

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY052
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Name of Service:	Happy Feet Pre-school
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Address of Service:	Snipefield, Ardfert, Tralee, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 NP5W
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rosario Godley
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	30/04/2024
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No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>08</td> <td>PM</td> <td>None</td> </tr> </table>	AM	08	PM	None
AM	08	PM	None		

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
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Description of service

Happy Feet Pre-school is a private early years service that is registered to provide sessional care for children aged between the age of 2 years and 6 years. The service is operating between the hours of 8:50am and 11:50 am, Monday to Friday. The service operates from a single playroom located at the rear of the registered provider's dwelling house. The children attending the service have access each day to a designated outdoor play area.

Staffing

The registered provider works single-handedly in the service. There is a named person to attend the service in the event of an emergency.

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 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,*
- (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, she works single-handedly each day in the service.
- (b) At all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the registered provider is on the premises.
- (2)
- The registered provider confirmed to the inspector that she works single handedly each day in the service and there is a named person to attend in the event of an emergency were employed in the service.
- The recruitment records in respect of two adults were the subject of the inspection.
- (a)
- There were two written validated references on file from a past employer.
- (b)
- There were two written validated references on file from a source other than a past employer.
- (c)
- Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for two adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d)
- Not applicable as neither of the two adults had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) Both adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 5 and above.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1)

Throughout the period of inspection, the registered provider did ensure that there was an adequate number of adults caring for the children attending the service.

(3)

There was one adult caring for 8 children aged between 2 to 4 years attending the service on a sessional basis. The adult child ratio was correct.

(8)(c)

A named person familiar with the operation of the service and within close distance of the service was available to attend the service to assist the registered provider in the event of an emergency.

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) There was a record for each of the 9 children enrolled in the service with the required detail as per(a) to (i) inclusive.

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 registered provider was kind and caring towards the children she was caring for and she was understanding of their individual needs.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets located within the playroom.
- The inspector observed children's individual toileting needs and subsequent personal hygiene needs were met in a discreet and kind manner during the session.
- The registered provider was available to the children to assist and guide them in the activities they participated in during the session.
- Throughout the session the registered provider positively re-enforced to children regarding their manners and praised the children for their efforts.
- The children were dressed appropriately for playing in the allocated outdoor area with coats and wellingtons.
- The children were assisted in preparation to go outside, the registered provider assisted with taking off changing their footwear into the wellingtons which are kept on the premises and with putting on their coats.
- Adequate handwashing facilities that included warm running water, liquid hand soap, paper hand towels and pedal operated lidded bins were accessible at the wash hand basins in the service.
- The children washed their hands after using the toilet, prior to the mid-morning meal and after playing in the outdoor play area.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the playroom.
- The outdoor play area located to the side of the building was used by the children during the session.
- The playroom was furnished with an appropriate number of child sized tables and chairs.
- Their materials and equipment were arranged so as they were visible and readily accessible to promote independent access by the children.
- The inspector observed the children playing singly for example completing matching games, in a group at story time and in pairs playing with the farm equipment.
- There was access to a variety of materials and toys that the registered provider said are rotated to suit the curriculum programme and to suit the current and emerging interests of the children.
- The spacious outdoor play area afforded children the opportunities to play in the grass area, on the swing/see-saw unit, in the playhouses, with the kitchen units, play ball and messy play with the sand and

peat. There was a partial concrete area underfoot where the kitchen and boxes and playhouse were located.

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 parents of the children attending did provide the food consumed on the premise.
- The food observed on inspection included sandwiches, crackers and rice cakes, yogurts and a variety of fruit. They had water to drink.
- The children had access to water throughout the session: - their drinks bottles were stored on top of the low fridge in the playroom. The inspector was informed that drinking water was available at the sink in the playroom.
- The perishable food items were stored in the fridge in the playroom.
- The inspector observed the children had ample time to eat their food. The registered provider sat with the children and assisted them as needed. She encouraged and supported them to open certain food packaging themselves and praised their efforts.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting disclosures were available for two adults. However, one Garda vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. There was a horizontal bar broken on one activity unit in the outdoor play area. The unit was unsteady posing a risk to children of falling off causing injury.

Fire Safety:

3. Records on file demonstrated the frequency of the fire drills conducted in the service were not adequate. The last recorded fire drill that took place on 20.02.'24.
4. There was a final certification for commissioning of the smoke alarm on file dated 10.12.'21 and the maintenance certification for the firefighting equipment was 28.04.'21. The records demonstrated that annual servicing of the equipment was not conducted.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The Garda vetting disclosure was obtained in respect of the one staff member. The staff files will be reviewed annually to ensure that all necessary documents as required are on file.
2. The horizontal bar has been fixed. Safety checks will be carried out on a monthly basis.

Fire Safety:

3. Fire drills will be conducted on a monthly basis. The last recorded drill took place on 2/05/'24.
4. The company for servicing the fire fighting equipment are booked to service the fire extinguishers and fire alarm.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. The garda vetting disclosure in respect of one adult.
2. A photograph of the horizontal bar secured on the outdoor activity unit.

Fire Safety:

3. A copy of the fire drill conducted since the inspection took place.
4. The statement is accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

The requirement has been met. The above will be the subject of inspection at the next inspection.

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 informed the inspector that she has current First Aid Responder (FAR) training with the certification in respect of this on file.

(2)

(a) There was a first aid box stored on a secure high-level shelf in the playroom.

(b) The first aid box was accessible to the adults and out of the reach of 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 fire fighting 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) The service had maintained in writing a record of the following: -

(a) A record was maintained for each fire drill that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place 14.01.'24.

(b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance checks of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm.

The records on file demonstrated a final certification for commissioning was recorded on 10.12.'21 and the maintenance certification for the firefighting equipment was 28.04.'21.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certification was furnished on inspection.

The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- the contact details for the insurance provider.
- the name and address of the service insured.
- the category of insurance cover for the service was sessional.
- the number of children covered by the insurance was for 22 children.
- The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27/03/'25.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*

Compliance Information

- (b)
The entrance to the premises was secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access in.
- (c) The lighting in the room was adequate, it was provided via artificial and natural lighting. There were protective covers fitted on the light fittings as was required. The rooms were ventilated by means of the openable windows. The air temperature of the playroom was recorded at between 18.1 degrees Celsius.