

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE131			
Name of Service:	Respond Early Years Service, Stonecourt			
Address of Service:	Stonecourt Community Buildings, Drumbiggie, Ennis, Co. Clare			
Eircode:	V95 NYN3			
Name of Registered Provider:	Lisa O'Rourke			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	18/09/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	10
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla, Station Road 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

Stonecourt Early Years Service is a full day care childcare service which first opened in 1996. It is operated by Respond; a community based limited company. It is registered to cater for 25 children from 2 - 6 years of age. The service operates from 09.00am - 16.00 hours weekdays. The community building was purpose built to include the provision of a childcare facility. This building is a two-storey structure with childcare provided in three playrooms at ground floor level, two were in use on the day of inspection. There is a kitchenette on site. Facilities for rest/sleep are available if required. An enclosed outdoor play area is located to the side and rear of the premises which has a storage shed for outdoor toys and equipment.

Staffing

The registered provider is not directly involved in the day to day operation of the service.

A service manager who operated the full day care service was present on the day when the inspection was carried out. She was assisted by one other staff member.

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 service manager, staff member 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 manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person available who was able to deputise for her 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 person in charge or her deputy were always available on the premises.

(2)(a) Two validated references from past employers were available for one adult.

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

(c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for two adults 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) Both adults employed to work directly with children on the day of inspection 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 two adults working with ten pre-school children. 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 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:

- Adequate and varied food and drink was observed to be available for the pre-school child attending the service. The adults sat with the children and each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snack and meal. All snacks and meals were supplied by the parents.
- The privacy and dignity of the children was respected especially at toileting and nappy changing.
- The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their age and stage of development. Regular hand washing by children was observed.
- The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the playrooms and in the outdoor areas.
- Rest facilities in low-level beds were available for the children attending if required.
- The adults were positive and consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- There were three indoor playrooms in the service, and two were in use by the pre-school children.
- The playrooms were laid out with uncluttered, clear floor spaces for the children to play safely.
- The rooms were well resourced, and children had the opportunity for different types of play and learning. A selection of children's creations was on display in the playrooms and in workbooks.
- The facility had an enclosed outdoor play area adjacent to the playrooms which catered for the two different age groups of children. The outdoor play areas contained a grassy and concrete ground surface. The outdoor area was well resourced with play equipment and a large storage shed housed the toys and equipment. A grassy area with facilities for planting was also 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:

- 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:

- The 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 who were all 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) Two adults present in the service had updated First Aid Responder training and the certificates were valid to February 2024.

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

(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 January 2023.

(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 29th February 2024. The required cover was available for a maximum of 25 pre-school children who could attend at any one time.