

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY286
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Name of Service:	Williamstown Community Playschool
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Address of Service:	The Parish Hall, Williamstown, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	F45 W211
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Name of Registered Provider:	Noel Tarmey
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	22/06/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Kelly
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
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Description of service

This service operates a sessional daycare early years' service for children aged from 2yrs to 6 years. The service operates from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm, Monday to Friday . This service is located in a community building in Willamstown village in Co. Galway. This service has 1 large playroom and a kitchen/staff area. It also has a well-equipped outdoor area which is located to the side of the buildings.

Staffing

On the day of inspection, there were 7 adults working with the children and 1 student that was on work experience placement. The register provider did not work in the service on a daily basis.

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 ,15 and 19; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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

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*

(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 service manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the manager was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.

It was confirmed that there were 8 members of staff employed in the service. Four adults held a qualification in early childhood care and education, two adults present were on childcare work placement and were supervised at all times while working with the children. There was also one student that was work experience placement.

The registered provider is supernumerary and does not work on the premises.

All files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) There were 9 written and appropriately validated references available from the adult's most recent employer.

(b) There were 7 written and appropriately validated reference available from a source other than recent employer for the adults working in the service.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the staff working in the service.

(d) Police Vetting was not required as the adults working in the service that had not lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.

(4) There were 4 adults working directly with children who had obtained at least an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) During the period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service. On the day, there were 20 pre-school children being cared for by 6 adults and 1 student on work placement.

At 10.30 am on the day of inspection, the following care room was in operation.

(3) Playroom (ECCE), there were 6 adults caring for 20 children.

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.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider developed, maintained and retained records about each child attending the service.

A sample of the children's records were reviewed by the inspectors, of the 22 children attending the service, a total of 7 records were reviewed, the records contained the elements (a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i,) as outlined above.

(4) All records were retained for the required period of 2 years from the date on which the child ceases to attend the service.

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

Basic Needs:

- Children were independent with their toileting needs. However, on occasion some children needed a gentle reminder from staff. When the children were playing in the outdoor play area, they were escorted to the main building to use the sanitary area.
- Children were observed washing their hands prior to lunchtime and after using the toilet and returning from the outdoor play area .
- Lunchtime was observed to be a social event, the staff sat with the children and ate their own lunch ,speaking and interacting in a positive manner with the children.
- Children got the opportunity to move freely between the indoor play area and the outdoor play area each day .
- The service manager state that they used positive approaches for dealing with behavioural issues. The service had a "Kindness Tree". At circle time a child who showed kindness to a fellow preschooler was rewarded by picking a coloured leaf of their own choosing and the staff member wrote what the kind act was on it and the leaf was displayed on the kindness tree on the wall. A photograph of the tree was sent home to the parents ,so they could discuss same with their own individual child. The inspector was informed that it was proving to be very effective in promoting positive and acceptable behaviour.

OUTDOOR PLAY AREA

- The outdoor play area has a large selection of areas to explore and use such as slides, climbing frames, timber house and see saws also has a range of toys and equipment that can be used in the outdoor area.
- There was also area that the children could play football and climb trees. The children also had an area where they could paint. On the morning of the inspection, the staff members had placed large sheets of white paper on the fence and the children while wearing protective clothing , used water guns filled with paint to create unique and amazing paintings.

- A range of different activities were observed from football, digging in the ground with a different sized construction toy and also imitating and roleplaying the activity from a nearby construction site.
- A low-level table allowed the children that wanted to engage in a colouring exercise, to happily colour in the shade of a large tree.
- The staff member walked around the area with a bubble machine, much to the delight of the children present.
- As it was a fine day the children spent the session in the outdoor play area, they only went into the indoor area to eat their lunch. The children were observed playing happily in the area, the staff offered assistance and encouragement at all times during the session. The staff were heard discussing colours, shapes, days of the week and other educational content in a pleasant manner, “Look, there is a red car, can you find the yellow one” .
- Small minor issue that arose in relation to sharing of toys and turn taking, were dealt with in a positive manner and did not escalate further.

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

Infection Control:

There was evidence of the policy of infection control being implemented, children were observed washing their hands after using the outdoor play area and before their snack time

Fire Safety:

Fire Drills were carried out every month as outlined in the service's Fire Safety Policy . A record of same is recorded and available for inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Fire Safety:

The fire alarm system and the fire extinguishers were not maintained and serviced in line the requirements set out in the Fire Safety in Pre School 1999. The last record of maintenance took place in November 2021 and not every 12 months as outlined. This posed a risk to the safety of the staff and children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The register provider stated the following in their reply:

Fire Safety:

Corrective & Preventive Action

The companies responsible for the maintenance of both the fire alarms and fire fight equipment have recently called to the service and inspected them. The manager of the service will contact the companies in the future to ensure they maintain the equipment as required.

Summary Comment

A copy of both the fire alarm maintenance record and the fire-fighting equipment servicing record was forwarded to the Early Years Inspector on the 17/07/2023. The actions taken by the manager of the service has rectified the non-compliance identified under this regulation.

The regulatory requirement of this regulation has been achieved.