

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015KK055

Name of Service: Little Sunflowers Crèche

Address of Service: Clonmel Road, Callan, Co. Kilkenny

Eircode: R95 WA46

Name of Registered Provider: Liam Egan

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 09/07/2024

No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	41

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Tusla Child and Family Agency
Early Years Inspectorate, Ely hospital
Ferrybank, Wexford.

Inspection undertaken by: E Mc Garry

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

This full day care service is located on the main street of Callan in county Kilkenny. A service is provided to children aged from 1 to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 08:00 and 18:00. The premises is a terraced two storey building with four preschool rooms, nappy changing facilities, toilets, a sleep room, and an onsite kitchen. The service has access to a large community outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service employed a total of 12 staff. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. Eleven staff held an award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above 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.

Regulation 10 Policies and procedures

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 15 Record of a preschool child

Regulation 17 Information for parents

Regulation 20 Facilities for rest and play

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials

Regulation 22 Food and Drink

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child

Regulation 25 First aid

Regulation 26 Fire Safety

Regulation 28 Insurance

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) (b)

The manager was the person in charge and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 12 staff employed in the service. All staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)(b)

There were 24 written and validated references available on file for all staff members.

(c)

There was evidence of Garda vetting available on file in the service for all 12 staff members. The service had demonstrated compliance with the early years inspectorate regulatory notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for all staff.

(d)

Police vetting was available on file for one staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Eleven staff working directly with the preschool children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(4)

There was one staff member who did not have evidence on file in the service that they had achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

There is now evidence on file in the service that the staff member had achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework. The registered provider will ensure all required documentation is in place in the service prior to staff commencing work in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the staff members qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education was received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is satisfactory to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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)

There was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children at all times for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

During the morning, there were 34 children in the care of 10 staff members.

During the afternoon there were 41 children in the care of 6 staff members.

The manager of the service was available to assist in the rooms as required.

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

There was a registration form available in respect of each child enrolled in the service. A sample of 10 forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The service provided parents with a parent handbook to include information regarding the service ethos, curriculum, and policies. The parents' handbook provided parents with an outline of the curriculum, the hours of operation, the funding schemes available, contact details and the facilities available within the service. It provided parents with information on the day-to-day requirements and running of the service.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1)
(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

1.
There were adequate and suitable facilities for children aged 1 to 2 to sleep in the service. There was a sleep room which contained five full sized cots for the children to sleep in. The room was an internal sleep room which was ventilated by mechanical ventilation and an openable Velux window. There was individual linen provided for each child which was stored in the sleep room.
2.
The children in the wobbler room were settled to sleep on the afternoon of the inspection. Their floor beds were set up in their preschool room. A staff member was observed to stay with the children while they slept. The beds were adequately spaced and individual linen was provided for them.
3.
There were rest areas available in all preschool rooms consisting of soft cushions and small upholstered chairs which were covered with sheets that staff who spoke to the inspector were laundered weekly. Of particular note was a large cushion which three preschool children could sit on in the corner of the toddler room. This was covered in a bigt comfortable cover which was cosy for the children to relax on while reading their books.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

There was good quality child sized chairs and tables provided in all the preschool rooms. The highchairs in the baby room were moveable and allowed staff to place in a circle during mealtimes so the babies could look at each other and interact with staff during mealtimes. There was a supply of art materials in all rooms. The baby room had large trays which staff placed on the ground to allow for sensory play. For example, the babies were observed playing with dried pasta on arrival by the inspector.

The rooms were well resourced with play equipment for the children. For example, the dress up area in the Montessori room had a selection of well-maintained outfits such as outfits of cartoon figures known to the children. There was a large dolls house with miniature furniture. There was a dragon’s castle with small dragons which the children were observed playing with and enjoying on the day of inspection. There was also a supply of Montessori equipment such as polishing bowls which were stored on open shelves in the room. It was evident the play equipment and materials in the room were well maintained and the children were encouraged to take care of the equipment by replacing their play equipment back in its allotted place when they had finished with it.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service provided all snacks and meals in the service from the onsite kitchen. There is one staff member delegated to the preparing of snacks and meals in the service. There was a menu available was rotated on 4 - weekly rotation. There was a freshly cooked dinner prepared from the onsite kitchen on the day of the inspection. A meal consisting of carrots, peas, potatoes, gravy and minced beef was served to the children at midday. Babies were observed enjoying their dinner at midday. The children were served generous portions and extra was available for any child who requested more. Hydration for the children was encouraged across all the preschool rooms. Children were provided with frequent drinks of cooled boiled water which the staff dispensed from large jugs in the preschool rooms. The children had a snack consisting of homemade pizza on the afternoon of the inspection.

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

Access to the service was gained through the door which was locked on arrival. There was an intercom system in place to verify who was visiting the service.

Infection Control

There was an infection control policy in the service. Staff who spoke to the inspector were aware of this policy and the measures to prevent cross infection included in the document. Nappy changing procedures observed on the day were in line with the services nappy changing policy. The nappy changing policy was on display in both nappy changing areas. There were new gloves and apron dispensers evident throughout the service. These dispensers reduced the risk of cross infection in the service as staff could access gloves and aprons without touching the containers which were used to store them.

There was warm running water to support hand washing, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand drying throughout the service. Staff were seen to attend to children's personal hygiene during the day. For example, children were encouraged to wash their hands after wiping their noses. Children were observed washing their hands before meals and after messy play. Staff were observed supervising the younger children and encouraging them to sing "wash wash your hands" while they were in the bathroom.

The service was clean with daily and weekly cleaning schedules maintained. Staff who spoke to the inspector were clear on the infection control measures in place in the service. For example, mouthing toys were cleaned and sanitised in the baby room. Soothers were stored in individual containers to prevent cross infection in the service. The service has adopted a no outdoor shoes policy in the service. All staff and children wear shoes and slippers kept for wearing while in the service. Visitors to the service are asked to wear foot covers. Staff who spoke to the inspector said this was a further measure adopted by the service to reduce cross infection as many of the younger children like to play and crawl on the floors.

Safe Sleep

The service had one designated sleep room. Individual bed linen was available, which was laundered as needed. Staff who spoke with the inspector were aware of safe sleep practices for example, how often a sleeping child is physically checked, recording of the observations such as colour, position and breathing rate and the optimum sleep room temperature. The staff were observed remaining in the room with the children until they settled to sleep. Sleep checks were carried out every 10 minutes as per the service policy on safe sleep.

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)

There was a person qualified a in first aid responder course in the service on the day of inspection. The staff roster indicated there was an adequate number of staff trained in a first aid responder course to cover the service.

(2)

There was a first aid box for children safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position available to the children attending the service.

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)

There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill had taken place in the service in July 2024.

(b) There was a record available on file stating the firefighting equipment was last serviced in January 2024, and the smoke alarm in May 2024.

(4)
There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured for the children who were present on the day of inspection.