

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE046		
Name of Service:	Réalta Draíochta Pre-School (Ennis National Pre-school)		
Address of Service:	Ennis National School, Kilrush Road, Ennis, Co. Clare		
Eircode:	V95 DE44		
Name of Registered Providers:	Martina O'Loughlin , Kathryn Quinn		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	22/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	38	PM 10
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla, Ennis Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.		
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Ní Nialláin		
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

This service was first registered and opened in 2010. The part time/sessional service is a privately run service and is provided from two classrooms in Ennis National School. It caters for up to a maximum of 66 pre-school children on part time/sessional basis at any one time, between 2 and 6 years of age. The service is open Monday-Fridays 08:30 – 13:30 hours. An afternoon sessional service operates from 12:00 to 15:00.

Staffing

The joint registered providers operated the part time service/sessional assisted by four adults and one student who were present on the day when the inspection was carried out. All adults employed to work directly with children held an appropriate qualification in childcare.

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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26, and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. 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.

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 joint registered providers, 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) On the day of the inspection the joint registered providers were the designated persons in charge and there was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated persons in charge were present on the premises. The staff roster indicated that the designated persons in charge or their deputy were always available on site.

(2)(a) Two validated references from past employers were available for some of the adults.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, references from a source other than a past employer were provided.

(c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for six adults and one student employed at the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the state for a period greater than six months.

(4) Six adults employed to work directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) On the day of Inspection there were six adults and one student working with thirty eight pre-school children in the morning and four adults working with ten pre-school children in the afternoon. The adult/child ratio in the service was correct.
- (2) The written staff roster showed that the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.
- (8) (a) The service was not operated single-handedly, and 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) BASIC NEEDS:

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- Parents provided the snack foods and meals for their child. Adequate, suitable, and varied food and drink was available for the pre-school child attending the service. Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snack and meal. Drinking water was available to the children at all times.
- Children could access the toilet at any time during the session and were given assistance if required.
- Good personal hygiene practices were observed. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their age and stage of development. Regular hand washing was observed by the children after using the toilet, outdoor play and messy play.
- The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the playrooms and in the outdoor areas.
- Rest facilities were available for the children attending who were all over the age of two years.
- The adults were positive and consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- There were two playrooms in use at the time of inspection. Play equipment and materials were arranged to provide a number of separate developed interest areas. There was a library/relaxing area with a display of picture and story books and soft floor seating. Home corner sections contained play cookers, picnic rug, tea sets, play foods and household objects. Open shelf section areas held containers of stackable blocks, transport toys, garage units, lacing, threading materials and baby care doll resources. Tool bench with play work tools was provided in other area. A shelving area contained playhouses, miniature household furniture and figurines, musical instruments, animal toys, connecting blocks, dressing up props, shop play resources and team games. The messy play areas contained sand and water tables, painting easels and a selection of arts and crafts resources.
- The playrooms were laid out with uncluttered, clear floor spaces for the children to play safely.
- The playrooms were well resourced, and children had the opportunity for different types of play and learning .
- The children played outdoors for long periods and the facility had play areas consisting of a field with a grassy surface for running and playing games and two separate enclosed play areas on the national school grounds with a soft all weather surface area. The outdoor areas were well resourced with play equipment, e.g. wooden mud kitchens and accessories, a wooden teepee tent, paints, colouring material, books, bricks and magnets. Large sandpits and ride on vehicles and trucks were available. Outdoor tables and seating was provided. A planted area with flowers was present. A metal shed was available for storage.

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 person in charge ensured that complete and accurate daily records of attendance were kept for all children and adults in the service. The entrance to the service was secured with a security system.
- The external outdoor play areas were secured and fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.

Infection Control:

- Playrooms, communal, and sanitary areas were adequately ventilated by natural forms of ventilation.
- There was liquid soap at the wash hand basins to facilitate hygienic hand washing for children and adults. Paper towels were provided in the dispensers in all the sanitary areas used by the children and adults to facilitate hygienic hand drying.

Administration of Medication:

- Appropriate documentation was available in the event that medication was required by a child attending the service. Medication was not administered in the service on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep beds were available for children aged over 2 years of age should they require sleep or rest.

Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service.

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) Three adults present in the service had updated First Aid Responder training and the certificates were valid to June 2023 and to July and December 2024

(2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in a designated area in one of the playrooms.

(b)The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

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 are available to show that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises with the most recent services having been completed in June 2022.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous positions 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 insurance certificate for the service was available and valid to 27th March 2024. The required cover was available for a maximum of 58 pre-school children who could attend at any one time.