

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE118
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Name of Service:	Room to Bloom Kids Care
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Address of Service:	Scoil Chríost Rí, Cloughleigh, Ennis, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 ET26
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Name of Registered Provider:	Hazel O'Connor
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/06/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	13
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, County Clare
Inspection undertaken by:	A.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

Room to Bloom Kids Care was established in 2015 and moved to the current building in 2020. The service is located within a large, newly built, two storey primary school in Scoil Chríost Rí, Cloughleigh, Ennis, County Clare. The care room is located on the ground floor and the children enter and exit the building by a side exit. The service facilitates a play based sessional programme of care from 09.00 to 12.00 and from 12.30 to 15.30 Monday to Friday. Care and education are facilitated in a large open plan room and in the outdoor play area which is located adjacent to the building.

Staffing

On the 13th of June 2023 the registered provider and three members of staff cared for eighteen children in the morning and the registered provider, and four members of staff cared for thirteen children in the afternoon. The registered provider worked directly with the children and undertook administrative duties. Five members of staff working in the service held qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education. The registered provider and the four members of staff held records of engagement in continuing professional development.

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 inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 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. 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 registered provider, person in charge, 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 period of the inspection, the registered provider who is the designated person in charge was available and a person was assigned as the role of deputy. The staff roster indicated that the designated person or their deputy were always available on site.

(b)

The registered provider who is the designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise are available at all times.

The staff files for five members of staff were reviewed. The findings included the following:

(2)(a)

Six validated references from past employers were available.

(b)

Where past employer references were not available, three references from a source other than a past employer with evidence of validation were available.

(c)

Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available in respect of five members of staff working at the service.

(d)

Not applicable, as international police vetting was not required for any of the staff members employed by the service.

(4)

Five members of staff working in the service held qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(b)

A second verified reference was not available in respect of one member of staff.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(2)(b)

Corrective and Preventive Action

A second past employer reference for the staff member was obtained and validated. In future, prior to a staff member commencing, all required information will be on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the validated reference.

Summary Comment

Based on the information provided by the registered provider the area of non-compliance Regulation 9 (2)(a) is addressed.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

- (1)
During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (3)
On the 13th of June 2023 the minimum ratio of adults supervising children was maintained at all times. The manager and three members of staff cared for eighteen children in the morning and thirteen children in the afternoon.
- (8)(c)
Not applicable, as the service is not operated singlehandedly.

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)
Forty-four enrolment forms are available for the number of children attending the service and contained the particulars outlined from (a)-(i).

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 inspector observed the children's learning, development, and well-being to be supported by the staff. The staff treated the children in a kind and caring manner and interacted with the children at their height and responded promptly to their cues for assistance and comfort. Positive behavioural strategies were employed by staff to de-escalate any issue that arose with the children in a calm manner. Children were encouraged to be independent while caring for their belongings, retrieving their lunches, during tidy up time and while using the toilet. In the afternoon the staff and children engaged in creating a volcano. Mealtimes were observed to be a relaxed, unhurried, and sociable occasions and members of staff sat with the children and conversed amicably. Sunscreen was applied to the children in accordance with the service policy and the children had access to bottled water throughout the programme of care. The children led the play-based programme of activities throughout the session and transitioned freely from the indoor to the outdoor area under supervision and in accordance with their preferences and personal interests.

On the inspector's arrival to the service, the children were engaged in play-based activities in the outdoor play area. The children transitioned from open ended sensory, pretend and physical play-based activities to mealtime to child led activities in the outdoor play area. Designated areas of interests were available in the open plan indoor environment and various creative hanging mobiles were observed on the ceiling. The areas of interest included a rest area with soft furnishings, sensory tables, a dress up area with a large range of costumes, a wooden kitchen unit with supporting equipment and materials and an art station with various colouring materials. The shelving units and containers with play materials and equipment, low level chairs and tables were accessible and supported the children to be independent. The individual learning journals which had records of completed learning and play based activities were placed on a unit that could be readily accessed by the children as they wished. The outdoor area provided a large space for the children to freely move. The areas of interest included a large sand box with

construction toys, buckets and spades, a crawling tunnel, a swing that the children could lie down on, planter areas, a climbing frame, wooden crates, wooden building blocks, balance beams and tyres.

The staff demonstrated a strong ethos of teamwork during the facilitation of the programme of care. The service operates an informal system for the parents to discuss the children's progress with the staff. Parents communicated with staff openly at arrival and drop off times. A settling in programme was in place for the children that were due to commence in the service in September, parents had attended an information evening and some of the parents and the children were in attendance for periods during the inspection.

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 entrance to the service was secured by a key code and a bell operated system to prevent unauthorised persons entering the service.
- The perimeter of the outdoor area was secured by a fence and gated access.
- The toys and play equipment in the indoor and outdoor environment were maintained in good condition.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- Running water, liquid soap and pedal operated bins were available to support good handwashing practices.
- The adults and children washed their hands at appropriate intervals.
- The surfaces were cleaned after messy play and before and after mealtime.
- The children’s perishable food items were stored in the fridge.

Administration of Medication:

- The manager confirmed that medication is not routinely administered in the service. A service policy and documentation is available in the event that medication is required.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exits points and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- A fire warning system was observed throughout the building.
- The fire assembly area was readily identifiable for use in the event of a fire.
- The staff and children completed monthly fire drills in preparation for an emergency situation.

Outing:

- The registered provider confirmed that outings are not currently being undertaken.

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 manager and three members of staff are qualified in First Aid Responder training and up to date certificates were available for inspection.
- (2)(a)
Suitably equipped first aid boxes were safely stored in a cupboard in the care room.
- (b)
The first aid boxes are available at all times for use by the staff.

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)

A record was available in the service which demonstrated that monthly fire drills were completed. The last fire drill took place on the 19th of May 2023.

(b)

The firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system was certified as having been serviced respectively on the 23rd of April 2023 and the 7th of May 2023.

(4)

Fire action notices demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A record of current insurance cover was available for the type of service provision and twenty-two children attending the service. The expiry date noted was the 27th of March 2024.