

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL003		
Name of Service:	ABC Childcare Centre		
Address of Service:	Finnvalley Enterprise Park, Lifford, Co. Donegal		
Eircode:	F93 XDW3		
Name of Registered Provider:	Linda Byrne		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	08/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	35	PM 22
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulations Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.		
Inspection undertaken by:	Mr. S. Meehan		
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

This purpose-built community based preschool service is in a residential area in the town of Lifford, Co. Donegal. The preschool caters for children aged between 2 and 6 years of age, from Monday to Friday between 9:30 am and 5:15 pm. This community operated preschool service offers the option of part time care service, an (ECCE) Early Childhood Care and Education and sessional care programme. This preschool service operates from a purpose-built building with 2 childcare playrooms and a school aged room. The service also has a fully equipped kitchen, staff room and sanitary facilities. The pre-school children have an outdoor play area to the front and side of the premises for children to spend time outdoors.

Staffing

The registered provider is not on the premises daily and has appointed a manager. There is a named person in charge and a named designated deputy. There is a total of 13 adults working in the premises which does not include the registered provider. The adults have documentary evidence of on-going training and education. On the day of inspection, there were 10 adults on the premises which included the manager. The 7 adults work directly with the children, held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework. There was a total of 6 adults working with school aged children.

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, 15, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28.

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 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

All 13 adults who work in the service and registered provider files were reviewed:

- (1)(a) There was a manager who was the named designated person in charge. There was a named person who could deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)(a)(b) There were 28 written, validated references from past employers or a source other than a past employer available in respect of the adults working in the service.
- (c) Garda vetting was available for 14 adults.
- (d) Out of jurisdiction police vetting was available for 3 adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than 6 months.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that all adults working directly with children had a major award of a minimum of FETAC level 5 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.*
- (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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained, there were 7 adults working in the service with 35 pre-school children in the morning and 6 adults working with 22 children in the afternoon of the 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.*

(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)

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) and (i).

A sample of 11 of the 41 children's records were reviewed by the Early Years Inspector.

The entries reviewed were factual, consistent, and accurate.

The 11 random records of children contain the following:

- The name and date of birth of the child.
- The date on which the child first attended the service.
- The date on which the child stopped attending the service (where relevant).
- The name and address of the child's parent or guardian, and a telephone number where that parent or guardian (or a relative or friend of the parent or child) can be contacted during the hours of operation.
- Written authorisation / permissions for collecting the child.
- Details are recorded of any illness, allergy, or additional need(s) the child had, together with all the information relevant to the provision of specific care or attention.
- The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner.
- A record of any immunisations the child has had.
- Written parental or guardian consent was included to allow the child to have appropriate medical treatment if there was / is an emergency.

(4)

The registered provider advised and documentary evidence from file review indicated, that all relevant children's records were kept for 2 years from the date a child stops attending 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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(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

19(1)(a) and (b)

Basic Needs

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and nutritious meals and snacks were served at regular times, but there was flexibility.
- Mealtimes were observed to be relax, sociable and staff engaged in a positive way with children.
- The tables and chairs were suitable for the children's ages and stages of development.
- The children were observed washing their hands before eating their morning snack, outdoor play and after toileting and messy play. Hand washing was both encouraged and supervised by the adults.
- The children were encouraged to be independent at toileting and supported by staff as required.
- Children who wore nappies had their nappies changed on a regular basis, in a timely manner by staff in the designated nappy changing area.
- All the children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment, both indoors and outdoors.
- There was an outdoor play area to the front and side of the premises which was sufficiently spacious to accommodate the numbers of children attending the service.

Supporting Relationships

- Staff communicated with parents on an informal basis at drop off and collections times and through the service's childcare application device.
- All the children had the opportunity to play outside for physical exercise and movement.

- Staff responded to younger children’s cues in a timely and appropriate way when they cried or became upset.
- Children language development was encouraged, they were observed reading books and engaged with adults and other children on the content of the books. Children played in small groups with animal jigsaws and discussed with one another what animal they to make. At story time adults created an interactive experience for children, which allowed them to share their views and on stories. Each child was given the opportunity to discuss what they were doing and their interests with their peers and adults.
- Through the programme of activities children had the opportunity to interact in small and large groups and were given the opportunity and encouraged by adults to take the lead and engage with their peers
- Children transitions were supported within the service and to the local primary school. There was evidence that these were well planned and organised by staff to make the transition comfortable and as easy as possible.

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 into the pre-school was secure to prevent unauthorised access by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child. There was a buzzer access system.
- The external outdoor play areas were secure, so that unauthorised persons could not access or enter the area or children could not exit unsupervised.
- The doors into the kitchen, staff toilet, staff room and utility areas had a system of security.
- Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.
- All cleaning agents and equipment were stored inaccessible and out of children’s reach.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Perishable items from children’s lunch boxes were stored in each playroom fridge.
- Parents and guardians had been advised of the service’s updated drop-off and collection policy.

Infection Control:

- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels. Thermostatically controlled warm water was available for use by the children to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
- The correct nappy changing procedure was carried out nappy changing in line with best practice.
- Airtight sealable bin was available for the disposal of used nappies in the nappy changing area.
- The children were observed washing their hands before eating their morning snack, dinner, toileting and outdoor play. Hand washing was supervised by the staff.
- The children's belongings for nappy changing were individually labelled and in designated storage containers.
- Children's soothers were sterilised in accordance with best practice guidance.
- Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with disposal paper towels and disinfectant spray.

Administration of Medication:

- A documented record of the administration of medication was maintained and all medications were clearly labelled and stored appropriately.

Safe Sleep:

- There was a designated sleep room with 15 cots and stackable beds were also available for older children for sleep.
- The service kept physical sleep checks on the service childcare applications. Records for sleeping children included a record of the room temperature and the position, colour and breathing of the child as per the safe sleep for under 2's best practice guidelines for childcare services policy.
- The sleep room temperature was maintained between 20 °C and 16 °C on the day of inspection.
- A supply of clean linen was available for each child. All linen provided was clean, dry, and stored in sealed labelled containers within the sleep room.
- Cellular blankets that allow air to circulate were used for all children under 2 years of age.

Fire Safety:

- A documented record of fire drills was maintained and available for inspection.

Outing:

- No outings have taken place, but they are planned to take place over the summer.

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 service did provide evidence from the roster that a person trained in first aid for children was available during the operational hours of the service to the children attending the pre-school service. There were 4 adults with first aid responder and 2 with paediatric first aid.

(2) (a) There were 2 first aid boxes were easily accessible and in a conspicuous position in the playrooms.

(b) The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 in writing of fire drills indicated that the last fire drill was conducted on the 31/05/2023.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that fire fighting equipment was checked annually. Records confirmed that the fire and smoke detection system was last serviced on 08/03/2023. A record for the fire fighting equipment advised that the last service was 03/03/2023.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire was available on file and was displayed in the lobby and playrooms of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured for a part- time service for 44 children on a sessional basis valid until the 27 March 2024.