

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC356		
Name of Service:	Schull Community Pre-School		
Address of Service:	Old Boy's School, Schull, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P81 KN80		
Name of Registered Provider:	Siobhan Jeffery		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	13/12/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Social Work Dept, 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	N/A		

Description of service

Schull Community Pre-school a is registered to provide an early year setting for children aged from 2 to 6 years on a sessional basis.

It operates from 9:00am to 12:30pm. daily.

The service is situated within a period 2 classroom national school located in the grounds of the local church in the centre of Schull a rural coastal village in west Cork.

It operates from a single storey property, offering 2 interlinked playrooms, kitchen, toilets accommodation and a secured playground.

There is ample car parking available for the safe arrival and departure of the children with their families.

Staffing

The registered provider has employed 3 child care professionals to work directly with the children.

Each adult has certification of Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training, ranging from Level 5 to Level 8.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Childcare 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, the deputy, 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.*

(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 had employed a person in charge to operate the service and work directly with the children. A deputy had been appointed to deputise as required.

(b)

Both the person in charge and the deputy were present at the time of the inspection and freely available to facilitate the inspection process. Review of the staff roster indicated that 2 adults were always on the premises during service operation.

(2)(a) & (b)

There was a total of 3 adults attached to the service and each of their files were examined. The following information was obtained -

There were 4 written past employer references available and 2 written references from sources that the registered provider considered to be reputable.

Each written reference had the appropriate record of validation attached.

(c)

There were 3 up to date Garda vetting disclosures on file.

(d)

Police vetting was not required for the staff members as they had not lived outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for a period of 6 consecutive months or longer.

(4)

Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training were on file ranging from Level 5 to Level 8

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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

(3)

There were 18 children aged from 3 to 4 years attending on a sessional basis with 3 adults in attendance. The adult child ratios were correct.

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 enrolment forms were reviewed to ensure they contained the required elements of Regulation 15(a) to (i). Each of the 19 forms were found to be compliant.

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:

- (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

The following records were reviewed in relation to the service –

- (1)
- (h) A register to record the children’s attendance maintained on a daily basis;
 - (i) Staff rosters were made available;
 - (j) The service had a logbook developed by an agency associated with early years settings for the correct recoding of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent. There were no entries.
 - (k) A logbook was made available for the recording of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service. The most recent entry was logged on 12 September and involved a minor incident. Parental signature evidenced that the information had been relayed.

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's parents provided healthy lunches and drinks according to the service healthy eating policy. The lunch meal was eaten at timely manner mid-session at 11:30am when the children were eager to sit, relax and eat with their friends. The tables were set with the children's crafted place mats, cutlery and plates in the small playroom. It was a sociable time with the staff members sitting with the children the children and assisted with the opening of yogurt cartons or peeling fruit as required.
- The children were encouraged to use the toilet facilities independently or were gently reminded at intervals throughout the session. Children that required supervision were prompted to flush toilets, wash hands and discarded of paper towels.
- The children's personal belongings such as coats boots and bags were stored at child height to allow for independent dressing and organising crafts and paintings for home time. Children were assisted with dressing warmly for the outdoor play area and praised for completing dressing. Aprons were available for the children to wear during messy play or art activities.
- The children had access to a rest corner in the small playroom. It was furnished with a blue couch scatter cushions and matting. A wide range of picture books were displayed nearby to provide the children with quiet reading time whilst they rested and relaxed.
- The service provided ample clear floor space for the children to enjoy free play, socialisation and participate in gross motor skill activities.

Physical and Material Environment –

Schull Community Pre-School occupied a period 2 classroom national school which had been suitably adapted to provide an early years' service. It was clean, brightly decorated and well maintained. It had high openable windows that provided natural light and ventilation.

- The hall leading to the playroom displayed pertinent information for the parents, sign in sign out and health promotion posters. It was furnished with a drawer unit which allowed each child storage for their personal items.
- The rooms were laid out thematically with activities to invite curiosity and exploration. The large playroom accommodated a large well equipped home corner, dress up and activities to entice imagination.
- There was a construction corner cars and trucks.
- There were many open display mobile display units which offered tabletop activities so that children could master fine motor skill practice.
- There were ample child sized tables and chairs which were clean and well maintained.

- The smaller room was laid out to offer arts and crafts and rest space.
- Christmas arts and crafts adorned the walls of the service along with pictures of the local village and the children’s handprints and birthday plates.
- The children had direct access to a compact secured playground which was equipped with critical fall matting for the children’s safety and comfort. Murals displayed woodland scenes and chalk boards had been fence mounted to offer the children chalking experiences. There were balls, hoops, ride on toys such as cars and trucks. There was a slide and a mud kitchen.

