

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL029		
Name of Service:	CPI Community Childcare		
Address of Service:	CPI Centre, Knockrawer, Castlefinn, Lifford, Co. Donegal		
Eircode:	F93 YDR9		
Name of Registered Provider:	Stephen Kennedy		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	05/03/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	63	PM 49
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F95 XK94		
Inspection undertaken by:	L Mc Glynn and L Costello		
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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

CPI Community Childcare is a not for profit service located in the border town of Castlefinn in County Donegal. The service offers full day, part time and sessional preschool care to children aged 0-6 years. The service operates between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm each weekday with a sessional preschool operating from 9.00am to 12.00pm. There are four preschool rooms, two of which are in the main building and two are on the first floor of the adjoining building. There are two sleep rooms, a kitchen and relevant sanitary facilities on site. There is a large outdoor area to the rear of the premises that has been subdivided for use by different groups of children.

Staffing

There is a total of 31 staff members employed to work in the service which includes an office manager, staff working directly with the children, staff members on employment activation programmes and auxiliary staff members. The registered provider does not work in the service on a daily basis. There is a named person in charge and a deputy in their absence.

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. 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 inspectors wish 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee 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) (b) (c)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required. There was a clear line of accountability with preschool leaders identified in all care rooms.

(2) The records of all 32 adults working in the service were reviewed. This included 28 staff members, 3 adults employed as part of an employment support programme and 1 adult on student placement.

(a) and (b) Two references from past employers, including the most recent employer or a source other than a past employer in cases where there was no past employment was available for 30 adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 32 adults employed in the service.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for three adults employed in the service that had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4) There was evidence on file to demonstrate that the 28 adults who required it, had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) (b)

- There were no references on file for one staff member.
- One of the references on file for one staff member was from a source other than those listed on their past employment history.
- The second reference on file for one staff member was from a source other than a past employer despite the fact that a number of past employments were listed on their record.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- Two references were obtained for the staff members.
- The staff members CV was updated and includes the relevant employer.
- The staff member obtained the second reference from her past employer.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of references and employment records were submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspectors have reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (2) (a) (b) has been adequately addressed.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were 14 adults working directly with 63 children on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service.

A review of a sample of attendance records showed that an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children during service hours of operation. Two adults employed under a community employment scheme were also present in the playrooms.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

In the cuddly cubs room there were five adults caring for 11 children. Five of the children were aged under one year and six children were aged from one to two years.

In the messy monkeys room, four adults cared for 16 children aged from one to three years.

In the terrific tigers room, there were four adults caring for 18 children aged three to five years.

In the little lions room, four adults cared for 18 children aged two to three years.

In the afternoon the adult to child ratios were found to be as follows:

In the cuddly cubs room, four adults cared for four children aged under one year and five children aged from one to two years.

In the messy monkeys room, four adults cared for 16 children aged from one to three years.

In the terrific tigers room there were three adults caring for 11 children aged three to five years.

In the little lions room, two adults cared for 13 children aged from two to three years.

The person in charge ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises when children were present in the service as evidenced in a sample of attendance records reviewed.

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-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(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.

(2) A registered provider-

(a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, or

(b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016,

shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service consisted of four large playrooms each one assigned for use by different groups of children.

There were adequate and suitable indoor play facilities available in each room for the age range of children attending. The rooms presented as bright and visually appealing spaces with an orderly arrangement of play equipment and materials set into clearly defined areas of interest. These included arts and crafts, construction, small world items, dress up props, play kitchen areas, library's, sensory tables, relaxing areas, problem solving toys and wide range of manipulate play resources. Open low level shelving units enabled all items to be readily accessible to the children and suitable sized tables and chairs were available for tabletop activities.

The cuddly cubs room catered for children aged six months to two years contained two play areas, one specifically for younger babies, not yet mobile. This area included soft floor matting, wall mounted toys, baskets with play items, a ball pit and a shatter proof mirror.

The second area catered for children slightly older who were more mobile and contained more clearly defined interest areas such as a kitchen area, sensory play area, tuff trays for messy play, a cosy area with reading materials dress up area and a range of open shelving and low-level drawer units containing small world toys, blocks, shape sorters and musical instruments.

