

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL047
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Name of Service:	Glenties Community Playgroup Ltd
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Address of Service:	Glen Rd, Glenties, Co. Donegal
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Eircode:	F94 D622
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Name of Registered Provider:	Josephine Meehan
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	30/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM	16
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F95 XK94
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Inspection undertaken by:	L Mc Glynn
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Glenties Community Playgroup Ltd is a community run not for profit service located in the rural town of Glenties in west Donegal. The service is registered to provide full day care for children aged 1-6 years however on the day of inspection the service was providing for children aged 2-6 years. The service had recently closed the room that caters for children aged 1-2 years on a temporary basis. The service currently operates from 8.00am-5.30pm, for 49 weeks of the year and provides full day, part time and sessional preschool care.

The service currently operates from a purpose adapted single story premises which has two care rooms. The third care room which was closed on the day of inspection is located in a new building to the rear of the premises. The service has a number of enclosed outdoor areas located on three sides of the building.

Staffing

There are eight staff members currently employed to work in the service, five of which were present on the day of inspection. The registered provider is not on the premises on a daily basis, there is a named person in charge and a named deputy.

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 inspections 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 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
- (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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The registered provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise.
 - (b) The registered provider had a manager in place who was the person in charge and was on the premises and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.
Staff rosters indicated that the designated person in charge or deputy were available on the premises at all times when the pre-school children were present.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and roles and responsibilities of each employee.
- (2) At the time of inspection, the person in charge confirmed that there were eight named staff members who worked in the service. Two of these staff members had commenced working in the service since the previous

inspection. A review of records demonstrated that the vetting documentation for six of the staff had been reviewed during previous inspection and were found to be compliant under this regulation. With reference to the above listed elements of Regulation 9, recruitment records in respect of the two newly recruited staff were reviewed and the following information was available:

- (a) (b) Three validated references on file, in respect of the two staff members were from past employers or a source other than a previous employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. 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 on file for one staff member who required it.
- (4) The two staff members did not require a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications to carry out the duties of their role.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (a) (b) There was two references on file for one staff member, however both references were relating to time spent in the same employment. A second reference from an additional employer is required to meet the requirements of the regulation.
- (d) There were significant gaps in the employment history of one staff member therefore the requirement for international police vetting could not be determined.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2) (a) (b) I have reviewed the staff file. Requested a reference from her previous employer. A checklist template has been created to avoid this occurring again on staff files.
- (d) The staff member has updated their curriculum vitae. We have reviewed this to ensure that police vetting was not needed with this particular staff member. Reviewing curriculum vitae to ensure no gaps are present.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation was submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 (2) have 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) (2) On the inspector's arrival to the service, 24 children were being cared for by 4 staff members in 2 care rooms. In the Sr Preschool room, three adults were caring for 15 children aged 3-5 years and, in the Jr Preschool room, one adult was caring for 9 children aged 3-4 years.

When assessed in the afternoon, 16 children were all cared for in the Sr preschool room by three adults.

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 children brought lunches from home for snack time and a main meal, sourced from a local hotel was served at lunchtime. Children were given the choice each morning of two hot meals which were made to order before delivery. The meal was observed to be adequately nutritious and children appeared to enjoy it. Snacks brought from home were observed to be healthy and nutritious with a selection of sandwiches, breads, crackers, fruit and yogurt consumed. The children were allowed the opportunity to take their time at snack time and to progress to activities when they were happy that they had ate enough. Drinking water was available to children in both rooms throughout the day. The children were observed to go in and out of the toilets independently and to confidently ask the adults working in the

service for help if required. Staff were observant of children's requests for help. The children were supported by the adults to ensure that hand washing procedures were carried out post toileting, messy play and before eating. Nappy changes, when required, were carried out promptly and in a sensitive manner. Staff communicated with children during the process and encouraged children to be independent where possible.

The preschool rooms were well-resourced room and clearly laid out to accommodate the needs of the children. Low level tables and chairs were available for tabletop activities and for dining at snack time. A library area with a range of reading material next to a comfortable seating provided a relaxation/rest space. Art and craft facilities were available with a painting easel, paint pots, brushes and aprons available to the children. Sand and water play were easily accessible. There was an array of children's artwork and items of interest displayed on the walls.

Staff were observed to have a good relationship with children and spoke in a casual, friendly manner about their home and family life. Staff demonstrated knowledge of children's individual likes and interests and spoke to the inspector about how they incorporate this into their planning of learning activities in the rooms. A portfolio of children's art work, group and individual activities throughout the year was compiled for each child in preparation for the end of year and was to be given to parents.

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 boundary of the premises was secured with high level fencing preventing children for exiting the premises unsupervised. The entry and exit routes from the building were secured with a buzzer system alerting staff to the arrival of parents or visitors.
- The equipment and materials in use on the day were well maintained and free from hazards. Records demonstrated that a risk assessment was carried out by staff prior to the use of the outdoor play area.

Infection Control:

- The preschool rooms and sanitary accommodation presented in a clean, hygienic condition. Cleaning records were documented and on display in each area.
- Childrens hands were routinely wash following messy play, toileting and prior to eating meals.
- Perishable items in the children's lunchboxes were refrigerated prior to eating.
- Nappy changes were carried out in line with infection control procedures.

Administration of Medication:

- Records were maintained on the safe administration of medication in the service. The records were reviewed and noted to be completed in full on each occasion.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were free from obstruction and a record was maintained of regular fire drills occurring in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The dining room where children ate their main meal contained items which may pose a risk of injury to a child including laptops, a printer, cables, files, boxes and cleaning equipment.

Infection Control:

2. The waste bins in use in the preschool rooms were hand operated posing a risk of infection. Foot pedal operated bins are required for use in all areas within the preschool.

3. The wipeable covering on chairs in the Sr preschool room were torn exposing the thread and foam underneath which cannot be adequately cleaned for infection control purposes.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. We are in the process of moving this office space to another area in the service. Children would have been highly supervised in this area at all times during use. We will ensure that all items are removed from this area.

Infection Control:

2. Bins were replaced immediately with foot pedal bins in all playschool rooms. Health and safety checks will be carried out regularly to ensure such bins are in working order in the preschool rooms.
3. The chairs have been removed from the preschool room and replaced with new chairs. Regular checks will be carried out to ensure this chair is suitable for use.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions detailed by the registered provider. These have been accepted as an assurance that the non-compliances have been addressed. Evidence of their implementation will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Adequate adult to child ratios were in place to ensure that all children were appropriately supervised, when attending the service. It was observed on the day that constant careful supervision by both sight and sound occurred to ensure children's safety. The staff positioned themselves within the rooms in areas where children were playing in small and large groups. Staff were observant and were available to children when using the toilet independently and during mealtimes to provide assistance if required.