Supporting Relations Around the Children

- The staff members demonstrated kindness, patience and engaged with each child. This was observed during the organisation and facilitation of activities and caring practices, such as supervising the children’s toileting, preparing for lunch and on-to-one engagement.
- Child led activities were promoted with gentle adherence to structured activities such as circle time when a book was chosen from the ‘lucky book box’ and ‘the queen that came to tea’ was enjoyed.
- The children were observed to be familiar with their environment, relaxed and cheerful.
- The adults worked in unison; supervising toileting and assisting the children to prepare for lunches. Good eye contact was maintained, and only low tones used during communicating with the children.
- Staff members had availed of training to enhance childcare practices and skills such as, outdoor play therapy, inclusion and diversity, English as a first language and first aid training.
- The service had participated in initiatives such as healthy Ireland.
- The service was closely integrated with the local community and had invited a local farmer in to talk to the children; likewise, parents with unique skills and talents were invited to the service to share with the children for example, a doctor, nurse, hairdresser, and a guard. Families from different cultures were invited to share aspects of their culture such as food types, books, and customs.
- Communication with parents and guardians was conducted both via digital platforms and in hard copy.

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

- Schull community Pre-School operated a healthy eating policy, and this was adhered to as observed by the healthy, nutritious and varied lunches meals eaten at lunch time.
- All food and drink items were supplied by the parents and guardians.
- Lunches were seen to be nutritious, varied, and sufficient for example, fruits, crackers, wraps, meat and cheese sandwiches, yogurts and dips and cheese biscuits.
- A drink station in the smaller playroom allowed the children to access their drinks when they felt thirsty.
- The service made available an ample supply of cutlery and plates available to the children.
- A large fridge was situated in the playroom to store the perishable items of the children’s lunches.

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 main door to the school was suitably secured so as to prevent unauthorized access and stop a child from leaving the premises unsupervised.
- Internal doors to the staff, kitchen and storage room were also suitably secured to prevent the children accessing the rooms unsupervised.
- The emergency exits were unobstructed.
- The staff members stored all their personal items in the kitchen out of reach of the children.
- Cables and flexes were not accessible to the children.
- Openable windows were out of reach of the children.
- Cleaning products were out of reach of the children.
- Prior to outdoor play the area a staff member checked the area and wiped down the damp equipment.

Infection Control:

- Schull Pre-School was clean; with well-maintained cleaning schedules to evidence that regular cleaning duties was carried out.
- Sanitising units were placed throughout the service for adult use and out of reach of the children.

- The children and adults were observed practising regular and thorough hand washing such as prior to lunch and after toileting and outdoor play.
- There were 3 child sized toilets and 3 wash hand basins situated in the lobby. They were clean and well maintained with toilet tissue, clean step ups and toilet seats available for the children's comfort.
- Hand wash posters promoted the correct hand wash routine.
- Liquid soap and paper towels were available.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water registered within the normal range of 41 degrees Celsius.
- An additional sink unit was installed in the large playroom to provide additional hand wash facilities.
- The staff members had their own designated toilet and wash hand basin which were clean and well maintained.
- Tissues were available for nose hygiene.
- Lidded and non-contact pedal bins were in operation.

Administration of Medication:

- It was reported that the staff members were familiar with the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a child requiring medications.
- There were currently no children attending the service that required medications.

Fire Safety:

- The fire door was unobstructed.
- Fire cylinders were tethered to the walls.
- In conversation with the registered provider, it was stated that a designated staff member had completed fire training, and that each staff member was familiar with the procedures required to be followed in the event of a fire.

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)

The person in charge had first aid responder (FAR) certification on file which had an expiry date of August 2024.

The additional 2 staff members had first aid training certification with a paediatric component with expiry dates of October 2024 and November 2025.

(2)(a) & (b)

The first box was stored on a high shelf in the playroom, out of the children's reach but accessible to the staff. The first aid box was suitably equipped with the required medical supplies.

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 premise.
- (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

- (a) The service displayed a template in the playroom which indicated that monthly fire drills were carried out. The most recent fire drill took place on the 24 November 2023; there were 13 children present at the time and 3 staff members to supervise the event.
- (b) A record was in place which detailed the number, type, and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms. The most recent service had been conducted in October 2023.
- (4)
A fire evacuation plan was displayed in the lobby and in the playroom which provided a visual guide of the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a fire.
The fire assembly point was clearly identified.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service displayed an up-to-date insurance certificate which stated that up to 22 children were adequately insured to attend on a sessional basis. The expiry date was March 2024.