

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE010				
Name of Service:	Sixmilebridge & District Community Services CLG				
Address of Service:	Shannon Road, Sixmilebridge, Sixmilebridge, Co. Clare				
Eircode:	V95 X886				
Name of Registered Provider:	Yvonne Keogh				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	21/10/2024				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>52</td> <td>PM</td> <td>42</td> </tr> </table>	AM	52	PM	42
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare.
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Ní Nialláin & A.McCarthy
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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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<p>Description of service</p> <p>Sixmilebridge & District Community Services CLG was first notified in 2009, as a community-based service in Sixmilebridge, County Clare. The childcare facility is located in a single storey building that accommodates six care rooms. A programme of care and education is facilitated Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 17:30. Designated, enclosed outdoor play areas can be accessed from each care room. A school aged childcare service is provided each afternoon and during summer holidays in the Den room.</p>
<p>Staffing</p> <p>Twenty-seven adults are employed by the service. On the 21 October 2024, the general manager, the childcare manager, twenty adults who worked directly with the children, two adults who prepared, cooked and served the food and two students on work placement were present. The registered provider is part of the voluntary board of management and does not work directly with the children.</p>
<p>Methodology</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous inspection history • Any information received in relation to the service <p>The findings on inspection are based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (3)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 - First aid (1), (2)(a)(b).

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures (1)(a)(b)(4).

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the managers, 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*

(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)

During the inspection, both the general manager and childcare manager were available.

(b)

On the 21 October 2024 the general manager and the childcare manager were available at all times during the inspection.

(2)

Twenty-eight files were available in respect of the registered provider, the adults and student working in the service.

The findings included the following:

(a)

Thirty-two written and validated references from past employers in respect of the adults working in the service were available.

(b)

Twenty-four written and validated references from a source other than a past employer in respect of the adults working in the service were available.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for twenty-eight adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report. It is acknowledged that applications to up to date the garda vetting disclosures were submitted by the childcare manager.

(d)

International police vetting was available in respect of three adults working in the service, who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months.

(4)

All adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 and Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 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) 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)
During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.
- (2)
On the 22 October 2024 twenty-one adults supervised fifty-two children in the morning and seventeen adults cared for forty-two children in the afternoon.
- (8)(a)
The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available in the service at all times.

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)
The children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the children. Six care rooms were in operation during the inspection.

Basic Needs of Children:

The adults treated the children in a kind and caring manner and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults conversed with the children in a sensitive and respectful manner, used soft tones of voice, engaged with the children at the level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance.

The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings and using the toilet. Staff supervised and treated the children in a sensitive manner during nappy changes and toileting.

Nappies were changed frequently and on an individual need's basis. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care and nasal care appropriate to their age and level of development. The infant's sleep was attended to on an individual basis and an alternative area and activities were offered for children who did not wish to sleep. The infants were encouraged to feed themselves and promoted to be independent. Appropriate crockery and feeding utensils were provided in each room and these periods were observed to be relaxed and unhurried.

The adults offered praise and encouragement, and children were respected and supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities. The children in each room were offered a range of developmentally challenging play and learning activities and the children were observed to be fully engaged and included in all activities in the indoor and outdoor environments. The children transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor areas throughout the day.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

A key person approach was observed in each care room, the staff demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge of the children's preferences, interests, and individual capabilities. The adults followed the children's lead in the care rooms and the children were supported in individual and group play. The rooms accommodated visual cards and routine displays demonstrating photographic illustrations to support and include all children in the programme of care. The children were notified and consulted in advance of changes in the activities. The transitions in the programme of care were completed cohesively in a calm manner in all rooms.

The children's care need observations were shared daily with parent/guardians on the service's electronic application system. The adults in each room worked effectively to facilitate the programme of care and education. The adults communicated informally with parents/guardians during drop off and collection periods from the service.

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:

- A ked coded, bell operated system was in place at the entrance door to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility.
- The outdoor areas were secured with fencing and gates to protect the children within, and the children were supervised at all times during the inspection.
- A sign in book was available to record people entering the premises.
- The children arrival and departure from the service was recorded on an electronic application device and in the record book.
- Medication and cleaning agents were stored in a secured area out of reach of the children.
- The blind cords were appropriately secured on the windows throughout the service.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined pedal operated bins. Child friendly handwashing posters were located above the wash handbasins as prompts to promote good handwashing practices.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, toileting and before mealtime.
- The nappy changing procedures were completed in accordance with the service's infection control procedure. A procedure was displayed in the nappy changing facilities.
- The children's perishable food items and infant formula were stored correctly in fridges in the care rooms.
- An appropriate method was available to sterilise the infant's soothers. The soothers were stored in individually labelled containers.
- Labelled containers were available for storing bedlinen and personal care items.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not administered during the inspection.
- The adults demonstrated a good knowledge of the service's administration of medication policy.
- Documentation was available should medication be required.

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep room accommodated standard sized cots with wipeable mattresses for the babies to sleep.
- The sleep room and care room temperatures were maintained between 16-20 °Celsius in the areas where children sleep. An electronic thermometer was available for staff to measure and monitor the room temperatures.
- The adults demonstrated an awareness of the service's safe sleep policy. The children's sleep observations were recorded by staff every ten minutes. These observations included the children's colour, position and breathing.

Fire Safety:

- The adults held records of up-to-date fire safety training.
- The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The fire exits routes and fire assembly points were readily identified with signage.
- The service demonstrated evidence of completing monthly fire drills to prepare the service to respond in the event of fire.

Outing:

- An outing was not conducted on the day of inspection. A policy was available to inform parents/guardians and the adults working in the service of the service procedure for conducting outings.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for three adults employed by the service. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice. It is acknowledged that Garda Vetting disclosure applications were submitted to the Garda Vetting Bureau by the childcare manager on the 21 October 2024.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

For the 3 of the 28 staff members vetting that were out of date, we received their vetting back on the 31/10/2024. The service has already emailed copies to the inspectors who carried out the inspection. The service has a checklist in place for all staff vetting this will be checked on a three-monthly basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copies of the Garda Vetting disclosures.

Summary Comment

Based on the managers corrective actions and documentary evidence, the area of non-compliance is addressed. The requirements of Regulation 23 are met.

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)

Four adults working in the service had a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)(a)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored adjacent to each care room in the service.

(b)

The first aid boxes were available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

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 fire fighting 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)

Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out by the service The last fire drill took place on the 25 September 2024.

(b)

Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system took place respectively on the 12 August 2024 and 09 October 2024.

(4)

A fire action notice was available demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for ninety-eight children. The policy is valid until the 27 March 2025.