge and an additional adult was designated as deputise as required.

(b)

On inspection of staff rosters it was evidenced that the person in charge and the deputy were on the premises for the duration of service operation.

(2)(a) & (b)

There were 4 adults enlisted in the service and each adult's personal file was examined. The following information was obtained -

There were 5 written past employers references on file with records of verification attached.

There were 3 written references from a source that the registered provider considered to be reputable, with records of validation attached.

(c)

There were 4 up to date Garda vetting disclosures on file.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as the employees had not lived outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for a period longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training were on file for each staff members at level 5 & Level 6.

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)

On the day of the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(3)

There were 17 children attending the service on a sessional basis aged 3 to 4 years. There were 4 adults present, and the adult child ratio was correct

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)

Each of the children's enrolment forms were reviewed; 24 in total and these were found to be compliant in respect of the above subsections of Regulation 16 (a) to (i)

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or program; thme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
The following records were available and compliant in relation to the service –
- (a) to (i).
- (j) There was a recording book to detail any medications administered to a pre-school child attending the service. The most recent entry was recorded on the 18 May 2023 and found to be completed correctly in accordance with the service medication policy.
- (k) The service had developed templates for the recording of any accidents or incidents that had occurred in the service. The most recently recorded incident had been logged on the 04 April 2022 which detailed a minor accident. The information had been duly relayed to the parent as evidenced by the countersignature.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

Information incorporating the subsections of Regulation 16 (1)a) to (g) for parents, guardians or prospective parents was displayed in the lobby. It was also available in hard copy.

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

- Parents and guardians supplied their children with all their food and drink provisions.
- The lunch meal was timetabled mid-session and was a sociable event. A system was in place whereby children were rostered to assist with setting the table, putting out plates and taking lunches from the fridge and distributing them to their friends.
- The staff members sat with the children and assisted with opening cartons and encouraging the correct table etiquette.
- Children were observed eating in an unhurried manner and allowed ample time to finish their meals.
- Staff members supervised toilet visits and gently prompted handwashing and disposing of paper towels.
- Additional hand washing was observed prior to lunch.
- Aprons were stored for use to protect the children's clothes during art and messy play activities.
- Each child had their own coat hook and unit space for bags and personal belongings.
- The children had access to a rest corner that was furnished with a low chair and throw.
- Displayed books were to hand so that literacy was encouraged whilst the children waited for their friends to finish lunch.

- There was generous clear floor space in the playroom for the children to enjoy free play, socialise and investigate their environment in a supervised manner.
- The children had direct access to a secured, south facing outdoor playground to the front of the premises.
- Generous adult child ratios allowed for the close supervision of the children and challenging behaviours were not observed.

Physical and Material Environment –

- The service was situated in a cabin style structure which provided a large room which was clean, airy, bright and well maintained. There were many openable windows which allowed for natural light and ventilation.
- The playroom was furnished with a sufficient number of child sized tables and chairs that were clean and well maintained.
- The room was laid out in a manner to encourage thematic play and provided opportunities for play experiences, such as the kitchen area, shop/office area, farmyard and farm vehicles, cars and trucks, large and small construction, arts and crafts.
- Low level open display shelving presented transparent boxes with photographs of the contents to permit children to easily access fine motor skill play equipment such as jig saws, matching games and puzzles.
- Displayed art works included the children’s fingerprints, ABC and shape posters.
- The outdoor playground provided a range of gross motor skill play apparatus. There were ride on toys, such as bikes, scooters and cars.
- There was a large climbing frame/playhouse with integral slide which proved to be very popular as the children were observed enjoying playing on the apparatus in a supervised manner.

Supporting Relations around the Children

- The staff members were observed to be kind, patient and caring to each child, for example during one-to-one tabletop activities and preparing for lunch.
- Children’s cues were read, for example when toileting was required, or drinks were needed; staff members discreetly facilitated the children.
- A staff member had completed further training to enhance childcare skills and practices.
- The service was integrated with the local community; it was reported that the local garda, ambulance crew and firefighters had visited to demonstrate their job roles to the children.

