

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN001		
Name of Service:	ABC Childcare		
Address of Service:	7 Cherry Grove, Drumgola Wood, Cavan, Co. Cavan		
Eircode:	H12 DE26		
Name of Registered Provider:	Carmel Sorohan		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date(s) of Inspection:	16/08/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM 19
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre Commons Road Navan Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham & C Tunney		
Title:	Early Years Inspectors		

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

ABC Childcare is located in a housing development within the town of Cavan. This service was established in 2010. The service provides full day, part- time, sessional and school aged childcare and education for children from 0 to 6 years and school aged. The service operates from 8.00am-6.00pm each weekday and caters for a maximum of 57 children per day. There are four care rooms namely Wobbler/Toddler room, Pre School room 1 and Pre School room 2 and Preschool room 3. Preschool room 3 was the only room in operation on the day of inspection, therefore the remaining rooms were not inspected.

Staffing

Four staff members are employed at present in the service including the registered provider and the cook.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required. On inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 29 and 30. 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 inspectors wish 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
and unpaid worker.

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.
- (2) Four staff members are employed in the service, which includes the registered provider who is the manager, and the cook. These files were reviewed.
- (a)& (b) Eight references were available.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff members in the service.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as the staff members had not resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) The three childcare staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 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) & (2) Preschool Room 3: From 12.55pm there was an adequate number of adults caring for the children. Three staff members cared for 21 preschool children ranging in age from 2 years to 5 years attending parttime and full day care.

The registered provider arrived at the service at 12.55pm.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) & (2) Preschool Room 3: Between 10.30am and 12.55pm there was an inadequate number of staff present. Two staff members cared for 21 preschool children ranging in age from 2 years to 5 years. Nineteen children were attending full day care service and 2 children were attending part-time day care. Three staff members were required.

(8) As staff roster was not available, it was not possible for the inspectors to ascertain if two staff members were on the premises at all times. Additionally, the sign in sheets were not maintained for all staff.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Corrective Action

1. The proper adult child/adult ratios will be adhered to as set out in the preschool regulations.
2. Staff rosters & staff sign in rosters are in place.

Preventive Action

1. Adult/child ratios will be maintained always.
2. Staff rosters will be in place and staff will complete a staff sign in roster.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff roster submitted to the Inspectorate identifying two adults present at all times.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate accepts the assurances from the registered provider which has addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 11. This will be assessed at the next inspection.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider ensured a record in writing was available in respect of each child containing particulars as specified in Regulation 15 (a) to (j).

(3) The children's records were available and open for inspection by an authorised person. Thirteen children's records were inspected and were completed correctly

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) Records were available as specified by Regulation 16 (a)(b)(c)(d)(f)(g)(h)(j)(k) in relation to the service.

(3) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were made available.

Non-Compliance Information

(k) A staff roster was not available for inspection. This was also a non-compliance at the last inspection on the 20th June 2022. The corrective and preventive actions that the registered provider has stated had been put in place to address the non-compliance at the last inspection were not effective to sustain compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Corrective Action

Staff rosters & staff sign in rosters are in place.

Preventive Action

Staff rosters will be in place and staff will complete a staff sign in roster.

Supporting documentation submitted

A staff roster was submitted to the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the non compliance in Regulation 16.

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

Basic Needs:

Children were supported to manage their personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.

Assistance was given as appropriate, such as supervision of hand washing. The staff members supervised the children during mealtimes. The younger children had the opportunity to feed themselves and assistance was given if required.

Relationships around children

Positive engagement between the staff members and children were noted. The staff members were kind and used age-appropriate soft tones, the child's individual names, and engaged respectfully with the children. The staff members were attentive to the children, comforted the children when upset. The staff members were familiar with each child's preferences and the children sought out staff members as required.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

Compliance Information

(1)(b) One cot room was available downstairs with 6 cots beside the Wobbler/Toddler room. Within Preschool room 3 there were soft furnishings, mats, and cushions for children to take a break from activities and rest if needed.

(3)(a) There was a secure outdoor space to the rear of the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)(a) The outdoor area was not available for children to use as a workman was using this area to cut out skirting boards for the refurbishment of the Wobbler/Toddler room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Outdoor area will always be available to the children (weather permitting).

