

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC228
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Little Haven Union Hall Community Playschool
-------------------------	--

Address of Service:	The Blackfield, Union Hall, Co. Cork
----------------------------	--------------------------------------

Eircode:	P81 PX70
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Katie Hegarty
-------------------------------------	---------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date(s) of Inspection:	18/04/2023
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	---	----	-----

Address of the 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

Little Haven Union Hall Community Playschool is registered to offer a sessional early years care and education for children aged 2 to 6 years.

It operates from 09:00am to 12:30pm daily.

The service operates from a purpose built, detached, single storey premises which is situated within the GAA grounds in the rural coastal village of Union Hall, west Cork.

Facilities include, a large playroom, kitchen, storage areas and toilets. The children have access to a secured outdoor garden.

The GAA grounds provide ample car parking for the safe arrival and departure of the children with their families.

Staffing

There are 2 care professionals attached to the service that work directly with the children.

Two adults have been enlisted on a relief basis.

Each of the 4 childcare professionals had attained 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.

Additional Information

This inspection was conducted on the foot of information received via Feedback and Concerns.

Findings are recorded in the content of the report.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
The following changes had not been notified to the Agency in writing at least 60 days prior to the changes taking effect.

1. In conversation with a staff member it was stated that the appointed person in charge no longer fulfilled this role and the responsibility had been taken on by another member of staff.
2. The times of operation of the service were at variance with the registration status, listed as 09:00am to 12:30pm. It was reported and evidenced that the service was operating from 09:15am to 12:15pm.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

1 & 2. The registered provider stated that a Change in Circumstance Form has been completed and sent to the Agency with the new details in respect of hours of operation and person in charge.
A copy of the Change in Circumstance Form was attached to evidence this action.

Summary Comment

Submitted documentation was reviewed and found to be satisfactory in meeting the Requirements of Regulation 8.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

There were 2 childcare professionals present that worked directly with the children.

(b)

Both the adults were on the premises for the duration of service operation, as evidenced by the staff roster.

(2)(a)

Each staff members files were reviewed; this included the 2 childcare professionals and 2 relief staff. It was found that there were 5 written references on file from past employers.

(b)

There were 3 written references from sources that the registered provider considered to be reputable on file.

(c)

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

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

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) & (b)

Records of validation were not made available for the 8 references to verify written references from both past employers and reputable sources.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

(2)(a) & (b)

The registered provider stated that the outstanding validations had been misfiled and were submitted to evidence that each written reference had the appropriate validation records.

Summary Comment

The Requirements have been met.

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 8 children present on a sessional basis aged from 3 to 4 years, with 2 adults in attendance. 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 registration forms were reviewed and the following sections of the Regulation were found to be compliant –

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) and (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 programme 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)
Records pertaining to the service as listed above were maintained digitally, (a) to (i) were found to be compliant.

(j)
The administration of medication book was made available and was reviewed. There were no entries logged.

Non-Compliance Information

(k)
The accident incident logbook was examined, it was found that the last 3 entries, dated 23/02/2023, 28/11/2022 and 02/09/22 had not been counter signed by the parent or guardian to evidence that information relating to the accident or incident had been relayed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

(k)
The registered provider stated that going forward all accidents and incidents shall be signed off by the parents or guardians as per the service policy.
Submitted documents included evidence of signed templates.

Summary Comment

Documentation submitted was reviewed and found to be satisfactory in meeting this subsection of Regulation 16

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

It was reported and evidenced that the service had the required information (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1) to hand both in hard copy and digitally in readiness for prospective parents and guardians.

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 children were attending on a sessional basis from 09:15 to 12:15 and lunch time was scheduled and observed to be from approximately 11:40. The manager stated that the children have access to their snacks on a flexible basis when they wished to eat. The lunch meal was timetabled later in the morning as it was a more sociable time for the children to sit, eat and relax after the morning activities.
- Drink bottles were observed to be easily accessible to the children as they were stored on the meal tables so that the children could help themselves to a drink when thirsty.
- The staff sat with the children and assisted with opening cartons, yogurts pots and peeling fruits.
- Staff members assisted with toileting and gently reminded the children to wash hands afterwards.
- Additional hand washing was observed after the children had played outside and prior to lunch.
- The children were encouraged to dress appropriately in waterproof overalls, protective boots and hats for outdoor play. Some children were given gently assistance as required.

