

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015KY011

Name of Service: Beginners World

Address of Service: Dromin, Listowel, Co. Kerry

Eircode: V31 YE13

Name of Registered Provider: Bridget O'Carroll

Service type: Part Time

Date(s) of Inspection: 02/12/2024

No of pre-school children: AM 17 PM 16

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.

Inspection undertaken by: N. Reidy

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 N/A

Description of service

Beginners World is a private early years service that is registered to cater for children aged between 2 years and 6 years on a part-time full day care basis.

The service currently caters for children aged between 2 years 8 months and 5 years. The service offers the part-time service from 08:45 am to 1:45 incorporating planned sessions between the hours of 08:45 am and 11:45 am and 12:15pm to 3:15pm Monday to Friday inclusive.

Staffing

Currently, there are 5 adults attached to the service including the registered provider, 4 of whom currently work directly with the children.

Each of 5 adults have attained a relevant award 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 inspections 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 registered provider, 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 registered provider is the designated person in charge, and she did ensure that there was a named deputy in charge.
- (b) The registered provide was on duty at the service when the inspector arrived to conduct the unannounced inspection. The registered provider works in the service.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to 5 adults who were attached to the service were the subject of the inspection.
- (a) Of the 10 required references, 7 references were from previous employers with records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the 10 required references, 3 references were from another source other than a previous employer with records of validation on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for each of the 5 adults. The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in respect of each of the applicable adults.
- (d) Not applicable as the 5 adults had not resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

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) The registered provider did ensure that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) On the day of the inspection the children in attendance were attending on a sessional basis. There were 3 adults caring for 17 children aged between 2 years 9 months and 5 years attending the morning session up to 11 am when a 4th adult joined to care for the children. There were 3 adults caring for 16 children attending the afternoon session. The adult child ratio was correct.
- (8) (a) The registered provider did ensure that a minimum of 2 adults are on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

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

- The staff members present were observed to be kind and caring towards the children. They communicated with the children in low soft tones of voice.
- They demonstrated an understanding of individual children's needs, for example children requiring additional support with play and care needs.
- The staff were observed meeting and greeting parents/guardians at departure time and at drop-off time for the afternoon session.
- The parents of the children attending provided the food.
- The children's individual needs were accommodated for example a child's meal was eaten in advance of the scheduled mealtime as the child was hungry.

- The children assisted the staff with distribution of the lunches and the children who arrived for the afternoon session assisted the staff in placing their lunch bags in the allocated spaces in the entrance /reception area.
- The staff encouraged and supported the children to feed themselves independently assisting the children with tasks such as opening food packaging and drink's bottles.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets located in the playroom.
- The mealtime observed was relaxed and unhurried where pleasant social interaction between the children and the adults took place such as who had put up the Christmas trees at home the previous weekend.
- The food observed on inspection included a selection of fruit, sandwiches, crackers and yogurts.
- There was a selection of handwashing signs and visual charts for the steps in using the toilet situated at children's eye level in the toilet facilities. These visuals encouraged and supported the children in developing self-help and personal care skills.
- The children had access to their drink's bottles on a designated trolley in the playroom during the session.
- The inspector observed children were promptly accommodated to return from playing outside to use the toilet.
- The staff encouraged and supported the children in becoming independent with using the toilet and the children were allowed to take their time.
- Prior to going outdoors, the staff assisted the children in putting on their coats and hats and protective clothing in an unhurried manner, enabling manner and they praised the children for their efforts.

Physical and Material environment

- The children attending enjoyed free movement within the playroom on the day of the inspection.
- The wide range of toys were accessible and available to all the children on the open shelving, on the floor, on a display rail, thus facilitating the children to help themselves independently as they wanted to.
- The children were observed to play happily with the supervision and assistance of the adults who encouraged and praised the children for their efforts.
- The playroom was colourfully decorated with a selection of items including Christmas decorations, the children's family tree and the children's birthdays.
- The rest/relaxation area in the room consisted of child sized seating, matting on the floor and some cushions.
- There was an adequate number of child sized chairs and child sized tables for the children attending.

- The secured designated outdoor play area located at the side of the building is available and accessible to the children each day. The area is directly accessible from the playroom.
- The inspector observed a staff member going outside to check the area, ensure that the gates were secured and dry any toys as needed prior to the children using it.
- The children played games with the parachute, used the ride on toys and sang Christmas songs for example whilst outdoors.

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:

- Internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas.
- The external door was so secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access.
- The fire doors were unobstructed.
- The cleaning agents observed were stored out of the reach of the children.
- The outdoor play area was enclosed with fencing and walls and the gates were secured.

Infection Control:

- The children's perishable food items were stored in the fridge.
- The children were observed to wash their hands before the mealtime and after using the toilet.
- Tissues were provided for children's nose cleaning and observed that they were taken to the outdoor play area when the children played there.

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) The registered provider ensured that there were staff available at all times with appropriate first aid responder (FAR) training. The provider had completed FAR training during November 2024 and was awaiting the issue of the certificate, there was a 2nd staff member with completed FAR certifications.
- (2) (a) There was a suitably equipped wall mounted first aid box available to the children attending.
- (b) The first aid equipment was available to the children at all times

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) From a visual assessment, the building appears to be of sound and stable structure.
- (c)
 - Within the playroom and sanitary accommodation, natural lighting was provided through windows and this was supplemented with artificial lighting.
 - Adequate heating was ensured in the playroom and sanitary facilities to ensure the room temperature within the range of 18-22 degrees Celsius.
 - The playroom and the sanitary facilities were supplied with natural ventilation, through open windows.
- (d)
 - The premises was noted to be maintained in a clean condition.
 - There was a written cleaning schedule in place, with provision to record frequent cleaning of the various areas and equipment indoors and outdoors.
- (e)
 - The children had access to toilet facilities located outside the playroom.

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- There were 2 toilets and a wash hand basin with warm running water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and a lidded, pedal-operated bin.
- Nappy changing facilities are available within the allocated the adult/ disabled sanitary facilities that consisted of 1 toilet and 1 hand basin.