Preventive Action

This will not be an issue in the future as work has been completed and has not happened previously.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has been accepted and will be assessed at the next inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

There was adequate and suitable furniture and play equipment and materials available to support play experiences indoors in the Preschool Room 3

- Play materials and play equipment were visible and easily accessible to the children on open shelving at their height. Play materials and equipment were laid out in interest areas including home areas, construction, arts and crafts, sand table and reading/ relaxation areas.
- A suitable range of books were available in the care room.
- Children’s artwork was displayed.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy with a two-week menu available. The food was prepared and cooked freshly on the premises on a daily basis by a designated cook. The food provided by the service was nutritious, varied, appropriate for the age of the children and adequate for the length of time the children were in attendance in the service. Extra helpings were provided to the children on request. Children bring their own morning snack, and the remaining meals are provided by the service. On the day of inspection, the children received strawberries, apple and banana for morning snack, dinner consisted of a chicken casserole, with turnip, brussels sprouts, and potato. Tea consisted of brown bread and a yogurt. Drinks were stored in the fridge in the room and children were observed independently getting their drinks throughout the day.

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 door leading into the premises were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.
- The outdoor play areas were secured.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided to support effective hand hygiene in the sanitary accommodation in the service.
- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, and after using the toilet.
- The standard of cleaning was good to prevent the risk of cross infection.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep observations were carried out and documented at 10 minutes intervals, noting each child's position, colour and breathing pattern. On the day of inspection, a staff member remained in the sleep room with the children.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The light on the stairway that the children use was continuously flashing and is a safety concern when children ascend and descend the stairs.

Infection Control

2. Children placed toys in their mouths as they were at this developmental stage and following the child's use staff did not remove them for cleaning. They were placed back in the general play area.

Fire Safety:

3. The last recorded fire drill available for inspection was dated the 24th April 2023 and not carried out monthly as is required.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

General Safety:

Corrective Action

1. Faulty Light has been replaced.

Preventive Action

All lights will be replaced when they become faulty /stop working

Infection Control:

Corrective Action

2. A basket is available for mouthed toys to be placed into until such time that they are cleaned. This is a routine that already exists in the Wobbler/Toddler room.

Preventive Action

All mouthed toys will be removed from the play area and returned when they have been cleaned and sterilised.

Fire Safety:

Corrective Action

3. Staff have been reminded that fire drills need to be carried out every month for each of the 12 months.
(Manager will keep a check to ensure this is happening).

Preventive Action

Fire drills will be carried out every month and this will be checked by manager.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has been accepted and addresses this non-compliance.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) A record was maintained which documented details of children’s daily attendance in the service which was maintained in the care room. A system was in place to ensure that no person other than the children’s parents / guardians, employees or authorised visitors can enter the pre-school.

(3)(a) The inspectors noted that authorised persons only were allowed to enter the pre-school.

(b) A visitor’s book was available and maintained, the inspectors were requested to sign the visitors’ book.

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 held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training and was available to the children from 12.55pm.

(2)(a) and (b) The first aid boxes were safely stored in readily accessible positions and out of the reach of children.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) A person trained in FAR was not always available to the children at all times as no staff member with FAR training was on the premises from 10.30am when the inspectors arrived to 12.55pm.

(2) The first aid box contained materials that were out of date and was not adequately stocked.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

All staff members will avail of FAR training.

At present 2 members of staff have FAR certificates and there is always at least 1 of those staff members on the premises during opening hours.

First aid box has been adequately stocked and out of date items removed.

Preventive Action

All staff will be trained in FAR.

First aid box will be checked regularly by room leader.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has been accepted and addresses the non-compliances identified in Regulation 25.

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 written record was available of fire drills completed in the service however the last date of the fire drill was 24th April 2023.
- (b) A record was maintained of the mains powered smoke alarms and firefighting equipment on the premises. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 17th May 2023. The firefighting equipment was last serviced on the 11th September 2022.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

Non-Compliance Information

The Preschool room 3 was not adequately ventilated as the room temperature was recorded at 27.3°C at 11.15am. Staff were informed of the reading and opened windows and encouraged children to take their drinks regularly. The temperature was checked again at 12.30pm and was recorded at 25.4°C; windows remained open, and drinks were encouraged.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Staff keep regular checks on room temperature, windows are opened regularly, cold drinks are encouraged and there are fans available if needed.

Preventive Action

Fans will be readily available on warmer days and windows will remain open.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has been accepted and addresses the non-compliances Regulation 29.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

Non-Compliance Information

Preschool Room 3 was observed to be overcrowded on the day of inspection as there was insufficient space available for the 21 children present. A clear floor area of 41m² was available in this care room for children to work, play and move.

A clear floor area of 48.45m² is required for the 21 children present (3 < 3 years and 18 > 3 years).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Corrective Action

Preschool Room 3 is used to provide care for 22 preschool children during term time for children participating in the ECCE Programme where floor space requirement is 1.818sq mtrs per child.

This room is being used to accommodate 16 children (2 adults) full daycare

Preventive Action

On day of inspection this was the only room available as maintenance work was being carried out in wobbler/toddler room) this situation has never occurred before, and as work is completed it will not be an issue in the future.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 30.