- Aprons were stored for use to protect the children's clothes during art and messy play activities.
- Slippers were available to the children for indoor play and stored in cubby space so as to encourage the children to help themselves.
- Each child had their own coat hook and cubby space for bags and personal belongings.
- A rest area had been developed in the book corner. It was furnished with low armchairs and throws so that the children could opt out of activities and relax and rest if they so wished. The children were observed making use of this area immediately after outdoor play whilst they waited for children to hand wash.
- 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 also had direct access to a secured well-equipped playground.

Physical and Material Environment –

- The premises were purpose built to provide an early years setting.
- The playroom was furnished with a sufficient number of child sized tables and chairs that were clean and well maintained.
- There were many low-level display units so that the children could easily access play resources.
- The room was laid out in a manner to encourage thematic play and provide a wide range of opportunities and play experiences, such as the dress up area with hairdressing station, a wooden playhouse with a table set in readiness for pretend play, hobby horses, large construction, trucks and cars.
- There was a wide range of tabletop activities to prompt and promote fine motor skill play.
- Recent fund-raising events provided the installation of display boards so that the children's arts and crafts could be exhibited in a way that provided value and satisfaction for the children. Art works included rainbows, birthday cake charts and a collage of family photographs.
- On the day of the inspection the children were observed enjoying outdoor play on the ride on toys, digging in the planting area, climbing and sliding on the Noah's ark and socialising around the water and sand tables which doubled up as picnic benches for the children to enjoy their lunches in finer weather.

Supporting Relations around the Children

- The staff members were observed to be kind, patient and caring to each child.
- Only low tones were used during communication and positive reinforcement was observed during one-to-one craft activities and during supervision of outdoor play.
- The children were discreetly supervised when taken to the toilet and gently encouraged to use the toilets and hand wash independently.
- It was reported by the manager that staff had availed of recent training such as trauma informed training which had been organised by the local county child care committee, manual handling and fire training.
- A digital application was operated to communicate with parents, both a general application for notices in relation to the service and individual application so that parents could be communicated on a one-to-one basis as required.
- It was also reported that an open day for parents was conducted on a yearly basis and the parents and children were offered an additional open day so that the children could familiarise themselves with the setting.

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.
- Displayed templates indicating that short term and medium-term curricular activities were planned was evident. The manager stated that timetables were flexible and took account of the children’s emergent interests.
- Each child had a folder which stored arts and crafts and progress records amassed during their attendance. These were to be taken home at the end of the term.

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 operated a healthy eating policy and this was adhered to as observed by the healthy, varied and nutritious meals being eaten for example, ham and cheese sandwiches, wraps, rice cakes, fruits and cereal bars.
- Each child had access to their own water bottles so that they could help themselves to fluids when they were thirsty.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The children were observed eating out of their lunch boxes as plates and cutlery were not made available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

1. The registered provider stated that plates and cutlery are now made available to the children.

Staff members have been trained in this new practice.

A photograph of a table set with plates and cutlery was submitted.

Summary Comment

The Requirement has been met.

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:

- Little Haven Union Hall playschool was suitably secured so that a child could not leave the premises unsupervised.
- Both the main door and lobby door leading to the playroom were secured so that unauthorised was restricted.
- The staff members bags and belonging were stored out of reach of the children.

- 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.
- There were no glazed doors that required visibility strips.
- The emergency exit door was unobstructed.
- The children had free access to the kitchen as this area was set up for snacks and the lunch meal, child safety latches had been applied all the kitchen unit doors and drawers.

Infection Control:

- The service had displayed cleaning schedules were well maintained.
- Hand washing practices were observed periodically throughout the session.
- The children had access to 2 separate child sized toilets and 2 wash hand basins.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water registered at 39 degrees Celsius.
- There was a wheelchair access toilet which was designated for staff use.

Administration of Medication:

- It was reported that there were no children in the service that required medication, however an appropriate recording book was made available in the event of a child requiring medications.
- Staff members were familiar with the procedures that are to be followed when administering either prescribed or non-prescribed medications.

Fire Safety:

- In conversation with the staff members, it was apparent that they were aware of the procedures that were needed to be followed in the event of a fire.
- Fire cylinders were tethered to the walls.
- The fire exit was unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The children had access to a storage cupboard in the toilet which posed a risk of the children accessing cleaning products.

