

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY057			
Name of Service:	IRD Waterville Early Years Centre			
Address of Service:	Waterville Community Centre, Spunkane, Waterville, Co. Kerry			
Eircode:	V23 Y892			
Name of Registered Provider:	Pat Everett			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	26/07/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	10
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Social Work Dept Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co Cork P81 PD78			
Inspection undertaken by:	M Carney			
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

IRD Waterville Early Years Centre is registered to provide a full day care, part time and sessional early years care and education to children aged from 0 – 6 years. It operates from 08:30am to 17 :30pm daily. The service is situated in a community building in Waterville, a coastal town on the Ring of Kerry. This early years setting has 2 care rooms and the children have access to the community hall. There is adequate toilets and nappy changing facilities. There is a separate sleep room and kitchen. The children have direct access to secured outdoor play areas. There is ample car parking for the children's safe arrival and departure to the service with their families.

Staffing

There are 9 adults attached to the service, this includes the registered provider and 8 childcare professionals who work directly with the children. Each of the childcare professionals have completed Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 in childcare training.

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.

Additional Information

A referral to Better Start National Early Years Quality Development was made in relation to Regulation 21 – Equipment and Materials, details of which are stated in the body of the report.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, 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 had appointed a manager to oversee service operations. A deputy had been appointed to deputise as required.

(b)

On the day of the inspection both the manager and deputy were on the premises and available to facilitate the inspection process. Examination of the staff roster indicated that either the manager or deputy were on the premises for the duration of service provision.

(2)(a) & (b)

There were 9 adults in total attached to the service and each of their personal files were reviewed on the day of the inspection. The following information was found –

There were 18 written past employers references on file with records of verification attached.

(c)

There were 9 up to date Garda vetting disclosures on file, dated from April 2022 to August 2022.

(d)

Police vetting was available for 3 childcare professional who had lived outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for a period longer than 6 consecutive months. One of the Police vetting disclosures was suitably translated.

(4)

Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training were on file for each staff members, ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 in a childcare course.

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

The manager reported that service policies had recently been reviewed. The following policies were inspected - policy on safe sleep, policy on outings, policy on healthy eating and the policy on the administration of medication; each were found to be compliant when triangulated with conversations with staff members and practices observed.

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 the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2)

There was a total of 16 children aged from 18 months to 5 years. Ten children were attending on a full day care basis, 3 were categorised as part time and 3 children were attending on a sessional basis. There were 4 adults in attendance.

The adult child ratio was correct.

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)
The manager made available the children's registration forms and each one was reviewed. The forms were found to be completed correctly and had the required information as listed above in relation to Regulation 15 (a) to (i).

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)
- The service maintained the relevant information of the service in respect of Regulation 16 (a) to (h)
- (i) The staff roster was reviewed; it provided details of staff breaks and it indicated that adult child ratios were suitably maintained at that time.
- (j) The manager reported that both a digital application and handwritten record was used for the documentation of medications that are required to be given to children attending the service. The most recent entry was dated 19 May 2023 and was found to contain the correct information for example, parents written consent and instruction to administer.
- (k) The service had a record book to detail any accidents or incidents that had occurred in the service, this information was also recorded on the digital application. The last entry was recorded on the 16 June 2023 and involved a minor incident. The information had been relayed to the parents as evidenced by the counter signature.

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 manager reported that information in relation to the service had recently been devised and compiled in booklet form. On inspection it was found to contain all the information in respect of Regulation 16 (1) (a) to (g). The manager reported that this information was also maintained and readily available in digital form.

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

- Parents and guardians supplied their children with all their food and drink provisions.
- Meals were offered in a timely manner, mid-morning snack was provided at 10:15am, lunch was offered at 12:15 with another snack being provided mid-afternoon.
- Meals were observed being eaten in the playroom with the younger children sitting in highchairs in a circular companionable position. Bibs were provided to protect clothes.
- The older children were seated at the table with their friends, where socialisation and pleasant conversation was enjoyed whilst eating in an unhurried way.
- Aprons to protect the children's clothing during paints and messy play were available.
- Protective boots were stored in the lobby for use in the garden.
- Children were observed to be familiar with regular hand washing routine, for example prior to lunch and after playing in the community hall.
- A rest area was available and a designated sleep room to allow the children to rest during their day if they so wished.

