

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC249		
Name of Service:	Lotamore FRC Pre-School		
Address of Service:	20 Lotamore Park, Mayfield, Cork, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	T23 NPW2		
Name of Registered Provider:	Abina Brennan		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	16/05/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	12	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

Lotamore FRC Pre-School is a registered community based early years service in operation since 1997. This service provides education and care to children aged from 2 to 6 years and for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The current opening hours are from 9am to 12pm each day Monday to Friday.

The premise is located in a suburban estate in Mayfield, Cork. The service is located on the ground floor of a Family Resource Centre. The service consists of one playroom, one adult toilet facility, two children's toilets and a nappy changing facility. The service has a partially covered outdoor play area to the rear and side of the premise.

Staffing

There are four adults and one of the adults is a community employment worker in the service. Three of the four adults working directly with the children all hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The registered provider is not serviced based.

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 of the coordinator of the family resource centre, 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 service had a named person in charge and a deputy that could deputise as required.

(b) The named person in charge and the deputy were present when the inspectors arrived at the premises and remained on duty until the end of the inspection.

(2)

The person in charge confirmed that four adults had begun working at the service since the previous inspection undertaken on 14/06/21, therefore recruitment records in relation to these adults were reviewed.

(a) There were six references and required validations available on file from past employers in respect of the adults.

(b) There were two references and required validations from sources other than past employers in respect of the adults.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of each of the four adults.

(d) Not applicable as none of the two adults had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of six months or more while over the age of 18 years.

Three of the four adults that worked directly with the children held a major award from Quality and Qualifications QQI Level 5 to a Level 6 in Early Childhood Care and Education. The remaining new adult associated with the service is on a community employment placement and is not required to have a childcare qualification.

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)

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(3) On the day of the inspection, there was the person in charge, deputy, and one AIM (access and inclusion model) worker with 12 children present. During the period of inspection, the minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations.

(8) (c)

Not applicable as the service was not operating single-handedly.

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)
Thirteen of the children's registration forms on file were reviewed and found to contain most of the elements of information as required by Regulation 15 (a), (c) to (g) and (i)

Non- Compliance Information

(1)
(b) The date on which some of the children commenced in the service was not recorded on the children's registration forms.
(h) Many of the children's registration forms had no immunisation details on file.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In the written response, the following was stated by the person in charge

(1)
(b) Children’s registration commencement date, where applicable, have been updated. Registration forms will be inspected to ensure accuracy when the children commence in the service.

(h) All the children’s immunisation details have been received and the children’s registration forms updated and edited to ensure immunisation details are correct. The person in charge will check that the immunisation details are included on each child’s registration record prior to commencement in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (b) The statement from the person in charge is accepted as evidence.
- (h) The statement from the person in charge is accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

(b)+(h) The documentation submitted by the person in charge relating to the non-compliances were reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.

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

- Child led play was supported by staff during the course of the inspection while spent time playing indoors and outdoors.
- 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.

- 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.
- Children had sufficient space to move about freely indoors and outdoors.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The adults were observed to be caring in their interaction with the children and observed to be interested in the children’s activities and listened and spoke to them using soft tones of voice and positive language.
- Updates and information were furnished to parents and guardians at drop off and collection times and via the services electronic system.
- A mixture of adult led play and child directed play was facilitated through planning and having a variety of play and natural materials available to the children. Lots of positive interactive communication was observed between staff and children during the inspection process.

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 and drink provided by the service 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, seedless grapes, banana and pear. Toasted bread with cheese and ham slices with the choice of milk or water to drink.
- The children were provided with appropriate cutlery and crockery at snack times.
- The perishable foods provided by the service for the children’s mid-morning snack were observed to be refrigerated.

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.
- The play materials, resources and equipment were in a satisfactory condition.
- Visibility strips had been applied to the glazed doors to prevent the children from bumping into the glass.
- Cables and flexes were suitably concealed and out of reach of the children.
- The kitchenette area was adequately cornered off to ensure that children had no access to same while the service was in operation.

Infection Control:

- The playroom was adequately ventilated with openable windows and mechanical forms of ventilation were in place in the toilet facilities.
- The children had access to sufficient toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing facilities.
- The adults had their own designated toilet.
- A supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, paper towels were available in one of the two wash hand basins for children and in the nappy and toilet facility for adults
- A supply of cleaning agents and equipment was available in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control

1. There was no supply of thermostatically controlled hot water in one of the two wash hand basins in the children toilet facility increasing the potential risk of cross infection.
2. The three refuse bins in the children's and adult toilet /nappy changing facilities were not lidded pedal operated bins for the disposal of used paper towels increasing the potential risk of cross infection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Infection Control

In the written response, the following was stated by the person in charge

1. There is now thermostatically controlled hot water in both wash hand basins in the children's toilet facilities. The tap has been inspected by plumber and fault repaired. Staff will check daily that there is thermostatically controlled hot water available at the wash hand basins in the children's toilet facilities at all times while the service is in operation.
2. Three lidded pedal operated bins have been purchased and installed in the children's and adult toilet and nappy changing facilities. Staff will check that the pedal operated lidded bins are clean and in a proper state of repair on a regular basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographic evidence of the invoice from the Plumber was submitted and deemed satisfactory.
2. Photographic evidence of the new lidded pedal operated bins was submitted and deemed satisfactory.

Summary Comment

- The documentation submitted by the person in charge relating to the non-compliances were reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.

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 had in date First Aid Responder certificate (FAR)

(2)

(a) The first aid box was safely stored out of children's reach in the room.

(b) The fully equipped first aid box was available at all times to 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 26/04/23
 - (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 28/03/2023 and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced on the 17/06/2022.
- (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 services' insurance certificate was available on the premises and demonstrated that the service was adequately insured. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of children covered which was 22, the start date, which was 28 March 2023, the end date, which was 27 March 2024 and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding, contents, public liability and fire and theft cover.