

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY119			
Name of Service:	Kilkerrin Community Playschool			
Address of Service:	Kilkerrin Community Development Centre, Kilkerrin, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway			
Eircode:	H53 K7F9			
Name of Registered Provider:	Leona McMahan Divilly			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	29/11/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	0
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, Co. Galway.			
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan.			
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

The preschool is in a playroom within the community hall building in Kilkerrin village, county Galway. A quiet rest area is provided in the pre-school playroom, to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if a child chooses to do so. The pre-school children have access to secure outdoor play area to the side of the premises.

This community service operates an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme and sessional care programme from 9.15 am to 12.45 pm, from Monday to Friday, aged 2 to 6 years of age. There is a well-developed outdoor area for children to play and explore.

Staffing

A total of 4 adults works directly with children in the service. The registered provider is supernumerary and not on the premises daily. There is a designated person in charge and a named deputy on the premises daily. Four adults work directly with the children and hold 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection 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.

(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) The manager was the designated persons in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.
- (b) The manager was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.
- (c) Staff rosters, policies and signage evidence indicated that there was a clear management structure in the service, which identified the lines of authority and accountability within the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.
- All 5 adult files were reviewed including the registered providers:
- (2)(a) & (b) Ten of the validated references on file in respect of 5 adults were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 5 adults. This was in adhere with the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Documentary evidence indicated that no adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years and therefore did not require police vetting.
- (4) Four adults held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of Level 5, in Early Childhood Care and education.

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) The adult / child ratio was correct and maintained on the inspection day.
- (2) On the day of the inspection, there were 11 pre-school children present with 3 adults working directly with them.

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

19(1)(a)

BASIC NEEDS:

- The healthy eating policy was available for parents, guardians to view and the snacks were appropriate and the foods observed on the day of inspection.
- The snacks supplied by the parents were healthy and nutritious and consisted of sandwiches, crackers, cheese, fresh fruit pieces, yogurts with milk or water available to children when needed. Perishable items were stored in the service fridge.

- Crockery and plates were offered and used during children’s snack times and were appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children.
- Children had access to water in the playroom and the outdoor play area.
- All children attending the service were toilet trained and toileted independently or with some assistance or support by adults as required.
- The children self-care was assisted and encouraged by adults for e.g., to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting, after using a tissue and after messy play.
- In the playroom the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couch in designated cosy area and the service also had a sensory room where children could take time out and relax.
- Children’s behaviour was managed in a positive manner by adults, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement. Children are shown positive strategies to manage their behaviour during the session.
- Transitions between activities were organised in a calm and effective manner by adults.
- Adults were observed showing empathy to each child, spoke in soft tone of voice, engaged in a caring way with children.
- There was an outdoor play area to the side of the premises and well-defined sheltered areas for inclement weather which was sufficiently spacious to accommodate the numbers of children attending the service. There was a good variety of special interest areas for children to play in.
- The play equipment and materials provided in the outdoor area supported a range of physically energetic activities and play experiences.
- Children were observed at snacktime, circle time, playing in the defined interest areas and enjoying the outdoor area where children played with the farm and built a cow shed with buckets of water, hand and timber.

Programme of Activities and its Implementation

- There was a programme of activity in playroom which was in use on the day of inspection. A weekly plan was in place which detailed the theme for the week which was ‘Dinosaurs’.

- A learning journal was maintained for each child and a group journal which outlined the different activities that were carried out over the year.
 - Staff carried out observations and assessments of learning for each child. These observations were linked to the planning of curriculums.
- The children appeared happily engaged in activities throughout the session. Different activities were pursued in the room according to the children's interests with an emphasis on outdoor play.

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:

GENERAL SAFETY:

- The main entrance door into the pre-school was secure to prevent unauthorised access by an unauthorised person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- Fire doors were unobstructed, to ensure the safe evacuation in the event of a fire or other emergency.
- All cleaning agents and equipment were stored inaccessible and out of children's reach.
- All toys and play equipment in the playroom, were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Daily records of attendance were kept for all of children attending the playroom.
- Low level windows in the playroom were fitted with restrictive opening devices.
- All blinds were fitted with fasteners / safety devices.
- The temperature of the playroom was within normal recommended guidelines between 18° to 22° C.
- A documented risk assessment of the outdoor play areas was also available for review.

INFECTION CONTROL:

- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels.
- The children washed their hands before eating their morning snack, after toileting, after messy play and outdoor play. Hand washing was supervised by the staff members.

- Children’s spare clothing was stored in labelled storage bags to avoid cross contamination.
- There was a daily and a weekly cleaning log.
- Waste was disposed of in foot pedalled lidded bins in the sanitary areas, kitchen, playroom and thereby inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with disposal paper towels and disinfectant spray, the inspector observed this practice on the day of inspection.
- The playroom was observed to be kept adequately ventilated with the windows left open whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playroom.

Fire Safety:

- Fire drills were maintained and documented monthly.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-*
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) A written record was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service.
The last recorded fire drill was the 25/11/2024
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual check 30/08/2024.
The last annual service record for smoke and fire detection alarm was dated 30/08//2024.
- (4) A notice was displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had in date insurance for a part-time day-care service for a maximum of 22 preschool children valid until the 27/03/2025.

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,

Compliance Information

(d) The premises was maintained in a good state of repair and there was documented evidence of cleaning schedules, these were signed off by the staff members on a daily and weekly basis.