- Transition year students from the local secondary school had volunteered their time to re-paint the playground fencing in bright colours with artful seasonal display boards.
- It was evidenced that a planned outing to a local activity centre had been arranged for their end of term treat.
- In addition, the children moving onto national school had plans to visit their school in preparation for the transition.
- The person in charge stated that an open-door policy operated in respect of parents or guardians wishing to speak with staff members.
- The service managed a digital group application for parents to receive notices regarding the service.

Implementation of Programme of Care

- A daily timetable was displayed to evidence that a wide range of activities were offered to the children, there was ample time allotted for free play, outdoor play, circle time socialisation and meals.
- Folders were made available to evidence short term and long-term planning of the curriculum.
- Observations were maintained on each child's learning and activities enjoyed and completed.
- It was reported and evidenced by the person in charge that the service had recently engaged with Better Start Quality Development service. The purpose of the application was to obtain specialist support to improve both indoor and outdoor play settings and to assist newly recruited staff members to apply quality play practices and develop an enriched curriculum.

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 parents and guardians supplied their children with all food and drink provisions.
- Lunches were stored in the service fridge along with the children’s bottles of water.
- A healthy eating policy was in place which was adhered to as observed from lunches eaten.
- Children were seen eating adequate portions of healthy and nutritious sandwiches such as cold meats and cheeses, rolls, savoury wraps, seasonal fruits such as strawberries, yogurts, rice cakes and chopped vegetables.
- Plates and cutlery were available to the children.

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:

- Eyerics Playgroup was suitably secured so that a child could not leave the premises unsupervised.
- Unauthorised was restricted.
- Play materials were found to be in a good state of repair with no pinch points or sharp edges.
- Cables and flexes were not accessible to the children.
- Openable windows were not accessible to the children and there were no blind cords.
- There were no low glazed windows.
- The emergency exit door was unobstructed.
- The children had free access to the kitchen corner, it was observed that there were no hazards present such as sharp knives and that safety latches had been applied to kitchen units and drawers.
- Cleaning products were out of reach of the children.
- The children did not have access to the adult toilet or staff members bags and personal belongings.

Infection Control:

- The service was clean and well maintained. It was reported that the staff members operated a clean as you go policy with a deep clean at the end of the week.
- Sanitising units were placed out of reach of the children for adult use.
- Good hand washing practise were observed with children washing hands after using the toilets, after messy play and prior to lunch.
- The children had access to 2 separate, child sized toilets and 2 low level wash hand basins which were clean and well maintained.
- The children had use of step-ups or pots ad required. These were suitably stored.
- Liquid soap, and paper towels were available for hand washing purposes and strategically places hand washing posters were visible to the children to prompt the correct hand washing technique.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water registered at 30 degrees Celsius.
- Adults had a designated toilet.
- Non-contact pedal bins were situated throughout the service.

Administration of Medication:

- It was reported that the staff members were familiar with the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a child requiring either emergency or prescribed medications.

Fire Safety:

- The fire door was unobstructed.
- Fire cylinders were tethered to the walls.
- Records evidenced that staff members had availed of fire safety training.
- In conversation with the person in charge it was reported that staff were familiar with the procedures that are required to be followed in the event of a fire.

Outing:

- It was reported that an outing had been planned for the end of term and that staff members were familiar with the safety procedures in order to conduct the event. For example, the need to contact insurance company and check cover, obtain parental consent , adhere to the correct adult child ratio which is detailed as 1 to 2 children.

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 service had designated a staff member to be responsible for checking the children in and out of the setting on a daily basis. A record book was maintained and stored in the lobby to be completed on the children's arrival and departure. The book was reviewed and information was found to tally with the daily register.

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)
Records informed that 1 staff member had completed first aid responder training certification (FAR). The expiry date was May 2024. It was evidenced by the staff roster that this adult was on the premises on a daily basis so as to tend first aid as required.

(2)
The service had a well-equipped first aid box which was stored in the kitchen area on a high shelf out of reach of the children but easily accessible to the staff members.

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 firefighting 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)

The template for recording the monthly fire drill conducted in the service was displayed in the lobby. The most recent fire drill had been carried out on the 17 May 2023; 17 children and 4 adults were present.

(b)

The service maintained a written record of the number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the setting. The most recent service had taken place in August 2022.

(4)

A fire evacuation plan was conspicuously displayed to inform occupants of a safe route to leave the building in the event of a fire.