

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE140		
Name of Service:	Teach Spraon Pre School & After School Service		
Address of Service:	Toonagh, Fountain, Ennis, Co. Clare		
Eircode:	V95 RWV5		
Name of Registered Provider:	Nora Custy		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date(of Inspection:	22/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	17	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

Teach Spraoi Pre School & After School Service is a privately owned service that was established in 2010. The service is located in a rural setting, opposite Toonagh National School in Fountain, Ennis, County Clare. The service offers full day, part-time and sessional care, Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 38 weeks each year. The programme of care and learning is facilitated across five care rooms in a two-storey house and an outdoor classroom. The children predominantly spend most of their time outside in the “nature kinder garden”.

Staffing

On the 22nd of June 2023 the registered provider and two members of staff were present. The staff members have appropriate qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education. Evidence of staff engagement in continuing professional development was available on file.

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 registered provider, the 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 is available to deputise as required.

(b)

Both the designated person in charge and the person who is assigned as deputy were available throughout the inspection.

Three files were available in respect of the registered provider and two members of staff. The findings included the following:

(2)(a)

Five validated references were available from past employers.

(b)

One validated reference was available from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda Vetting disclosures were available and reviewed in respect of the registered provider and the two members of staff.

(d)

International police vetting was available in respect of one adult who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

The staff employed by the service held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 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)
During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)
On the 22nd of June 2023 an adequate number of adults supervised the children. Three members of staff cared for the seventeen pre-school children in the morning and two members of staff cared for the three preschool children in the afternoon.

(8)(a)
During the inspection more than two adults were available to care for the children 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 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 kind and caring manner this was observed by the staff conversing with the children at their level in a respectful manner and responding promptly to their cues for assistance. The children were encouraged to be independent while caring for their personal belongings, using the toilet, participation in tasks and tidy up time.

On the inspector's arrival to the service, the children were engaged in group discussion, singing and rhymes. Preparations were under way for the children's graduation. The children were included in every stage of the planning and preparation, after circle time a rehearsal took place. The children transitioned to free play in the indoor and outdoor area prior to mealtime. The dining experience was observed to be a relaxed and sociable occasion where the children sat and conversed amicably with their peers. Healthy and nutritious lunches were consumed, and beverages were freely available to the children. A garden party graduation took place whereby the children's family were invited to celebrate their preschool year and a certificate was awarded to all the children. This was observed to be a very happy occasion for all the children. The staff communicated informally with the parents/guardians at drop off and collection times and during the graduation ceremony.

The indoor and outdoor areas were appropriately resourced and offered an enriching environment for the children in attendance. The indoor environment comprised of five care rooms; three were located on the ground floor and two were located on the first level which included the following. Room one accommodated individual shelving and clothes hangers to store the children's belongings and some imaginative play accessories. Room two was used for the group discussion and this provided a comfortable space for the children to engage in the group discussion, singing and rhymes. The third room was used for mealtime. Montessori materials, accessories and reading materials were accessible on low level shelving in both rooms.

A nook was available under the stairs with soft seating, furnishings, and a unit with reading materials. This space was used by the children to rest and relax during the morning. On the second floor the two rooms provided large spaces and accommodated musical instruments and sensory boards, reading and play materials, large and small construction materials, and equipment. Children's observations were recorded using photographs which were accompanied by a written synopsis of their learning outcomes.

The outdoor area provided a large kinder nature garden for the children to freely move all around the building. The outdoor environment afforded the children an opportunity to climb, explore and engage in sensorial play and learning. A magic dome accommodated a large space for the children to play and learn in and planter's boxes and all-weather gear and wellingtons were stored in this area. The outdoor environment was equipped with wooden houses, dens, nooks for the children to explore in within the trees, large tyres, swings, wheelbarrow and watering cans, magnifying glasses to check for insects, wooden blocks of various shapes and sizes, tricycles, cars and seating areas. The front of the building was decorated with bunting and flowers and food and beverages were available to celebrate the children's graduation.

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 and surrounding perimeter was secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering or unsupervised children exiting the service.
- The children’s arrival and departure times were recorded in a logbook.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor play area was adequately secured with a fence and gated access.

Infection Control:

- The indoor and outdoor environment was maintained in a clean condition. Surfaces and furniture were cleaned after use.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals which included prior to mealtime and after using the toilet.
- Running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lined, lidded pedal operated bins were available in the sanitary facility.
- The children’s perishable food items were stored in a fridge in the kitchen.

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider demonstrated a good knowledge of the service’s policy, and a record book is available in the event that prescription and non-prescription medication is required.

Safe Sleep:

- A designated area was available for the children to rest and relax. This area is located away from the care room and has soft furnishings and an area with a large quantity of reading materials.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exits and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The service conducts monthly fire drills in preparation for emergency situations.

Outing:

- The registered provider demonstrated a good knowledge to ensure the safe conduct of outings. A service policy was available. The registered provider confirmed that a risk assessment is undertaken prior to outings and that an outings checklist is completed.

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 had a record of up to date First Aid Responder training. The certificate was valid until 30th August 2024.

(2)(a)
A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in a cabinet in one of the care rooms.

(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 firefighting 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. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 24th of May 2023.

(b)

A record of the number, type and maintenance for the firefighting equipment and the fire alarm system were available. The most recent firefighting equipment and fire alarm system maintenance service took place on the 26th of March 2023.

(4)

A fire action notice demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed at the entrance to the care room.

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 twenty-five pre-school children attending the service. The policy is valid until the 27th of April 2024.