

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL138		
Name of Service:	Glen Outdoor		
Address of Service:	Barrack, Newmills, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal		
Eircode:	F92 YR68		
Name of Registered Provider:	Sally O'Donnell		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	16/06/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM 18
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 and Ms. 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
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Description of service

This privately owned outdoor preschool service is in a private dwelling and outdoor grounds in Newmills, outside the urban town of Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. The preschool caters for children aged between 0 and 6 years of age, from Monday to Friday between 07:50 am and 06:30 pm. This outdoor service offers the option of full day-care, part-time day care service, an (ECCE) Early Childhood Care and Education and sessional care programme. This preschool service offers an outdoor experience and has a variety of interest areas for children. The service also has a fully equipped kitchen, dining room, two internal playrooms, sleep room and sanitary facilities.

Staffing

The registered provider is not on the premises daily and there is a named person in charge and a named designated deputy. There is a total of 4 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 5 adults on the premises which included the registered provider. Four 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.

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, 19, 23 and 32. 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.

Additional Information

This inspection was triggered by information received to the Early Years Inspectorate on the 23 May 2023.

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*

(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.
- (b) The person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.
- On the day of inspection, the 5 staff files were reviewed.
- (2)(a)&(b) Ten written validated references on file, in respect of the 5 staff were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 5 staff.
- (d) Documentary evidence indicated no adults, had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years, so police vetting was not required.
- (4) Four staff working directly with the children had evidence of a minimum of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Non-Compliance Information

- (4)
- One adult working directly with children, did not have evidence of one of the following:
- A minimum award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, in Early Childhood Care and Education or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.
 - An exemption from the qualification requirement and confirmation that the Minister accepts this exemption.

- The qualification requirement or relevant specialist training and the basis on which the capitation may be used for a person employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), detailed in an exemption letter from Pobal.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in her response that:

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (4) In future unqualified staff will not work directly with preschool children and relief qualified staff will only be used.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (4) No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

- (4) The Early Years Inspectors have reviewed the registered providers response and has deemed it has met the requirements of this part of the Regulations. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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) At 10:15 am on the morning of the inspection, there were 24 preschool children present.

- 3 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 4 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
- 17 children were aged between 3 to 5 years.

There were 4 staff directly caring for these children.

The registered provider assisted with the administrative side of the inspection and provided relief.

In the afternoon, of the inspection, there were 18 preschool children present.

- 3 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 4 children were aged between 2 to 3 years,
- 11 children were aged between 3 to 6 years.

There were 3 staff, directly caring for and supervising these children.

(8) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were on the premises during the operation of the preschool service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1), (2) Between 9:30 am and 10:15 am the registered provider did not ensure that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the Wobbler / Toddlers group.

There was 1 adult working with

- 3 children were aged between 1 to 2 years,
- 4 children were aged between 2 to 3 years.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

They will ensure that relief staff are available to cover staff absences from the service and that the adult / child ratio is maintained during the operation of the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The Early Years Inspectors have reviewed the registered providers response and has deemed it has met the requirements of this part of the Regulations. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

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. Children dined in the outdoor area and in the dining room.
- The tables and chairs were suitable for the children's ages and stages of development. Crockery and plates were readily available for children.
- All perishable items were stored in the service fridge.
- The children were observed washing their hands before eating their morning snack, before lunch 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.
- The outdoor service was to the back and side of the main premises which was sufficiently spacious to accommodate the numbers of children attending the service. There was a large selection of special interest areas for children to explore and play in.

Supporting Relationships

- Staff communicated with parents on an informal basis at drop off and collections times and through the service's childcare application device.
- Children spent the majority of the day playing in large and small groups in the outdoor area and were supported by staff where required.
- 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 at the sand pit, climbing trees, setting up a rally track, building blocks, playing with small world toys and practicing their summer play. 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 their transition 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.
- The service has been involved in a cross-border programme called 'Sharing from the Start' which aims to improve educational outcomes for young children and build good relations between children and adults from different backgrounds from the border counties. The service has attended and organised events to date.

