

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK086		
Name of Service:	The Wishing Well Crèche		
Address of Service:	Glenvale, Ballyragget, Co. Kilkenny		
Eircode:	R95 D932		
Name of Registered Provider:	Helen O'Regan		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	05/12/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	37	PM 35
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child & Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow.		
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Thornton.		
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 Wishing Well Crèche and Montessori is a purpose built, full day childcare service located in the Glenvale housing estate in the centre of Ballyragget village in north county Kilkenny.

The service caters for preschool children aged 0 to 6 years, between the hours of 07:45 and 18:00 hours for 50 weeks of the year. The service also provides a registered service for school aged children.

The facilities include four classrooms, the baby room, wobbler /toddler room, preschool classroom 1 and a senior preschool classroom. There are two outdoor play spaces onsite, at either side of the building which can be directly accessed from the preschool classrooms. A smaller appropriate outdoor area is provided for the children in the baby room, directly at the back of their classroom. While the children from the wobbler/toddler room currently use the available outdoor play spaces, the registered provider informed the inspector that there are plans for the wobbler /toddler room to also have a designated play space which will be directly accessed from their classroom.

Staffing

There were 11 staff employed in the service, including the registered provider. All staff member who as part of their role in the service, worked directly with the children, held at least the minimum Level 5 to Level 8 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 a pre-school service,
- 11(1)(2)(8)-Staffing Levels,
- 20(1)(a)(b)-Facilities for Rest and Play,
- 21-Equipment and Materials,
- 22-Food and Drink,
- 23-Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms name rooms.

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 registered provider, 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.

(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) There was always a designated person in charge available in the service. A second named deputy designated person in charge was available to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was always onsite during the inspection.

(c) A clear management structure was displayed visually with photographs of each staff member, on a notice board, in the entrance hall of the service. The information provided detailed each staff member's role, qualifications, responsibilities and room allocation.

- (2) Staff files for 11 staff employed in the service were reviewed by the inspector.
- (a)(b) Two validated references were available on file for each of the 11 staff members, from either a past employer or reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting certificates were available on file, for each staff member working directly with the children.
- (d) Not applicable, as on review of staff files, the inspector observed that no staff member employed in the service had lived outside of the State for a period of longer than six months.
- (3) The inspector observed from each staff file that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) had been completed prior to staff members commencing employment in the service.
- (4) Certificates of qualifications were available for inspection, from each staff member, who as part of their role were working directly with the children, demonstrating that each staff member held at least a minimum Level 5 to Level 8 qualification in early childhood care and education on the National Quality and Qualifications (QQI) Framework.

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 was assured that the registered provider ensured that all the required documents specified in Schedule 5, were available in the service and were communicated to the staff as part of their induction process on commencing employment in 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.*
- (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

- (1) There was always an adequate number of staff members observed working directly with the children in attendance at the service, for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children as required by schedule 6 were maintained as follows throughout the inspection.
- The Baby Room** - There were 3 children, aged under 1 year of age directly cared for by 1 staff member, throughout the inspection.
- The Wobbler /Toddler Room** – Throughout the day there was a total of 10 children, 5 children aged 1 to 2 years and 5 children aged 2 to 2 years and 8 months, directly cared for by 2 staff members.
- Preschool 1** – There were 7 children aged 2 years and 8 months to 3.5 years cared for by 1 staff member.
- In the **Senior Preschool room** -There were 17 children aged 3 to 5 years directly supervised by 3 staff members for the sessional service in the morning and then 15 children remained in the classroom directly supervised by 2 staff members for the full day care service.
- The registered provider, an additional staff member and the extra staff member available in the Senior preschool room were available to help in all the classrooms during nappy changing procedures or for sleep settling and to provided cover for staff breaks.
- (8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises, and this was reflected on the staff roster available for review.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (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.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe, and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

Compliance Information

- (1) The inspector observed that there were four preschool classrooms available in the service, specifically assigned to the preschool children. A fifth room which had previously been a dining room was now designated to the school aged children in the evenings. Each of the four preschool classrooms contained equipment and resources appropriate to the ages of each class.
- (b) There were two designated sleep rooms available in the service, one adjacent to the baby room and one adjacent to the wobbler/toddler room. A total of 10 standard cots, 5 in each of the two sleep rooms were available for children under the age of 2 years to sleep in during the day.
- (3)(a) Three safe and secure play areas were provided onsite, one at either side of the building and a smaller play area specifically for the baby room at the back of the building. Risk assessments of the outdoor play areas were carried out daily and all four groups of children had daily access to their designated outdoor space. The outdoor play spaces were secured by a high concrete brick wall with high wooden side gates, to prevent children from exiting the premises unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised persons from entering the premises.

