

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DL031

Name of Service: Creeslough Community Childcare Services Ltd

Address of Service: St Michael's Tce, Creeslough, Co. Donegal

Eircode: F92 XF61

Name of Registered Provider: Sarah Lafferty

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 06/11/2023

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|-----------------------------------|-----------|----|-----------|----|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 43 | PM | 23 |
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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

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

Creeslough Community Childcare Services Ltd. is a community run childcare service offering full day, part time and sessional preschool care for children aged 0-6 years. The service operates from 8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday with a three-hour sessional service from 9.30am to 12.30pm. The service operates from a single-story purpose-built premises in the centre of the town. There are three care rooms, the creche room, Jr preschool and Sr preschool. A kitchen, office and storage facilities are also available on site. A spacious fully enclosed outdoor play area is provided to the side and rear of the premises subdivided into three separate areas for each playroom.

Staffing

A total of 18 adults are employed to work in the service, 11 of which were present on the day of inspection. There are 13 adults employed to work directly with the pre-school children. There are also two office/managerial staff, a chef, a caretaker and one adult employed on a workplace activation programme.

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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 23 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

(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

The employment records of six new staff members recruited since the last inspection were reviewed to determine compliance with the above listed elements of the regulation.

(2) (a) (b) There were 12 written references on file for the 6 staff members.

(c) A vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána was on file for the six staff members.

(4) Evidence of completion of a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework was available for five staff members and not required for one staff member.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) International police vetting was not available for one staff member whose employment record demonstrated that they had resided outside the State for a period longer than 6 months as an adult. It is acknowledged that this was applied for and submitted to the inspectorate in the days following the inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(d) International police vetting is now currently on file for each employee that requires it.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of police vetting.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance 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.*
- (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 an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.
- (2) The minimum adult/child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection.
- On the morning of inspection there were 43 children were being cared for by 7 adults in 3 care rooms.
- In the creche room, there were 3 adults caring for 11 children aged 1-2 years.
 - In the Jr preschool room, there were 2 adults caring for 19 children aged 2-3 years.
 - In the Sr preschool room, there were 2 adults caring for 13 children aged 3-4 years.
- In the afternoon there were 23 children being cared for by 6 adults in two care rooms.
- (8)(a) A review of the planned staff roster demonstrated that at least two adults are rostered to be on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

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.*

Compliance Information

The records required at points (a) to (k) as detailed in the regulation were on file and available for review on the day of inspection.

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 to the service and the perimeter of the outdoor play area were secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. There was a buzzer system on the main entrance door to alert staff to the arrival of parents or visitors and an alarm sounded continuously when the door was open to prevent it accidentally being left ajar. The kitchen was inaccessible to children as were all storage areas containing harmful or unsafe items. Cleaning supplies were kept on high level shelves out of children's reach. Measures had been taken to ensure windows were safe for children with visibility indicators and window blind cords were secured. The toys and equipment were appropriate for use by the children attending, given their age and stage of development. Individual items appeared to be clean, in good repair and free from hazards. Larger play equipment was in good condition and appeared to be well maintained. The outdoor play area appeared safe for children's use with no evidence of hazardous materials, or access to unsafe areas. Staff members were observed carrying out a risk assessment on the outdoor play area prior to children's use with potential hazards recorded, for example the wooden decking was highlighted as a slip/fall hazard as it was particularly wet on the day. Staff alerted children to the risk and advised to take care when in the area.

Infection Control:

The service presented as visibly clean and well maintained. Cleaning records were maintained of the care rooms, sleep area and sanitary accommodation. Individual areas and items were detailed along with the frequency and method of cleaning. Staff were observed maintaining general cleanliness within the rooms including wiping table before and after mealtimes. Colour coded clothes were used throughout the service for cleaning the specific areas and there was a wall mounted chart in each room as a reminder to staff of the colour for each area. A system of routine handwashing was in place for children before meals and after outdoor play. Each wash hand basin used by children was equipped with thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and single use paper towels. Foot pedal operated bins were provided in all areas for the safe disposal of waste. Each of the rooms were ventilated by way of openable windows and children played outdoors for periods of the day.

Administration of Medication:

Records were maintained of the administration of medication to children which included written parental consent and information on the dose, time, method and staff member administering the medication. A second staff witness signature was also recorded.

Safe Sleep:

There was one designated sleep room with four standard cots. Each cot was fitted with a waterproof mattress that met required safety standards. The cots were in a good state of repair and were individually labelled for each child. Physical checks, no more than 10 minutes apart were carried out on children whilst asleep in both the sleep room and older children sleeping in the care room. Records detailed the colour, breathing, position of each child along with the temperature of the room.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were clear from obstruction and a clearly identifiable evacuation plan was wall mounted in each room. Staff were conversant on the procedure to follow in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The perimeter of the outdoor play area was enclosed with a wooden boundary fence which had three entrance gates. The mechanism for opening each gate was located on the outside of the fence. This posed a risk of unauthorised access to the premises.

Infection Control:

2. There was no suitable changing station at waist level in the Jr preschool room to provide for safe and hygienic practices in relation to nappy changing. On the day of inspection, children's nappies were changed on a changing mat placed on the floor of the children's sanitary accommodation.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. One of the gates has been closed up. It had been opened up during Covid and is no longer needed to be opened. The locks are on both sides of the gates to prevent children from opening the gate from the inside and unauthorised person gaining access. The outdoor area is supervised at all times and ensure that both locks are locked at all times.

Infection Control:

2. A waist level changing facility was built into the toilet with removable steps. This will be used going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

A number of images were submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances have been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance in place for up to 56 children attending the service on a full day care basis.