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 door into the pre-school was secured to prevent unauthorised entry by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- All toys and play equipment were safe and in good condition in each of the childcare rooms and outdoor area.
- Fire doors were unobstructed to ensure the safe evacuation in the event of a fire or other emergency.

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 with a temperature reading of less than 43°C.
- Tissues were available within reach of the children and the children were prompted to wipe their noses by the adults.
- The children's barrier creams were individually labelled and on designated shelving in the nappy changing area.
- Childrens nappies were changed in line with best practice.
- A supply of hand sanitiser was readily available throughout the service.
- The premises was maintained in a clean condition and up to date cleaning schedules outlining the measures taken to clean the service were available.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- One designated sleep room was available for children aged less than 2 years of age with a total of 4 cots.
- Stackable beds were available for older children requiring sleep provision.
- A sleep policy detailed 'the safe sleep for under 2 years' best practice guidelines was available.

- There was a thermometer in the sleep room to record the room temperature. The inspectors noted the sleep room temperature was within normal recommended guidelines between 16°- 20°C.
- All records were maintained electronically and included the colour, position, and breathing pattern of the sleeping child and any necessary remedial action taken if required.
- All linen provided for the cots were clean, dry, and stored in the service hot press.
- There was soft seating and matting provided in each playroom for children to rest or opt out of an activity if they choose to.

Fire Safety:

- There was documented evidence of fire drills.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Children had access to office equipment and cables in the hallway area of the service which may present as a safety hazard for children.
2. There was hanging cables in the sleep room which may present as a safety hazard for preschool children.
3. There was a clothes line in use in the outdoor area which may pose as a safety hazard to children. It is acknowledged that this was removed on the day of inspection.

Infection Control:

The following may pose a risk of cross infection for a preschool child:

4. There was no self-sealing leak proof nappy changing bin in use in the nappy changing area.
5. A foot operated pedal bin was broken in the children's sanitary area in the main building. It is acknowledged that it was removed and replaced on the day of inspection.
6. There was a substantial amount of dust on the mechanically operated extractor fan in the children's sanitary area.

Safe Sleep:

7. Cellular blankets were not in use in the sleep room which may pose as a safety risk for children, it is acknowledged that this was rectified on the day of inspection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in her response:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The office has been moved to an office space in a secured area away from preschool children.
2. The monitor in the sleep room is now secured to the wall.
3. The clothes line was removed on the day of inspection.

Infection Control:

4. New leak proof bin self-sealing bin has been purchased for the nappy changing area.
5. The foot pedal bin was replaced on the day of inspection.
6. The fan in the sanitary area was cleaned and hovered.

Safe Sleep:

7. Cellular blankets were put into the cots on the day of inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1-3 Photographic evidence was submitted.

Infection Control:

4-6 Photographic evidence was submitted.

Safe Sleep:

7 Photographic evidence was submitted.

Summary Comment

1- 7 The photographic evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectors and has been deemed to have met the requirements of this part of the Regulations.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) A complaints policy was available on file. The policy advised that the service welcomed any suggestions, recommendations, or feedback from the parents/ guardians of children attending the service. The policy sets out the procedures as to how a person can make a complaint – that is, how to make a complaint and to whom to make it.
- The policy describes the process for closing the complaint by the service including recording the outcome of the complaint; details of any recommendations; details of any changes to practice, policy, or statement.
- (b) The policy indicated the way which complaints will be dealt with. If the person making the complaint was not satisfied with the information about the appeals process.
 - (c) The policy stated how the person making the complaint is to be kept informed of progress.
- (2)(a) In the policy a record of all correspondence and the reply to the complainant that an investigation took place was outlined.
- (b) The complaint record was open to an authorised person.
- (4) The person in charge advised of the retention of records as outlined in (2)(a) will be retained for 2 years