

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK046		
Name of Service:	The Village Childcare & Community Services		
Address of Service:	54/55 Hollybank Lawn, Clongowen, Waterford Road, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny		
Eircode:	R95 DD27		
Name of Registered Provider:	Martin Cornally		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	07/03/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child & Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow.		
Inspection undertaken by:	N.Thornton, C.Ryan		
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

The Village Childcare and Community Service is a registered non-profit community childcare service established since 2004. The service offers a sessional and part-time childcare and education service to children aged two to six years of age between the hours of 08:45 and 13:30.

The sessional early childhood care and education (ECCE) scheme operates from 09:00 to 12:00 hours. A registered school age service operates from the premises from 13:45 to 18:00 hours Monday to Friday.

The service operates from two connected semi-detached houses located at the end of a cul-de sac in the residential estate of Clongowen in Kilkenny city. The houses have been adapted internally to provide three early years classrooms, the Teddy Bears room on the ground floor and the Sunflowers ECCE Year 2 and Busy Bees ECCE Year 1 room on the first floor.

Staffing

There were ten staff members employed in the service, which includes a designated person in charge and office administrator. The registered provider does not work in the service. All staff working directly with the children held qualification at Levels 5 to 8 in early childhood care and education on the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) 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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following regulations.

10-Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-School Service.

15-Record of a pre-school child,

16-Record in relation to pre-school service,

19-Health Welfare and Development of Child,

23-Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of child,

25-First Aid,

26- Fire Safety Measures.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included all three classrooms and the outdoor space.

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 receipt of information to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) There was a designated person in charge in the service, who was present and facilitated the inspection on the two days.

(b) The designated person in charge confirmed that there was a named deputy designated person in charge, who was also present for the inspection.

(c) A clear outline of the management of the structure was displayed in the service, identifying the lines of authority, accountability, the roles and responsibilities of individual staff members in the service. Staff advised the inspector that they had weekly room meetings and three monthly one to one meetings with the service manager.

(2) Staff files for nine staff members and one student employed in the service were reviewed by the inspector.

(a)(b) Two references were available on file for each of nine staff members and student, from either a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting certificates were available on file, for each staff member working directly with the children, for the student and for all ancillary staff. Garda vetting for all staff members was observed to have been carried out within the last three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for each of two staff members, who had lived outside of the state for a period longer than six months.

(3) On review of staff files the inspector was assured that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to any staff member commencing employment in the service.

(4) Certificates of qualifications were available in each staff member's file, demonstrating that each staff member working directly with the children held qualifications in early childhood care and education at Level 5 to Level 8 on the national Quality and Qualifications (QQI) framework.

(7) Each staff file recorded that the pre-school service's policies and procedures were communicated to the staff, as part of their induction process, on commencement of employment in the service. Staff informed the inspector that as part of their roles in implementing policy into practice, training needs are considered at team meetings and as part of their supervision meetings.

Staff reported that the entire team had in February 2024 completed up to date training in positive behaviour management with a staff member designated to continue their learning and continually feedback to the team on current best practices, for implementation into policy and practice in the service.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

On review of the service’s policies, the inspector observed that the registered provider ensured that all required documents specified in Schedule 5, were available in the service. The service policies and procedures were revised annually and discussed with the staff, as part of their continuous professional development, within the service. The following policies were reviewed, management of behaviour policy, supervision policy, risk management policy, incident and accident policy and child safeguarding statement. The content of the policies reviewed were adequate and there was evidence recorded that staff had read and were familiar with the policies of the service.

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)
On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff were always working directly with the children. There were 22 children with 6 staff members directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection. Additionally, there was a student on placement and the service manager on the premises.

(2)
On the morning of the inspection, the staff to child ratios were maintained as follows throughout the service:

- In the Teddy bears room, there were 5 children aged 2 to 3 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the ECCE room 1, there were 8 children aged 3 to 4 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the ECCE room 2, there were 9 children aged 4 to 5 years old being cared for by 2 staff.

