

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR003			
Name of Service:	Blackrock Community Playgroup			
Address of Service:	Lower Hall, Urban Junction, 42 Main St, Blackrock, Co. Dublin			
Eircode:	A94 Y3X7			
Name of Registered Provider:	Sharon O'Reilly			
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	07/12/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	20
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.			
Inspection undertaken by:	Ms Sarah Quigley			
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

Blackrock Community Playgroup is a not for profit early years service which was established in 1995 by the current registered provider. Care and education is provided to children aged two to six years on a part time and sessional basis, and the programme of care is facilitated through a play based curriculum. The service is located in a urban area in Blackrock, South County Dublin and is open from 09:00 to 12:45 each weekday. The service operates from two rooms within the Blackrock Methodist Church. When the early years service is not in operation in the afternoons, the room functions as a multi-purpose space for other group in the community. An outdoor play area is available to the front of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 7 staff members, not including the registered provider who does not work directly in the service. On the day of inspection, 5 staff members were present including the designated person in charge and an adult who performs cleaning duties.

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/ information and records/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1).

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

(2) Documentation was reviewed in respect of the 7 adults who are currently employed to work in the service.

The following records were available for the adults:

(a) (b)

The registered provider demonstrated that they had verified the references obtained from two sources for 4 of the adults.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure from The National Vetting Bureau for the 7 adults.

(d) Not applicable, international police vetting was not required by the adults.

(4) There was evidence that 6 of the adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent. One of the adults did not require a qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

There was no evidence available to show that the two references each obtained in respect of 3 staff members had been appropriately verified by the registered provider.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider provided the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The references were checked by the provider, Sharon O'Reilly, as usual. The references have been signed off on. The service will do what they can in the future to ensure all references are signed off promptly.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions outlined as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance. The actions outlined will be reviewed on the next inspection of the service. The regulatory requirement has been met.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were 20 children present in the service being supervised by 6 adults during 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.*

Compliance Information

(1)
A sample of 11 records of preschool children maintained in the service were reviewed by the inspector to assess compliance. The documentation reviewed evidenced that 10 of the records detailed all of the required information outlined under Regulation 15(1), and that 1 of the records detailed the required information under 15(1)(a) to (g), and (i).

Non-Compliance Information

One of the records reviewed did not detail a record of immunisations received by the child as required under Regulation 15(1)(h).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The required documentation is now in place.

Supporting documentation submitted

No Supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

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:

- (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

- (1)
- (h) A written record was available in the care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
 - (i) Details of a staffing roster was available in the service and accurately reflected the staff in attendance on the day of inspection.
 - (j) Records of the administration of medication were not available in the service as no medication had been administered to a child. However, staff detailed the procedures in place to record the administration of medication and documentation was available to record these details if required.
 - (k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed documented the necessary details.

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-

(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

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

Staff stated that lunch and snacks are provided daily by the parents or guardians of the children in attendance. Drinks of water were accessible to the children in the care rooms at all times. Children were encouraged to assist in the preparation for lunch and snack time, handing out food and drinks to their peers. Staff members sat with the children engaged in conversation during mealtimes.

Children all accessed the toilet independently during the inspection and staff supported younger children where required. Children requiring nappy changing were changed at a set time during the morning and promptly if required outside this time. Staff demonstrated kindness and warmth during interactions observed by the inspectors. Comfort was offered to children promptly when required and the children appeared happy and content at their play and activities throughout the inspection.

Staff supported the children to wash their hands regularly throughout the inspection including before meals and after toileting. Rest areas were available in the care rooms so children could take time away from the group or rest if required. Children were also encouraged to be independent in assisting with various tasks within the classrooms which were displayed on a daily job chart. Staff were observed supporting the children offering reassurance and praise during play and organised activities and demonstrated an awareness of children's individual care needs.

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

The inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the play indoor environments were safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products, medications, and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

Staff stated an infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy. Children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors. Documentation was available to record such administration if required, a sample of this documentation was reviewed by the inspectors and was appropriate.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

Some practices were observed which were at variance with the infection control policy in place in the service and posed a risk of cross contamination as follows:

1. Appropriate bins were not available for disposal of waste in parts of the service.
 - Unlidded bins were in use in both care rooms and the sanitary area for disposal of waste and paper towels following handwashing.
2. Paper towels used for hand-drying were not appropriately stored in a dispenser for use and to prevent cross contamination. Staff were observed handling large rolls of paper towels following handwashing to break off pieces for children to dry their hands, without washing their own hands beforehand.
3. There were no cleaning schedules in place in the service to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff outlined during discussions with the inspector that there is no record maintained of what has been or needs to be cleaned, and that schedules they did have are no longer in use. This increases the risk of cross contamination and spread of infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider provided the following response:

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

All Children now take hand towels from the dispenser after washing their hands. Adequate supplies of hand towels are kept on the premises to ensure the children can dry their hands from the dispenser. New bins have been purchased for the areas required. New cleaning schedules in place.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The actions outlined by the registered provider will be assessed on the next inspection of the service. The regulatory requirement has been met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed during the inspection evidenced that the service was adequately insured for the number of children in attendance and the type of service provided.