

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC453		
Name of Service:	Two Rivers Kindergarten		
Address of Service:	An Sanctoir, Bawnknockane, Ballydehob, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P81 XF34		
Name of Registered Provider:	Patrice Fanning		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	30/05/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Child & Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, 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	Not Applicable		

Description of service

Two Rivers Kindergarten is a community-based service providing a Steiner philosophy early years sessional service for children aged from 2 to 6 years.

It operates from 09:30am to 13:00pm daily.

The service is situated within a cabin style structure nestled within an organic wood a few kilometres from the rural village of Ballydehob in west Cork.

Facilities include 2 inter-linked playrooms, toilet facilities and an extensive garden.

A parking space has been designated opposite the premises for use by the children's families.

Staffing

The registered provider has employed 2 adults to work directly with the children who have attained Quality Qualification's Ireland (QQI) at Level 8.

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 had duly notified the Agency in writing of changes that had occurred within the service for example, in respect of change of registered provider details and staffing details.

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 had appointed an adult to be in charge of the service. In addition, a second adult had been appointed as the deputy to deputise as required.

(b)

On inspection of staff rosters it was evidenced that the person in charge and the deputy were on the premises for the duration of service operation.

(2)(a) & (b)

There were 2 adults enlisted in the service and each adult's personal file was examined. The following information was obtained –

There were 4 written past employers references on file with records of verification attached.

(c)

There were 2 up to date Garda vetting disclosures on file.

(d)

Police vetting was available for the adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for a period longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 8 were available for both staff members.

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)

On the day of the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(3)

There were 11 children attending the service on a sessional basis aged 3 to 5 years. There were 2 adults present, and the adult child ratio was correct

Part IV – Information and Records

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; 22 in total and these were found to be compliant in respect of the above subsections of Regulation 16 (a) to (i)

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;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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

- (1)
The following records were available and compliant in relation to the service –
- (a) to (i).
- (j) The service had compiled templates for use in the event of a child requiring administration of a medication. The templates detailed the correct information that is required to be completed with space for signed parental consent. There were no entries to date.
- (k) The service had developed templates for the recording of any accidents or incidents that had occurred in the service. On examination of the templates, it was found that there were no entries.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

Information incorporating the subsections of Regulation 16 (1)a) to (g) for parents, guardians or prospective parents was available, namely the parent’s handbook.

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

- The service provided the children’s food items and drinks were supplied by the parents and guardians.
- The lunch meal was timetabled mid-session. Unfortunately, on the day of the inspection an electrical outage occurred, and the children had to leave the service early so lunch time was not observed.
- The children were observed drinking from their water bottles however and were encouraged to do so by the adults to counter thirst.
- It was reported that the children are accustomed to a lunch time routine whereby they sit together with the staff at the large circular wooden table, light a candle and sing a song prior to eating their lunches.
- The staff members supervised toilet visits and gently prompted handwashing.
- Additional hand washing was observed after the children’s bread making.
- Aprons were stored for use to protect the children’s clothes during art and messy play activities.
- Each child had their own coat hook and space for bags and personal belongings in the decked lobby.
- Slippers were worn by the children for indoor play comfort and safety.
- The children had access to a rest corner that was furnished with a square of carpet and cushions.
- There was generous clear floor space in the playroom for the children to enjoy free play, socialise and investigate their environment in a supervised manner.

- The children had direct access to a secured garden. It was observed that appropriate outdoor waterproof clothing was available to the children.
- The children were observed to be closely supervised and their cues arising from sensitive issues were promptly identified and immediately addressed by the adults.

Physical and Material Environment –

- The service was situated in a cabin style structure which provided two interlinked rooms and a large decking lobby area for the storage of the children’s coats, bags and outdoor waterproofs. The premises was clean, airy, bright and well maintained.
- Openable windows allowed for natural light and ventilation.
- The playroom was furnished with child sized wooden chairs and a large circular table where lunches could be enjoyed and crafts completed.
- The playroom was furnished with play materials and equipment that supported the Steiner philosophy; there was a well-equipped home corner, furnished with small kitchen utensils to entice socialisation and ignite the child’s imagination.
- A rest area/ circle area encircled a table adorned with materials and nature items such as flowers and cones.
- Tabletop items were stored in woven baskets and wooden boxes to allow the children to easily access the activities. There were stones, cones, shells, fabrics, knitted dolls, puppets and small wooden construction blocks.
- The children had access to a wide range of arts and crafts and paints.
- The children had access to a well-equipped and secured garden. There were low lying trees and mature shrubs were hammocks, swings and climbing frames were placed to encourage the children to practice gross motor skill activity.
- A canopied area had been erected to allow the children to avail of outdoor time during wet weather.
- There was a large wooden sand pit placed on decking for the children’s comfort and ease of accessibility to the sand. Associated equipment included buckets, spades and utensils for the children to fully experience sensory play.
- A tap installed at low level was available to the children so that they could fill containers and watering cans independently and enjoy water play.
- There were tunnels and tyres for balance practice.

