

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------|
| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015CE119 | | |
| Name of Service: | Ruan Community Childcare Ltd. | | |
| Address of Service: | Ruan National School, Ruan, Ennis, Co. Clare | | |
| Eircode: | V95 R206 | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Gai Hardy | | |
| Service type: | Part Time | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 19/10/2023 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 19 | PM 3 |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E | | |
| 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

Description of service

Ruan Community Childcare Limited was established in 1996, as a community service, in a purpose-built premises on the grounds of Ruan Primary School in a rural area, adjacent to Ruan village, in County Clare. The service facilitates a play-based programme of care for children ranging in age from two to six years on a sessional or part-time basis, Monday to Friday from 09:30 to 14:00. A school aged childcare service is facilitated after the part time service concludes. The service is located in a detached single storey building and the care and learning is provided in three interlinked open plan rooms. A large enclosed outdoor play area is available to the rear and side of the building. Part of this area is covered with a canopy which facilitates outdoor sensory play in all weathers.

Staffing

On the 19th of October 2023 the registered provider, two childcare workers and an administrative person were present. The registered provider and two members of staff worked directly with the children. The service is a community-based service managed by a local voluntary committee.

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 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 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)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge and a named staff member was available to deputise as required.

(b)

Both the registered provider and the person who is assigned as deputy were available throughout the inspection.

Four files were available and reviewed. The findings included the following:

(2)(a)

Four written references were available from past employers and validated where required.

- (b)
Four written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c)
Garda Vetting disclosures were available and reviewed.
- (d)
International police vetting was available in respect of three adults who had lived in another State for a period longer than six months as an adult.
- (4)
The adults employed by the service held Early Childhood Care and Education a Level 6 qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 19th of October 2023 an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the service.

(2)

During the inspection the ratio of adults supervising the children was maintained. The registered provider and two adults cared for the seventeen children in the morning and thirteen children in the afternoon.

(8)(a)

The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available in the service at all times.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1)
Twenty forms were available for the number of children enrolled in the service. The forms included the particulars outlined from (a) to (i).

(3) (a)(b)(c)
Enrolment records for the children currently in attendance were available for inspection.

(4)
The registered provider ensured that written records were available for all the children currently attending the service. It was confirmed by the registered provider that records are retained for a period of two years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

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)
Basic Needs of Children:

The inspector observed the children's learning, development, and well-being to be supported by the members of staff. The staff interacted with the children in a caring, kind and respectful manner. The staff listened to and conversed with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues to be held and comforted. The children were offered continuous praise and encouragement and the staff used positive behavioural strategies. The staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the children's personal preferences and capabilities.

An open-door policy was adopted for parents and an informal communication approach was observed during interactions with parents. Staff discussed the children’s day and observations with the parents during arrival and departure times. The children were encouraged to be independent while caring for their belongings, their play materials and toileting. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their age and level of development. Children’s cues for assistance with toileting were responded to in a sensitive manner. Two large areas were provided for the children to rest and relax. These areas had soft furnishings and a large range of reading materials. A large pouring container of water and cups was available and accessed by the children throughout the session. The children sat together and conversed amicably during mealtimes. Mealtimes were observed to be relaxed, unhurried and sociable occasions.

The children engaged in extended play and moved freely from the indoor and outdoor environments. The open plan care rooms were bright and spacious and were appropriately resourced for age range, and development needs of the children. The transitions in the changes of activities in each room were facilitated with ease, as staff notified the children in advance of any change in the programme of care and learning. The children played individually and as part of a group and chose their individual activities throughout the session. Staff engaged in open ended discussions, storytelling, rhymes, singing and dance exercises. The staff followed the children’s lead, and cues and played games with the children and sat with the children as they engaged in constructive, manipulative, sensory and pretend play. Designated areas of interest were available with appropriate and accessible supporting materials and equipment for the children. The defined areas included a shop and home corner, an imagination playground with foam shapes, a construction section, a rocking horse, a dolls house, sensory tables. The middle and end room included: a rest and reading area, an art and creativity area with a large quantity of containers that contained design and art materials and equipment, low level units with a large quantity of imaginative, constructive, and manipulative equipment and toys, a large wooden stage and slide.

The outdoor area offered a large space for the children to freely move and engage in a range of challenging, diverse, creative and enriching experiences. A covered section with a large sand pit and a large range of sensory and constructive equipment was provided at the side of the building and a large space was located to the rear of the building. The children played with the pretend mud kitchen, the sand tables, the swings, the tunnel, the slide, the activity station and climbing wall. A large section provided the children with a gravel pit and a large range of trucks, spades, buckets and a digger for constructive and sensory play. The outdoor area is enclosed by concrete walls and gates.

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 service was appropriately secured to prevent children exiting unsupervised and unauthorised persons accessing the service.
- The entrance to the service was secured, the service is accessed by a bell operated system. The outdoor area was enclosed with a surrounding fence, and wall to protect the children within.
- The children’s arrival and departure times were recorded daily.
- The furniture and equipment within the indoor and outdoor environment were maintained in good condition.
- Cleaning agents were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean condition.
- Hot running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels were available in the sanitary facilities. Pedal operated, lined and lidded bins were available in the sanitary facilities and care rooms.
- The children and adults washed their hands at appropriate intervals.

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider confirmed that medication is not routinely administered. A service policy and documentation are available should medication be required. Temperature reducing medication was available and stored out of reach of children.

Safe Sleep:

- Areas for the children to rest and relax were available and accessed by the children.

Fire Safety:

- A fire assembly point was readily identifiable on the premises.
- Fire exit routes and passageways were clear from any obstructions.
- The staff and children demonstrated a good knowledge of conducting a fire drill to ensure the safe evacuation of the service in the event of a fire.

Outing:

- The registered provider confirmed that outings are not undertaken currently. A service policy is available in the event that an outing takes place.

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 registered provider and the manager had a record of up to date First Aid Responder training.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the service.

(b)

A first aid box was 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 in the service. A fire drill took place during the inspection and on the 7th of September 2023.

(b)

A record of the number, type and maintenance for the firefighting equipment was available. The most recent firefighting equipment maintenance service took place in June 2023.

(4)

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

An up-to-date record of the number, type and maintenance for the smoke alarm system was not available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b)

A service of the smoke alarm system took place on the 22nd of November 2023. A copy of the maintenance service was issued to the inspectorate. Going forward a service to the system will take place on a quarterly basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of smoke alarm maintenance certificate.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

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Summary Comment

Based on the information provided by the registered provider, the regulatory requirement under Regulation 26 (1)(a) is met.

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 thirty-five children attending the full day care service. The policy is valid until the 27th of March 2024.