- Childrens coats and their bags and personal belongings were stored on low hooks at the entrance lobby to encourage independent dressing.
- The service provided ample clear floor space for the children to enjoy free play, planned activities, circle time, meals and socialisation a supervised manner.

Physical and Material Environment –

- IRD Waterville Early Years Centre occupied a segregated section of a community hall/building. On the day of the inspection only the creche room and large community was in use. It was a clean, airy and bright environment.
- The creche room had some openable windows which allowed for natural light and ventilation.
- Clean and well-maintained child sized chairs and 2 tables were available to the children for eating meals and tabletop activities. Five highchairs were clean and in a good state of repair.
- There was a range of age-appropriate activities available to the children in the hall, for example dress up, small construction and tabletop playdough.
- Within the creche room there was a cordoned area, namely the soft play area that had been equipped with activities for the younger children to assist with mobility, providing soft toys for comfort and some wall mounted fine motor skill activities.
- The creche children had access to their own secured outdoor play area and the older children had access to playground and garden areas. These were not used by the children or inspected on the day due to inclement weather.

Supporting Relations around the Children

- On the day of the inspection the generous adult child ratios allowed for positive one-to-one engagement with each child, for example during tabletop activities, floor play and comforting.
- Adults were kind, patient and relaxed with the children, and likewise the children responded with a happy, confident and familiar attitude.
- Caring practices were conducted in a dignified manner by the staff, with low tones and good eye contact being made with the children, for example whilst facilitating hand washing and assisting with feeding.
- The service operated a digital application for the relaying of children’s daily activities to their parents and families. This included all the information in relation to sleep, rest, diet and toileting.

Implementation of the Programme of Care

- It was observed that the displayed daily timetable offered ample time for free play, planned activities, meals, rest and relaxation.
- The manager stated that as the children were attending during the summer holidays a more relaxed and flexible programme was in place which was based on a child led pedagogy which encompassed the children's emergent interests.
- Observations in the form of photographs were stored and passed on to the children's families via the digital application.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The creche room was laid out in a staid and uninteresting manner with limited resources available to encourage and support children's play and learning. For example, there was a broken purple, plastic salon with no utensils. When asked what purpose the equipment was used for, staff reported that it was a kitchen.
2. Open display units were not in use on the day for the children to access toys and resources independently. When units were inspected, they were found to have sparse equipment.
3. The rest area was poorly furnished with a mat that was torn.
4. A climbing block in the soft play area was torn.
5. A wall mounted activity in the soft play area was not suitably fixed to the wall.
6. The books in the rest area were stored in a plastic box, some of which had broken spines and were torn and tatty.

In discussion with the manager, it was stated that the play area in the creche had not been reconfigured or updated since her recent appointment and she welcomed a referral to Better Start National Early Years Quality Development in order to gain assistance with improving the play area.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation

The registered provider stated the following and submitted photographs of each issue to evidence that the non-compliance had been suitably addressed. It was also stated that engagement with Better Start Quality Development programme had commenced.

1. The purple salon has been removed.
2. The open display units have been restocked age-appropriate materials.
3. The rest area has been refurbished
4. The torn climbing block has been discarded.
5. The wall mounted activity centre has been fixed and reinstalled.
6. The books have been displayed on a wall mounted bracket so that the children can easily access them.

Summary Comment

A selection of photographs was submitted to the early years office. They were reviewed and found to adequately meet the Requirement of the Regulation.

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

- It was service policy for the children’s parents and guardians to supply their children with all the food and drink items.
- Meals and snacks were stored in the service fridge.
- Each child had access to their own labelled water bottle and were seen helping themselves to drink when thirsty.
- Plates and cutlery were available to the children as required.
- The healthy eating policy was adhered as evidenced by the hot nutritious dinners that were consumed on the day for example, stew, pasta bakes and spaghetti bolognese.