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

In all the four classrooms, age-appropriate equipment and materials were provided for the age group of the preschool children in attendance. Interest areas had been created to include kitchen/ home areas, construction, imaginary and sensory play. Rest and reading areas were provided in each of the classrooms, age-appropriate seating and child sized tables were provided in each of the classrooms, to promote children's independence and physical development at mealtimes and during tabletop activities.

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 had a designated kitchen for safe refrigeration and storage of food products and for the preparation of meals provided by an external health service executive (HSE) approved catering company.

The inspector observed that menus were clearly displayed for parents to view at the entrance to the service.

The staff informed the inspector that children brought their snacks in from home and that a choice of cereals and toast were available for breakfast, for children that arrived early to the service. The main meal and evening meal were provided in the service. On the day of inspection, the main meal was observed to be beef past bolognaise, and for evening tea- a second hot meal of sweet and sour chicken and rice was served. Meals were served at the appropriate consistency for the younger children drinking water stations were available in all the rooms, so children could access their bottles or Sippy cups.

Alternative arrangements for meal provision by parents were also available and special dietary requirements such as a dairy free option was provided for.

In line with the service's healthy eating policy, a variety of meals were offered across the three-week menu plan provided, some of which included chicken casserole and mash, pasta marinara with garlic bread, tutti-frutti chicken curry, fish goujons with twisty fries and sausage hot pot.

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 main entrance of the service was secured with a keypad call system. Staff could easily observe who was approaching the service through the toughened protective glass in the front door. The perimeter of the service and outdoor play areas was secure by high wooden gates at each gable end and a surrounding 10-foot block cemented wall.

A daily safety risk assessment was carried out of all the outdoor play areas and a record of findings and corrective actions taken maintained.

All cleaning materials and equipment were stored in designated storage areas away from and out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

The service had an adequate infection control policy in place. The inspector observed that the staff and children carried out handwashing procedures prior to snack and mealtimes, after nappy changing, toileting, blowing noses or assisting with tissues for runny noses, after messy and outdoor play.

Children's nappy changing and toileting were supported and carried out in line with the service's infection control policy.

Administration of Medication:

Twenty-five administration of medication forms were reviewed by the inspector. Staff were observed to carry out and record procedures in line with the service's administration of medication procedure and policy.

Safe Sleep:

Throughout the inspection the inspector observed that there was an adequate number of cots provided in the two designated sleep rooms for children who demonstrated the need to sleep.

Staff promptly responded to children's sleep cues, ensuring that the service's safe sleep policy and procedure for a sleeping child was adhered to. The staff were observed to place children to sleep safely and to physically check sleeping children every ten minutes in line with the service's safe sleep policy and to record each child's sleep position, colour and breathing.

Outing:

An adequate outings policy was in place in the service however the registered provider stated that presently group outings were not operated outside of the service.

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 were two staff members present on the day of inspection who had current first aid responder (FAR) training. It is acknowledged that a third staff member was also present, whose FAR certificate had recently expired, and refresher training had been applied for. The registered provider assured the inspector and demonstrated with past records of staff rosters that a staff member trained in FAR was always onsite while there were children present in the service.

(2)(a) Two first aid boxes were available in the service. One in the baby room and one in the senior preschool room.

(b)The first aid boxes were adequately resourced with evidence that monthly checks of their contents were recorded. The first aid boxes were always available if required, for the children.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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 record of monthly fire drills carried out in the service was maintained. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on the 20 October 2023. On review of fire drill records, fire drills had been carried out monthly over the past year.
- (b) A record of the annual maintenance checks of fire-fighting equipment in the service and the service's fire alarm was maintained. The last maintenance check for the fire-fighting equipment was recorded as having taken place in October 2023. The last maintenance check for the service's fire alarm system was recorded as having taken place on the 14 March 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the main reception area of the service. A fire assembly point was clearly identifiable in the car park outside the main entrance.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate displaying adequate insurance for a full day care service for up to 45 preschool children was available for inspection and displayed in the entrance hall.