- A musical area had been recently created within a low tree enclosure, sound making apparatus included a large sized colourful xylophone, tubular bells and drums.
- It was reported that the children spent most of their time in the outdoor garden where robust gross motor skill activities were enjoyed in all weathers.

Supporting Relations around the Children

- The staff members were observed to be kind, patient and caring to each child, for example encouraging and praising safe swing and hammock play.
- Children's cues were read, for example when toileting was required, or drinks were needed; staff members quietly and gently assisted the children.
- The person in charge stated that the service had an active parents committee, for example a 'fix and mend' day had been organised for the children's families to visit the kindergarten and complete works required.
- The service managed a digital group application for parents to receive notices regarding the service.

Implementation of Programme of Care

- A daily timetable adhering to the Steiner programme was displayed to evidence that a wide range of activities were offered to the children, there was ample time allotted for free play, outdoor play, circle time socialisation and meals.
- Documentation evidenced considered long term and short-term planning of the children's activities.
- At the outset of the inspection, the children were observed sitting at the large circular table, fully immersed in making bread. Each child had a small wooden board and rolling pin, industriously rolling bread and pressing raisins creatively into their dough.

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 supplied fresh organic food items which was cooked on a daily basis and offered to the children.
- It was evident that the children were offered healthy, nutritious, and varied meals as seen by the displayed menu exhibited in the lobby. On the day of the inspection, the children were to have spelt bread rolls, pumpkin seeds, butter cheese, marmite fruit and vegetables.
- Food items were stored in the service fridge.
- Plates, glass beakers and cutlery were available to the children.

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:

- Two Rivers Kindergarten was suitably secured so that a child could not leave the premises unsupervised and unauthorised persons were restricted.
- Play materials were found to be in a good state of repair with no pinch points or sharp edges.
- Cables and flexes were not accessible to the children.
- Openable windows were not accessible to the children and there were no blind cords.
- Visibility strips were applied to the glazed doors at the time of the inspection.
- The emergency exit door was unobstructed.
- The children did not have access to the kitchen area and a low gate was secured to prevent their access.
- Cleaning products were out of reach of the children.
- The children did not have access to the adult toilet or staff members bags and personal belongings.

Infection Control:

- The service was clean and well maintained. It was reported that the staff members operated a clean as you go policy with a deep clean at the end of the week.
- Sanitising units were placed out of reach of the children but accessible to the adults.
- Good hand washing practise were observed with children washing hands after using the toilets and after bread making.
- The children had access to 2 separate, child sized toilets and 2 low level wash hand basins which were clean and well maintained.
- The children had use of step-ups or pots as required. These were suitably stored.
- Liquid soap was available for hand washing. Each child had their own cotton towels which was hung on their individually named hooks stored in the lobby.
- It was reported that single use cotton towels were washed on a daily basis at 60 degrees Celsius.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water registered at 32 degrees Celsius.
- Adults had a designated toilet and wash hand basin.
- Non-contact pedal bins were situated throughout the service.
- Tissues were available to the children for nasal hygiene.

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 either emergency or prescribed medications.
- There were no children currently attending the service that required a medication.

Fire Safety:

- The fire door was unobstructed.
- Fire cylinders were tethered to the walls.
- Records evidenced that staff members had availed of fire safety training.
- In conversation with the person in charge it was reported that staff were familiar with the procedures that are required to be followed in the event of a fire.
- On the day of the inspection the service experienced an electrical outage. The person in charge promptly established that it had affected the local village and decided to inform each parent for children to be collected as the fire alarm had been rendered ineffective due to the outage.

Outing:

- It was reported by the person in charge that each week a loop walk through the adjoining organic wood was conducted with the children.
- In conversation with the staff member, it was established that they followed the service outing policy to ensure each child's safety and had signed parental consent for these outings.

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)

Records informed that both staff member had completed first aid responder training certification (FAR), with an expiry date of January 2024.

(2)(a) & (b)

The service had a well-equipped first aid box which was stored in the kitchen area on a high shelf out of reach of the children but easily accessible to the staff members.

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)

The template for recording the monthly fire drill conducted in the service was made available. The most recent fire drill had been carried out in May 2023.

(b)

The service maintained a written record of the number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the setting. The most recent service had taken place on 03 June 2022.

(4)

A fire evacuation plan was displayed in the lobby which depicted a safe route to leave the building in the event of a fire.