

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC327
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Playdays Pre-School
-------------------------	---------------------

Address of Service:	Bweeng Community Centre, Bweeng, Co Cork
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	P51 KD5C
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Anne Forde
-------------------------------------	------------

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

Date of Inspection:	04/03/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM	No.
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 13 Market Square Mallow Co Cork P51 DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher
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

Playdays Pre-School has been in operation since 2010. It is a privately owned early years service, which is registered to accommodate children aged 2 to 6 years. However, it currently caters for children aged 2 years 6 months to 5 years 6 months. This includes children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, which runs over 38 weeks of the year. Registered operational hours are from 9:15 to 12:45, Monday to Friday. The service is situated in the rural village of Bweeng in north Cork and is provided from a room within the local community hall, with adjacent children's and staff sanitary facilities available. The children have access to a public playground, which is located beside the community hall.

Staffing

At present, the service employs three adults, each of whom work directly with the children. This includes the registered provider and one adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). All three adults were in attendance on the day of inspection.

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 and safety. 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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection as one radiator in the care room was recorded to have a surface temperature of 59.3°C and this posed a risk to the children. It is acknowledged that the registered provider turned down the thermostat settings on the radiator on the day of inspection and informed the inspector that the setting would remain below 40°C in the future. The registered provider is awaiting a carpenter to come to fit covers over the radiator. This was adequate to mitigate the risk.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, registered provider, person in charge and staff 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 registered provider was the designated person in charge and a named deputy was available to deputise as required.
 - (b) Both the registered provider and the deputy were on duty when the inspector arrived at the service.
- (2) The staff files in relation to the three adults who were employed in the service were the subject of the inspection.
- (a) Of the six required references, three were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.
 - (b) Of the six required references, three were from another source other than a previous employer with records of validation on file.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained and were on file for each of the three adults The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was on file for one staff member who resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months
- (4) Records demonstrated that three of the adults had achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 6 to level 8 as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies were reviewed and were found to meet the necessary requirements:

- Policy on outing.
- Policy on administration of medication.

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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance.

(3) The adult/ child ratio was observed to be above the minimum requirement for the duration of the inspection. There were 3 adults directly caring for the 17 children that were in attendance.

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

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff.

Basic needs:

- During snack time, pancakes were prepared at the service for the children and served with fruit as the day fell on pancake Tuesday. The registered provider informed the inspector that parents provide snacks all other days. A refrigerator was available for the storage of perishable foods.
- Drinking water was available to the children throughout the morning in the care room.
- Children were observed accessing the toilet area under the supervision of the staff who were available to assist if needed.
- Children that wished to rest while they attended the service could avail of a soft seated area in the room.
- Outdoor play was promoted and there was a large outdoor playground and walk area which the service used on the day of inspection.
- The children had ample space to move freely within their care room environment and adjoining hall and actively engage in their chosen tasks.

Supporting relationships:

- All children were observed to be actively encouraged by staff to participate in activities. Materials and resources were available which accommodated each child's individual needs such as puzzles, bricks, toy kitchen and books.
- Photos were displayed on the walls in the care room which promoted a sense of family for the children.
- The adults in the care room were noted to interact with the children in a caring manner throughout the inspection.
- A strong ethos of friendship was evident in the children's play, where they interacted and laughed heartily together throughout the inspection.

- Staff engaged with the children in both group and individual activities by getting down to their level and maintaining eye contact while discussing topics with the children and helping them with their chosen tasks.
- The children were encouraged to tidy up after completing tasks, which promoted a sense of responsibility.
- The staff promoted positive behaviour among the children encouraging them to take turns and resolve minor conflicts.
- Staff communicated with parents and guardians via a message application or on individual messages, by email or at pick up and drop off.

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:

- The external door of the hallway entrance was closed after the children arrived. This helped to prevent unauthorised access.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The appropriate temperature was recorded in the care room of 19°C.
- The appropriate temperature range of the water in both the children's sanitary area and the care room were recorded between 34.8°C and 39.6°C.
- No electrical cables were accessible to the children.
- The toys in the care room were maintained in good condition.

Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities in the care room were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before meals and after outdoor play.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste in the sanitary area and care room.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the round on hooks.

Administration of medication:

- Medication was not observed to be administered on the day of inspection.

- Temperature reducing medicine was stored in the original box out of reach of the children. The medicine inspected was in date. Consent for the administration of this medicine was gained in writing from parents, and this was in line with the medication administration policy.

Fire safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- The fire extinguishers observed in the service were wall mounted.

Outing:

- The deputy informed the inspector that the children went on outings daily to public playground or public walkway. Staff were observed by the inspector to go to the playground to assess this area prior to the children and the children were escorted safely to this area with the assistance of three staff. This was carried out as per the outings policy.

Non-Compliance Information

General safety:

1. One radiator in the care room was recorded to have a temperature of 59.3°C and this posed a risk to the children. It is acknowledged that the registered provider turned down the thermostat settings on the radiator on the day of inspection and informed the inspector that the setting would remain below 40°C in the future.

Infection control:

2. Warm running water was unavailable at the wash hand basin in the adult's sanitary facilities. A temperature of 8.3°C was recorded. Cold water may impede effective handwashing.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General safety:

1. The thermostat has been turned down to reduce the temperature and a radiator cover is to be applied in the future.

Infection control:

2. The staff are now using an alternative toilet with a boiler fitted to provide warm water for washing hands. The staff will continue to use this toilet in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

General safety:

1. Photographic evidence was received in the office of the inspectorate.

Infection control:

2. Photographic evidence was received in the office of the inspectorate

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The attendance book was available in which the inspector observed that all of the children present on the day had their check in and out time recorded.

(3)

(b) Visitor's records were kept in writing of any person entering the premises and the inspector was asked to sign in and out of the premises.

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) Evidence was available to demonstrate that one of the adults on duty held a current first aid responder (FAR) certification.

(2)

(a) A well-stocked first aid bag was available and was stored out of reach of the children.

(b) The first aid supplies were accessible at all times should they be required.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The insurance certificate indicated that sufficient cover was in place for the provision of a sessional service and the policy was valid until the 27 March 2025.