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-i)

A sample of the children's registration files were reviewed on inspection. Six files were reviewed on the day. The children's files were kept secured on a filing cabinet in the service office. All files reviewed were fully completed, signed and dated as required under the regulation.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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)(a)-(k) The registered provider and management in the service developed, maintained and appropriately stored the following relevant documents and records required:

(a) staff records, (b) the type of service and the age profile of the children, that the service is registered to provide, (c) details of the adult: child ratios in each classroom within the service, (d) the programme of care provided in the service, (e) details of the facilities available, (f) the opening hours and fees of the service, (g) the policies, procedures and statements that the service is required under Regulation 10, (h) each child's daily attendance details, (i) records of staff rosters, (j) administration of medication records and (k) accident and incident records, involving any early years children attending the service.

A sample of five administration of medication records and five incident and accident records reviewed by the inspector were observed to be completed in full, with the relevant details recorded.

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*
- (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.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

Staff were observed to be attentive to the children during the morning. They were down at their level engaged in play and chatted with them during the morning. A child who was out of sorts was comforted and held by staff.

Children from the Teddy Bears room were enjoying playing with play dough in the outdoor area.

Children from the ECCE rooms enjoyed free play in the outdoor area and while indoors they were occupied with cutting and gluing their art and craft activity.

The staff offered children a drink from the jug and cups they brought with them to the outdoor area.

Behaviour management was managed in a positive and respectful manner.

Staff used gentle language and simple rules with the children. For example: “Use our gentle hands” when play was getting boisterous. “How about we share?” when there were disputes or sharing.

Staff discussed with the inspector that they had class rules for being together and learning stories which were developed by staff to relation to the dynamic needs of the children at different times.

For example, staff had created the two current learning stories to manage “screaming and shouting” and “What can go in my mouth.”

Throughout the room there was artwork, visual cues for their daily routine, birthdays, and family walls. The rooms were well resourced with sufficient toys and materials.

(2)(3) In discussion with staff, the inspectors observed that staff were well informed in relation to positive behaviour management and had all participated in a training course on positive approaches to challenging behaviour in October 2023. Staff were aware of their service’s policies and procedures, clearly outlining practices that were not permitted in the service and demonstrating knowledge of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding the children in their care.

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 service was secured by a call bell system with a reception area located just inside the entrance door. This prevented any unauthorised person from entering the premises and prevented any child from exiting the service unsupervised.

Safety gates at the top and bottom of the stairs were observed to always be secured, during the inspection.

Staff were aware of the procedure to follow if a children had an accident and incident, which included attending to the child, contacting the parents, carrying out necessary emergency procedures, completing and maintaining the required documentation.

A child safeguarding statement was displayed in the service and staff were well informed of their roles in relation to safeguarding the children in their care.

Infection Control:

The service had an adequate infection control policy in place. A separate handwashing, nappy changing policy and toileting policy were attached as part of the service's Infection Control policy.

Hand washing was observed to be carried out by both staff and the children, prior to snack times, after using tissues to blow noses, after messy and outdoor play.

Toileting and nappy changing were supported and carried out in line with both the toileting and nappy changing policies contained in the service's infection control policy.

Cleaning schedules were displayed in each classroom and indicated that these were recorded daily by the staff present, as tasks were completed.

Administration of Medication:

Staff were informed of procedures and on how to administer any specialised medication, in line with the service's policy on administration of medication. On review of a sample of five administration of medication records, details had been recorded specifically in line with the administration of medication policy in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Throughout the inspection the inspectors observed that the required adult to child staff ratios were maintained in each of the classrooms and in the outdoor play space. Relief was provided by surplus staff and the designated person in charge for staff breaks and on occasions such as nappy changing times.

In the outdoor area the teams of staff from the various classrooms were observed to support each other over the child height fence if one staff member had to go inside with a child to the toilet. The staff had a clear overview of the entire outdoor play area.

Indoors, supervision was always maintained by a staff member if the other staff member was in the nappy changing area or supporting a child with toileting. On discussion with staff, staff reported that there was a clear understanding of their roles in the service on safeguarding and supervising the children. The staff were confident in informing the inspector that they were supported by management with any training required or extra support required in ensuring the children's safety in the service.

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.*

Compliance Information

The information required under regulation 32 (1) was observed to be clearly underlined in the service's complaints policy. On discussion with staff and management, there was a clear understanding of the process that was advised to be followed if a person wished to make a complaint, how it would be received and managed.