

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC340			
Name of Service:	Ready Steady Play			
Address of Service:	Mahon Point Shopping Centre, Ground Floor, Mahon Point, Cork, Co. Cork			
Eircode:	T12 V2CD			
Name of Registered Provider:	Carol Coffey			
Service type:	Drop-In			
Date of Inspection:	02/04/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	6	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:	V. McCarthy
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

Ready steady Play is a Drop-In service situated on the ground floor at Mahon Point Shopping Centre, Cork. The drop-In service caters for early years children aged between 1 and 6 years and also provides a service for school age children. The service's registered opening hours are between 10am and 6pm.

Staffing

There are 5 adults attached to the service of which 4 work directly with the children. The registered provider is not service based. On the day of the inspection there were 3 adults on the premises.

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*
- (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.*

(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 named deputy that could deputise as required.
- (b) The deputy was on duty when the inspector arrived at the premises and the person in charge arrived on the premises at 11.30am and remained on duty for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) The management structure detailing who was the person in charge was displayed on a wall notice for review by the inspector.
- (2)
- (a) There were 4 references and required validations available on file from past employers in respect of the 5 adults attached to the service.
- (b) There were 6 references and required validations from sources other than past employers.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file for review in respect of each of the 5 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years in respect of these adults.
- (d) Police vetting was available in respect of 2 of the adults that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months.
- (4)
- A copy of a childcare qualification as listed on the National Qualifications Framework was available on file in respect of 4 adults that worked directly with the children. The registered provider was not service based and did not work directly with children.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (c) The management structure detailing the lines of accountability as to who was the deputy in the absence of the person in charge was not available on file or on display for the parents and guardians of children to refer to.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(c) The management structure detailing the lines of accountability as to who is the deputy and person in charge is now available.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(c) The management structure detailing the lines of accountability will always be displayed on the lobby notice board for the parents/guardians of children to refer to. A photograph of the services' management structure was submitted to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The documentation and photograph submitted by the registered provider were reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.

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.

(6) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 3 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number 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.

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

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

- (1) The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children.
- (6) On the day of the inspection there were 2 adults working directly with 6 early years children. The person in charge was office based and was available to work with the children as required when some adults took their breaks.
- (8)(a) There were 3 adults on the premises from 11.30am onwards.

The roster demonstrated that 2 qualified adults were rostered to be on the premises at 10am when the service opened and that there would be 2 qualified adults on the premises at 5pm when the service closed.

Non-Compliance Information

(8)(a) There was only 1 adult on the premises when the inspector arrived on site at 10.15am. The requirement was not met as the regulations require that 2 adults are on the premises at all times. It was acknowledged that both the deputy and person in charge separately informed the inspector that a second adult had been rostered to be on duty at 10am but phoned in on sick leave.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(8)(a) On the day of the inspection, 2 additional adults had arrived at the premises by 11.30am to work with the children. There were then 3 adults are on the premises.

Supporting documentation submitted

(8)(a) The registered provider stated in her written response to the inspectorate dated 25 April 2024 that all staff have been informed that in future they must contact her prior to 8am if they are on sick leave so that adequate cover can be organised timely and that 2 adults will always be on the premises.

Summary Comment

The documentation submitted by the registered provider was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.

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:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1)(i)

The person in charge maintained a detailed weekly staff roster record that documented who was on duty and what time each adult started, finished and had their breaks. The inspector reviewed the staff rosters for the week of 01 April 2024, and it was detailed on these records that 2 adults had been rostered to be on duty at 10am on 02 April 2024. It was acknowledged that a second adult had been rostered to be on duty at 10am but phoned in on sick leave. Historic records for the month of March 2024 were also assessed and were complete detailing that 2 to 3 adults were rostered to be on duty each day between 10am to 5pm Mondays to Saturday and 12midday to 5pm on Sundays.

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

(1)(a)**PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:**

- The care room which was located on the ground floor of the shopping centre was noted to be comfortable, spacious and warm for children as they played contently. The brightly painted care room was kept in clean and well-maintained condition.

- The play materials and play equipment were all set up in interesting ways that were easily visible and accessible to the children. The child sized play equipment included a shop stall, a play hairdresser unit, a child sized bank unit, a play area designed as an airport, a playhouse and home area that were all kept well stocked with play utensils. There were low tables laid out with toys such a farm animals, dinosaurs, and push toys. There were also a variety of superhero capes that children could choose to dress up from.
- There were areas provided with soft matting so that children could rest or go to for quiet time as they chose. There was a suitable cot and linen available for any child aged less than 2 years that required a sleep.
- The toilet areas were positioned directly off the care room and were easy to access by the children. There were 3 toilet cubicles , 3 wash hand basins and 1 nappy changing unit available for children’s use. There was 1 toilet and wash hand basin provided for adult use.

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 half door leading into the drop-in service was secured by both a bolt and key lock that prevented unauthorised access by an adult or the leaving of an unsupervised child.
- The door leading to the toilet area was fitted with an alarm that alerted the adults if a child pushed opened the door.
- The ceiling lights throughout the room were each fitted with a protective cover.
- The floor was provided with a nonslip industrial type of floor covering that was maintained in good condition.
- The water temperature at the wash hand basin taps was thermostatically controlled to less than 43°C. During the inspection the water temperature was recorded at 26.3°C.
- The cleaning agents were kept stored in the secured storeroom out of children’s reach.
- The structural columns in the care room were each fitted with soft padding so that a child would not sustain an injury should they bump into one.

- The first aid box was stored in the reception area and was not accessible to the children.
- The fire exit door in the care room was maintained free from obstruction and it was noted that the firefighting equipment was stored on wall brackets or in a wall mounted boxed unit.

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

- (2)
- (a) There was a fully equipped first aid box available at the premises and it was stored in the reception area out of children's reach.
- (b) The first aid box was always available on the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- There was no adult with training in First Aid Response (FAR) attached to the service which did not meet the requirements. It was acknowledged that the service provided evidence that 3 adults had training in paediatric first aid and that 1 of these adults was always on the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) A staff member has been enrolled for training in First Aid Response (FAR) and in future it will be checked that the certificates are maintained in date.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) A photograph of correspondence from the FAR trainer stating that an adult has been enrolled to attend training between 4th and 25 June 2024 was submitted.

Summary Comment

The documentation and photograph submitted by the registered provider was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.

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) There were records of monthly fire drills carried out at the service available on file. A fire drill was last carried out by the service on 14 March 2024.
 - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced on 16 September 2023 and the wired smoke alarm was last serviced on 20 June 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 on the wall beside the reception counter.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The insurance certificate demonstrated that the service was adequately insured. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of children covered at any one time which was 12, the start date, which was 28 March 2024, the end date, which was 27 March 2025, the category of service covered which was Drop-In service at Mahon Point shopping Centre and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding public liability and fire and theft cover.