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:

- Although Waterville Early Years Centre occupied a public community building, it had its own entrance which was adequately secured so that the children could not leave the building unsupervised and unauthorised access was restricted.
- Internal doors were suitably secured, for example the kitchen door and the door leading to the main hall and lobby.
- Emergency exits were unobstructed.
- Staff members personal belongings were stored out of reach of the children.
- Cables and flexes were not accessible to the children.
- Highchair harnesses were in good condition.
- The children did not have access to nappy sacks.
- Openable windows were not accessible to the children and roller blinds had suitably secured cord brackets.

Infection Control:

- The service was clean and well maintained.
- Sanitising units were placed out of reach of the children for adult use.
- Good hand washing practise were observed with children washing hands after using the toilets, after messy play and prior to lunch.
- The children had access to 2 toilets, 1 of which was child sized in the creche room. In addition, there were 2 child height wash hand basins installed at child height for their comfort.
- There was a sink unit and an additional low level wash hand basin for the children use situated in the creche room.
- There was 1 nappy changing unit which provided a clean and well-maintained changing mat.
- Liquid soap, and paper towels were available for hand washing purposes and strategically places hand washing posters were visible to the children to prompt the correct hand washing technique.
- Training pots were available as required.

- Thermostatically controlled water registered at 40 degrees Celsius within the recommended range.
- Adults had use of the adult toilets and wash hand basin in the main hall. They were observed to be clean.
- There was 1 bespoke nappy changing unit with a changing mat which was clean and well maintained.
- Cubby space was available for the storage of the children's individually labelled toiletries and nappy supplies.
- A non-contact bin was available for the storage of used nappies.
- Protective gloves and single use aprons were available to the staff members.
- Non-contact pedal bins were situated throughout the service.
- Tissues were available to the children for nasal hygiene.

Administration of Medication:

- It was reported that the staff members were familiar with the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a child requiring medications.
- There were currently no children attending the service that required medications.

Safe Sleep:

- The service provided a separate sleep room which was furnished with 2 standard cots that were suitably spaced and away from fall hazards.
- Clean bedding and cellular blankets were stored in the children's individual linen bags in readiness for children sleep time.
- It was reported that the bedding and linen was washed on the premises as often as required.
- Sleep records were reviewed and found to be correctly maintained; detailing 10-minute physical checks observing the child's position, colour and breathing.

Fire Safety:

- The fire door was unobstructed.
- Fire cylinders were tethered to the walls.
- In conversation with the person in charge it was reported that staff were familiar with the procedures that are required to be followed in the event of a fire

Outing:

- It was reported by the manager that outings had been resumed for the older children that were due to transfer to national school.
- It was stated that each staff member was familiar with the correct procedures that are to be followed when conducting an outing.

Non-Compliance Information

Safe Sleep:

1. One of the cot mattresses in the sleep room was torn which compromised thorough cleaning after use.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

1. The registered provider stated that a new wipeable mattress has been purchased.
A photograph of a wipeable mattress was submitted to evidence.

Summary Comment

The Requirement of the Regulation has been met.

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 manager reported that each staff member had up to date first aid responder training (FAR) with expiry of September 2023. It was stated and evidenced that a refresher course for each staff member had been booked for the 09 September 2023.

(2)(a) & (b)

The service had a wall mounted first aid cabinet in the creche room that was suitably stocked. It was out of reach of the children but accessible to the staff members.

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)

The service maintained a record of the fire drills which had been conducted in the service. The most recent drill had taken place on the 21 July 2023. There were 12 children present, supervised by 4 adults.

(b)

The service maintained a written record of the number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the setting. The most recent service had taken place on 01 March 2023.

(4)

Fire evacuation plans was displayed on notice boards in each of the playrooms, to visually inform occupants the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An up-to-date insurance certificate was displayed to indicate that up to 52 children were insured to attend the service on a full day care basis.

The expiry date was 27 March 2024.