Infection Control:

The following issues posed a risk of cross infection –

2. In conversation with the manager it was reported that a system was not in place to provide spare clothes for children who had had spillages or had vomited.
3. The wall mounted paper dispensers were not operating and rolls of paper were stored either on the floor or on the toilet cisterns in both the children and adult toilet.
4. A toilet brush was accessible to the children.
5. Ceiling tiles harboured dust and cobwebs

6. Although the manager stated that there were no children attending the service that required nappy changing, a changing mat was stored on the floor in the adult wheelchair access toilet facility.

7. The door leading to the outdoor play was dirty.

8. A mop was accessible to the children

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action, Supporting Documentation Submitted

General Safety:

1. The registered provider stated that a lock had been installed and that the children could no longer gain access to the cupboard

A photograph was submitted to evidence.

Infection Control:

2. The registered provider submitted an up-dated policy which stated that spare clothes are now maintained on the premises.

3. The wall mounted paper dispensers have been fixed and stocks replenished.

A photograph was forwarded to evidence that this had been actioned.

4. The toilet brush has now been placed within the secured storage cupboard and a photograph was issued to evidence this.

5. Ceiling tiles have been cleaned and added to cleaning schedule for regular inspection and cleaning.

A photograph was submitted indicating the cleaner tiles.

6. The changing mat has been discarded.

7. The dirty door has been cleaned and a photograph of the clean door was submitted.

8. The mop has been installed in the newly secured storage cupboard out of reach of the children and a photograph was submitted to evidence this action.

Summary Comment

Documentation in the form of photographs, cleaning schedules and up-dated policies was submitted to the early years office; the information was reviewed and found to adequately meet the Requirements.

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)
- In conversation with both staff members, it was established that they were aware of the importance of checking in and out the children. It was reported that a staff member was designated to greet the children in the morning and hand over via the secured lobby at collection time.
 - Sign in and out records were examined and found to correspond with the attendance register.
 - Whilst reviewing the children's individual registration forms it was found that the authorisation for collection elements had been accurately completed.
 - On the inspector's arrival it was requested that a sign in and out register was to be completed

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 the manager had completed first aid responder training (FAR) with expiry date of November 2023
- (2)(a) and (b)
- A wall mounted first aid cabinet was installed in the kitchen out of reach of the children but accessible to the staff members.
- The first aid box was found to be stocked with the recommended requisites.

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 manager made available a template which detailed fire drills that had been completed in the service. The most recent recorded fire drill had been carried out on the 20 March 2023. It recorded that there were 2 staff members present and 3 children present.
- (b)
Records informed that the number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises had been serviced and checked in April 2023.
- (4)
Fire Evacuation plans were displayed.

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

- It was observed that the 8 children present at the time of the inspection were closely supervised during indoor play. Staff discreetly facilitated toileting and hand washing.
- They sat with the children during their meal.
- The layout of the playroom allowed for constant sight and sound supervision by the staff members.
- A staff member was observed counting the children as they lined up for outdoor play and when they returned to the playroom.
- The outdoor play area was secured with fencing so to prohibit any child leaving the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The manager provider made available an up-to-date insurance certificate, which detailed that up to 22 children were adequately insured at any one time to attend on a sessional basis.
The expiry date was March 2024

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a)
The service was situated in a purpose-built premises which was observed to be of sound and stable structure. It was in a good state of repair with no visual cracks or building defects. There was no evidence of pest infestations.
- (b)
The service was suitably secured. The playground was fenced and gates were adequately secured.
- (c)
Lighting in the service consisted mainly of strip lights which were functioning.
- (e)
There were sufficient number of child sized toilets and wash hand basins. They were clean and in a good state of repair.
The service had recently extended and installed an adult/wheelchair access toilet space.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
1. Decoration of the new toilet facility had not been completed, wooden architraving was not painted and the walls required painting.
 2. A wall in the playroom needed painting.
 3. The new storage cupboard doors had not been painted.
 4. The Noah's ark in the playground was chipped and splintered in places requiring varnishing.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action and Documentation Submitted

- (d)
1. to 4.
- The registered provider stated that the redecoration will not be able to take place until the summer holidays as it is dependent on fundraising and availability of their maintenance worker.

Summary Comment

The above non-compliances remain outstanding and will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

(1) The service provided spacious clear floor space within the operating care rooms so that the children could enjoy free play, explore their environment, participate in the activities and socialise in a supervised manner.