

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015CC322

Name of Service: Páistí @ No 3

Address of Service: 3 Churchfield Avenue, Churchfield, Cork, Co. Cork

Eircode: T23 EF60

Name of Registered Provider: Catherine O'Brien

Service type: Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 17/01/2024

No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	8
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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 N/A

Description of service

Páistí @ No 3 is a registered community based early years' service in operation since 2009. This service provides education and care to children from 1 to 6 years offering a choice of sessional and part-time day-care service and for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The current opening hours are from 08:40 to 12:20 hours and from 13:00 to 16:40 hours each day Monday to Friday.

Páistí@No3 operates from a converted terraced one storey council house that has been refurbished to provide an early years' service. The service is located in an urban area in the north side of Cork city. There are two playrooms in operation: A ground floor Toddler Room catering for children from 12 months to 3 years with a separate designated sleep room beside the Toddler Room. The Pre-school Room is located on the first floor. This playroom caters for children from 3 to 6 years. There is an enclosed outdoor play area to the front and rear side of the pre-school premises.

Staffing

There was a total of eleven adults associated with the service. There are nine childcare staff and the person in charge. The registered provider is not serviced based. On the day of the inspection there were 5 adults present in the morning and in the afternoon. The staff working directly with the children all hold a major award 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/ 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 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 and named deputies that could deputise as required.

(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 person in charge confirmed that there were ten adults in total working in the service. Four of the adults were new and this included a community employment worker that had commenced in the service since the previous inspection undertaken on 08/09/22. Recruitment records in relation to all adults were reviewed.

(a) There were fourteen references on file from past employers in respect of the eleven adults.

(b) There were eight references on file from a source other than a previous employer.

(c) A completed Garda vetting disclosure was received for each of the eleven adults.

(d) Three police clearance records were present for the adults that had worked outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

The ten staff that worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The registered provider is not working directly with the children and therefore a childcare qualification is not required.

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

(2) On the day of the inspection there were four adults working across the two care rooms plus the person in charge with eleven children present in total in the morning service. There were four adults working across the two care rooms with eight children present in total in the afternoon service.

Toddler room- there were six children in attendance in the morning and five children in the afternoon. In the morning session, one child was aged between 1 and 2 years, four children were aged between 2 and 3 years and one child was aged over 3 years. In the afternoon part time service, there were 5 children aged between 2 and 3 years with 2 adults in attendance.

Pre-school room - there were five children in the morning and three children in the afternoon aged over three years with 2 adults in attendance in the morning and afternoon session.

During the period of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations and an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children in each care room.

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;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(a) Curriculum vitae and identification records were maintained on all eleven-childcare staff in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(k) A hard copy accident and incident record book is maintained at the service. A duplicate copy of the signed accident /incident record is given to parent/guardian. A sample review of accidents and incident records in the service demonstrated that the following details were not recorded:

1. Three of the accident and incident records reviewed, had not been signed by the parent/guardians.
2. On other, accident and incident records reviewed, there was no date recorded of when parents signed the accident and incident records.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(1)(k) In the written response received (Corrective and Preventative Record (CAPA), the following was stated by the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. and 2.

All the accident and incidents records identified at time of inspection that were not signed and dated by parent/guardian have now been signed by the respective parent or guardian and dated. A staff meeting was held after the inspection to discuss the importance, of staff, recording all the detail required on each accident and incident record including the signature, of parent or guardian, staff that witnessed the accident or incident and the person in charge at time of incident and dated.

Supporting documentation submitted

- A copy of the service accident and incident policy was forwarded to the early years department and deemed satisfactory.

Summary Comment

- Correspondence received was deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation (16) (1)(k) 1. + 2. of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016

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 adults demonstrated a good knowledge of each child's individual needs. It was observed that the children were praised, encouraged and supported in their creative activities.
- Children's nappy changing and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. 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 nappy changing and toileting.
- The adults interacted with the children at their level as they explored their environment, acknowledging their interest in various materials and communicating in a patient, encouraging manner.
- Children had sufficient space to move about freely indoors and outdoors.
- Children were observed playing outdoors at time of inspection.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- It was observed that the adults spoke kindly and offered encouragement and assisted each child as required.
- The children sat at low tables and had their meals and snacks in an unhurried environment that promoted social interaction with peers and staff. Children were supported by the adults at mealtime.

The staff members were observed speaking with the children during snack time and using it as an opportunity to enhance social interaction with the children which promoted a relaxed atmosphere.

- 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.
- Parents and guardians were spoken to informally on a daily basis and formal meetings were arranged as required.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The two-care rooms in operation were observed to be clean and pleasant and had adequate space for the children to play.
- The shelving was set low to display play materials which were mostly plastic and wooden in nature and easily washable. The low shelving facilitated easy access to the materials by the children.
- Since the last inspection, the outdoor play area to the front of the service building had been revamped with a new astro turf surface. As observed on day of inspection, the new outdoor play surface, allowed the children in attendance that were observed to be suitably dressed, to avail of outdoor play, regardless of the weather.

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 on alternate weeks provided the children with either buttered toast and water or a cereal and water at around 9am. The food and drinks for the second food snack were provided by the parents or guardians. It was observed that the food the parents/guardians provided, consisted of a sandwich, some fruit and yogurts and a drink. The mid-morning food snacks provided by the parents were observed to be healthy, nutritious and portion size was age appropriate. Perishable foods provided for the children were stored in the refrigerator located in both rooms.

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.
- Fire exit routes were not obstructed.
- The play materials, resources and equipment were all in good working condition.

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 a sufficient number of nappy changing units and toilets and wash hand basins.
- A supply of liquid soap, paper towels and thermostatically controlled hot water and pedal operated lidded bins were available in the service.

Safe Sleep:

- The children's rest needs were facilitated in one small, designated sleep room for the children aged less than two years. There were two standard cots with supported well-fitting safety mattresses for children under two that required a sleep.
- For the older pre-school child's rest needs, there were a number of stacking beds available with designated suitable bed linen for any child over 2 years who wanted a sleep while attending the service. No child required to use the sleep room on day of inspection.
- Each playroom had a rest/ relaxation area for any child that wanted to rest or opt out of activities while attending the service. The rest areas consisted of child size leatherette couches and soft floor mats.

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) Four staff held certified, up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificates.

(2)

(a) There were two sufficiently stocked first aid boxes 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 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 drills took place on the 14th and 20th December 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 in September 2023. The emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced in April 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 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 children were supervised at all times when playing indoors and outdoors on day of inspection. The children from both rooms were observed playing in the outdoor play located to the front of the service. (The outdoor play area to the rear of the building was not used on day of inspection as the outdoor play area surface was due to be power washed the following day.) Included in the supervision of children going to and from the outdoor play area, a written roll call was taken before children left the preschool room located on the first floor, again when they are in the outdoor play area and when the children return from the outdoor play area.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

- The insurance certificate was available on the premises and demonstrated that the service was adequately insured for a part time service. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of children covered which was 28. (A maximum of nineteen children in the morning and afternoon) the start date, which was 14 December 2023, the end date, which was 13 December 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.