

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR115		
Name of Service:	Tir Na Nog Creche & Montessori		
Address of Service:	4 Marine Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	A96 W659		
Name of Registered Provider:	Patricia Keane		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date(s) of Inspection:	11/12/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM 27
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown, County Dublin.		
Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill and Mona Condon		
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

Tir Na Nóg Crèche & Montessori is registered as a Full Day Care service and is privately operated. The early years service is situated in a two-storey terraced house located on Marine Road in Dun Laoghaire. Care of the children is facilitated across five care rooms named the Baby room, Wobbler room, a Toddler room, Pre-Montessori and Montessori rooms. A separate sleep room is available for children under two years of age. An outdoor play area is provided to the rear of the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment. The service operates Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm and caters for children aged 0-6 years.

Staffing

Ten staff are employed in the service including the registered provider. On the day of inspection seven staff were present and one student who was on work placement. The registered provider arrived after the inspection commenced.

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection plan focused on an examination of compliance under regulations.

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 15 Record of Pre-school child

Regulation 16(h),(i),(j) and (k) Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child and

Regulation 25 First Aid

however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29 premises and facilities.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 and Regulation 16 (k).

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 registered provider, 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) The inspection focused on the recruitment records for ten staff employed in the service. Additionally records available for a student who was present on work placement were assessed. All records reviewed met the Regulatory requirement as follows.

(a), (b) There were twenty-two written verified references available from two sources for staff.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána for all staff working the in the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for four adults who lived outside the state as adults for a period exceeding six months.

(4) Records were available evidencing that all staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent.

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

(2) On the day of inspection there were twenty-six pre-school children being supervised directly by six staff.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were not working directly with the children at all times as evidenced by;

1. In the Pre-Montessori room one adult cared for eight children from 10-11am. These children were in the 2–3-year age range; the minimum ratio of adults to children for this age range is 1:6. This non-compliance was noted on the last inspection on the 10 February 2022.
2. One adult was observed supervising three sleep rooms the Baby, Wobbler and Toddler rooms for approximately five minutes. In total twelve children were sleeping. Seven children were aged under 2 years and five were aged 2-3 years. During this time the adult who was supervising left the service to open the front gate. The minimum ratio of adults to children for 1-2 years age range is 1:5. The minimum ratio of adults to children aged 2–3-year age range is 1:6. The minimum adult: child ratio was not maintained during this time.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) 1. Staff and Manager have been informed of the observation and the importance of monitoring and maintaining ratios – copy of training record submitted.
2. There was a mix up in times of staff breaks due the unusual level of absenteeism and one member of staff left for lunch while Manager took a 5 min break. As above, all staff have been re-trained in the importance of maintaining staff ratios

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has been met. Practice will be reviewed on next 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 records were reviewed for ten children who were attending the service. The records reviewed contained the following information:
- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
 - (b) The date on which each child first attended the service was recorded on a register.
 - (c) There was an area on the registration form where the date when a child would cease to attend the service will be recorded.
 - (d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service were also available.
 - (e) There was authorisation for the collection of the child.
 - (f) The record available supported the recording of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child.
 - (g) The name and telephone number of each child's medical practitioner was recorded.
 - (h) Parents provided a record of the immunisations their child had received.
 - (i) There was written consent for appropriate medical treatment of a child in the event of an emergency.

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

- (h) Details of the attendance of each child in the service were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.
- (i) The staff roster was available.
- (j) A sample of medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.
- (k) A sample of accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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)

Each children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated appropriate to their age and stage of development. Younger children were placed in highchairs and supported to feed themselves. For morning snack children were given fresh fruit and at lunch time a hot meal of sweet and sour chicken and rice was served. The manager confirmed the service uses an external catering company to supply the main meal. Mealtimes were sociable staff sat at the table with children and engaged in conversation. Children were offered milk with their lunch and drinking water was freely available in all care rooms.

Older children used the toilet independently while being supervised by staff. Younger children's nappies were changed as required. During this time staff engaged warmly with the children.

The care rooms were suitably furnished with low level tables and chairs for mealtimes and tabletop activities. Designated areas of interest included a home corner, dress-up clothing, an art area, a library area and cosy areas for children to sit and relax. Equipment including jigsaw puzzles, blocks and Montessori materials were easily accessible for children from the low-level shelving provided. Children had the freedom to choose the activity they wished to play with and staff were observed to provide additional support as required.

An outdoor play area was available to the rear of the premises. Children from the Toddler, Pre-Montessori and Montessori rooms were observed in the outdoor area at designated times. Children were observed to enjoy cycling bikes in the play area provided.

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 entry to the service was safely secured to prevent unauthorised access and to prevent children leaving unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely and inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.

Infection Control:

- The service maintained a cleaning schedule and the environment was clean.
- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. Children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including following outdoor play, after using the toilet and before meals.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication records were reviewed and were completed correctly signed by staff and parents.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were familiar with the safe sleep policy. Physical checks were completed on sleeping children every ten minutes. The sleep room was maintained at the correct temperature.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed and safety signs were used to indicate the location of fire exits.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the Wobbler room the cover on the two-child size armchairs was torn and foam was exposed posing a potential safety risk.

Infection Control:

2. Nappy changing practice observed was not effective for infection control purposes for example staff did not remove used gloves after nappy changing and clean the changing mat after use. Water wipes were used to clean the children's hands from the Toddler room this is contrary to the nappy changing policy.
3. A twist lid bin was provided for the disposal of nappies rather than a pedal operated bin increasing the infection control risk.
4. The pedal bin provided in the Montessori room was broken.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The armchairs have been removed from the room and new armchairs are in transit.

Infection Control:

2. Staff were made aware of observation immediately after the inspection. Retraining of staff was conducted to emphasise the importance of following the nappy changing policy for effective infection control – record of training form submitted.
3. Twist bin now removed. Pedal bin in operation.
4. Pedal bin is now in operation.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Written evidence.

Infection Control:

Written and photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions stated. The regulatory requirement has been met. Practice will be reviewed on next inspection.

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) A person trained in first aid for children was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a)& (b) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service and was available to the children attending the service at all times.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Non-Compliance Information

(d) The service was not maintained as required as evidence by the following;

- In the sanitary area used by children attending the Montessori rooms there was a leak, paint and plaster were flaking off the wall in one of the toilets used by the children.
- There was a leak in the ceiling in the Baby cot room.
- The blind in the Baby cot room was worn.
- On the stairs leading to the upstairs Montessori rooms the metal mount on two steps was worn and secured with masking tape.
- The skirting board was loose on two steps of the stairs.
- Paint was flaking off the walls in the hallway and Toddler room.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The County Council have been informed of these observations.

- Leak was repaired before inspection. Sanitary area wall has now been sealed and repainted.
- Leak in ceiling of baby cot room was fixed prior to audit. Area has now been sealed and repainted.
- The blind will be replaced in time but is in working order and not affecting care of the children.
- Metal mounts on stairs have been replaced.
- Skirting boards fixed.

The County Council are in discussions with contractor to get hall and toddler room re-painted by Aug 31st, 2024.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written and photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions stated. The regulatory requirement has been met.