- (1) (b) There were two designated sleep rooms in the service, one off the cuddly cubs room and the second adjacent to the messy monkeys room. The cuddly cubs sleep room contained eight cots to provide for the sleep needs of the younger children. Each cot was fitted with a mattress containing the required safety label which had a waterproof covering. A large unit provided individual storage of bed linen for each child. The messy monkeys sleep room contained two cots with the required mattresses and coverings. There was also five stackable floor beds and one individual floor bed. Each of the rooms caring for older children were equipped with suitable and comfortable rest areas including soft floor mats and soft cushions.
- (2) (a) (b) There were five separate designated outdoor play areas, each one suitably fenced to provide safe play areas for children outdoors. There was a small area located directly of the cuddly cubs room with an overhead canopy to allow the younger children access to the outdoors in all weathers. The second area contained a mud kitchen, a digging area and a small grass area. A third area contained a wooden stage, art easels and a playhouse for the children’s use. There were two additional play areas behind these which contained natural grass ground surfacing and included wooden climbing structures, a sand box and space for ball play and running. A large storage shed contained a range of play items that could be brought to the areas for children’s play including ride on toys, hoops, cones, balls and digging toys.

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 main entrance into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.

- Cleaning schedules were in place and up to date in all care rooms.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The outdoor perimeter was secure with waste bins stored out of reach of children.
- All hot food provided in the service was probed prior to being served to ensure correct temperature. A record of these checks was available for review.
- All windows on the first floor of the building were fitted with restrictors. Blind cords were secure.
- All perishable items brought in from home was stored in the fridges in the care rooms.

Infection Control:

- There were adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes and after messy play and snack times in all care rooms.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean, with cleaning schedules displayed and up to date in each care room.
- Children were observed to wash their hands regularly including before snacks and meals. Child friendly hand wash posters with picture instructions were placed above the wash basins.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available throughout the service for the safe disposal of waste too prevent cross infection.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had a medication administration policy in place and when questioned, staff were aware of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication.
- Detailed support plans were in place for children with additional health needs such as asthma, allergies and seizures. These plans were drawn up in consultation with the parent and provided easy to follow instruction should assistance be required.

Safe Sleep:

- The air temperatures within the sleep rooms were maintained within the required range while children were sleeping. Staff were observed to carry out physical checks on sleeping children at no more than 10 minute intervals.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms

Outing:

- The outdoor areas were secured with boundary fencing. The service also used the community playground as an additional playground located beside the service. There was risk assessment in place, completed prior to use of this facility.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. An exit door in the messy monkeys sleep room was unsecured when checked by the inspector. The door leads to the lobby area of the adjacent community building which is accessible to the general public. This poses a risk that a child could exit the service unsupervised or an unauthorised person would gain access to the service.
2. There was a pest control box in the sanitary area shared between the cuddly cubs and messy monkeys rooms. The box was on the floor and accessible to children during the inspection.
3. One of the cot mattresses in the cuddly cubs sleep room was ill fitting causing a foothold which poses a safety risk to children. A second mattress was torn and required replacing to prevent the risk of a child accessing the foam underneath.

Safe Sleep:

4. The records of sleep checks carried out in the cuddly cubs room did not provide sufficient detail on the colour or breathing pattern of each individual child. The records reviewed demonstrated that a tick was documented to confirm that both were checked, however the detail on the child's pallor and breathing is required to be documented.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A keypad with a pin and fob which contains a magnetic lock to ensure the door is closed securely has been purchased and installed within the service. Staff will ensure that the door is locked at all times and yearly service checks will be carried out to ensure it is fully operational.
2. The pest control box has been removed. Pest control boxes will be out of children's reach going forward.

- Two new mattresses have been ordered. We will carry out monthly checks on the mattresses within the sleep room.

Safe Sleep:

- We created new codes on the sleep sheet to ensure that breathing and colour would be in more detail. Staff will check the colour and breathing of the children and use the new code provided.

Supporting documentation submitted

Purchase invoices, receipts and photographs were submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted has been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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) On the day of inspection, six staff members on duty were trained in first aider response (FAR) training and were available to children attending the preschool service. The staff roster for the week demonstrated that at least one person with adequate training was on site and available to the children at all times during the hours of operation.

(2) (a) (b) Adequately stocked first aid boxes were available in each of the care rooms in a location easily accessible to staff when required.

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 of all fire drills completed monthly were kept in the service. The most recent fire evacuation drill was completed on the 26 February 2024.

(1) (b)

The service provided a list of all firefighting equipment and smoke detection equipment used within the service with the most recent service date of the 4 January 2024 and 22 January 2024.

(4)

The procedures to follow in the event of a fire were displayed in all care rooms. Child friendly picture format evacuation procedures were also displayed in the care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of valid insurance cover in date until the 27 March 2024. The insurance provided cover for 86 children at any one time attending a full day care service.