

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC447				
Name of Service:	Tracton Community Playgroup Ltd				
Address of Service:	Tracton G. A. A. Hall and Pre-fab, Minane Bridge, Co. Cork				
Eircode:	P17 KX47				
Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Saunders				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	17/04/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>34</td> <td>PM</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </table>	AM	34	PM	n/a
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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:	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	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Tracton Community Playgroup Ltd operates as a sessional service that also caters for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE). The service caters for children aged between two and six years. The opening hours for the service are 09.00 to 12.00 hours, 09.15 to 12.15 hours and 12.30 to 15.30 hours daily. The service operates from two rooms that were purposely adapted as a childcare facility. One care room named the Hall room is situated in the Tracton Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) Hall and the second care room named the Prefab room is situated in a prefabricated building positioned to the rear of the hall. There is a designated outdoor play area situated to the rear and side of the prefabricated building and a secured ball alley area situated to the side of the GAA Hall building.

Staffing

There were seven adults working directly with the children during the inspection. The registered provider was not service 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 person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Compliance Information

(1) The service was operating as per its registration status. The certificate of registration regarding the service was displayed on the notice board in the Hall room and detailed that the service could cater for up to 44 children at any one time that were aged between two and six years of age. The registration period on the certificate was 01 January 2023 to 01 January 2026. On the day of inspection there were 34 children on the premises all aged over three years of age. The attendance records demonstrated that there were never more than 44 children on the premises at any one time.

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 person in charge was on duty when the inspector arrived at the premises and remained on duty for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

The person in charge confirmed that one adult had begun working at the service since the previous inspection undertaken on 27 May 2021, therefore recruitment records in relation to this adult were reviewed.

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

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

(d) Police vetting was available as the adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than six consecutive months.

(4)

A copy of a childcare qualification as listed on the National Qualifications Framework was available on file.

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)
The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children.
- (3)
On the day of the inspection there were four adults working with 20 children in the Hall room and three adults working with 14 children in the Prefab room. The ratio of adults to children exceeded the 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

(1)(a)

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The two care rooms in use were warm, comfortable and furnished with child sized tables, chairs, low shelving and a variety of play equipment that met the needs of the children.
- The person in charge informed the inspector that all play materials, play equipment and arts and crafts materials were clearly laid out each morning on low shelving or in containers so that they were easily visible and accessed by the children. They were then cleaned at the end of each day and stored away until the following morning where they were all laid out again.
- Varied interest areas were set up in each of the two care rooms such as nature tables, sensory areas, rest areas, home areas with dolls and figurines, construction play area, blackboards, arts and crafts areas, tabletop activities, train set on low table, library racks and play dough. The adults supported the children to participate in the activities that they the children were interested in and provided them with opportunities to be creative and learn with their peers.
- The walls of the two care rooms were beautifully decorated with craftwork and paintings carried out by the children of wag tails and other birds that were native to the locality and that had been of interest to the children.
- There was a developed rest area and sensory area provided in each of the two care rooms. The areas were decorated with canopies, soft mats, cushions and child sized armchairs and were noted to be calm, restful areas that were used by children when they wanted some quiet time or a little rest.
- The secured ball alley area and the outdoor play environment situated to the rear of the Prefab room were set up to support the children's free play, imagination, movement and large group activities.

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

Infection Control:

- Regular handwashing by the children was carried out on arrival at the premises, before eating, after toileting, messy play and outdoor play.
- All wash hand basins were provided with thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper towels that were stored in wall mounted dispensers. The water temperature was recorded at 33°C during the inspection.
- Crockery was available to the children during their mid-morning snack break to prevent cross contamination.
- A fridge was available in both the Prefab room and in the kitchen that was adjacent to the Hall room for the storage and safe management of the children's perishable food.
- The children's bags, coats and personal belongings were stored on wall hooks or in shelving units provided at the entrance to the Hall room and the Prefab room respectively.
- Paper tissues and hand mirrors were available on a low table in each of the two care rooms to facilitate the children in attending to their own respiratory hygiene.
- Pedal operated bins were available throughout the premises for the safe disposal of used tissues and paper towels.
- A detailed cleaning programme was in place and daily and weekly records were available for review by the inspector. The inspector was informed that the adults practiced a clean as you go policy and carried out a deep clean at the end of each day. The adults had to set up the Hall room daily for the children as it was used by other groups when not in operation as a childcare facility. It was noted during the inspection that the premises, equipment and play materials were kept in very clean condition.

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 service provided evidence that five adults had training in first aid response (FAR) and that more than one of these adults was always on the premises.

(2)

(a) There were three equipped first aid boxes available on the premises. Two were stored on shelves in high presses in each of the care rooms and the third was stored on a high countertop in the Hall room all out of children's reach.

(b) The first aid boxes were always available on the premises.

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, the start date, which was 28 March 2023, the end date, which was 27 March 2024, the category of service covered which was sessional service and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding, contents, public liability and fire and theft cover.