

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY068				
Name of Service:	Little Chicks Preschool				
Address of Service:	Barragougeen, Moyvane, Co. Kerry				
Eircode:	V31 ET25				
Name of Registered Provider:	Catherine Fitzgerald				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	19/09/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>22</td> <td>PM</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	AM	22	PM	0
AM	22	PM	0		
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	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Little Chicks Pre-school is a private early years service that is registered to cater for children aged between 2 years and 6 years on a sessional basis. The service currently caters for children aged between 2 years 9 months and 5 years. The service operates between the hours of 9.30 am and 12.30 pm Monday to Friday.

Staffing

There are 4 adults employed in the service that includes the registered provider. The 4 adults had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 6 and above.

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.

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.*

(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 there is a named person who can deputize as required.
- (b) At all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the registered provider and the named deputy are on the premises.
- (2) The registered provider confirmed that 4 adults were employed in the service and the recruitment records in relation to these 4 adults were inspected.
- (a) 6 written validated references were on file from a past employer.
- (b) 2 written validated references were on file from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) A Garda Vetting Disclosure was on file for each of the 4 adults.
- (d) Police Vetting was on file for 1 adult who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The 4 adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 6 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 present.
- (3) There were 4 adults working with 22 children aged between 2 years 9 months and 5 years, 13 children in playroom 1 with 3 adults and 7 children in playroom 2 with 1 adult. All children were attending the service on a sessional basis. The adult child ratio was correct.
- (8)(c) Not applicable as the service does not operate single-handedly.

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 sample of 11 records inspected, the records had the required detail as per (a) to (i) inclusive.

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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1)

(h) A written record was kept with the details of attendance by each child on a daily basis.

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

- The toilets were located within the playrooms where the children had unlimited access to them.
- The children were encouraged and reminded to use the toilets independently.
- The adults attended to help children with their individual toileting needs in a sensitive and in a timely manner.
- Children's individual toileting needs were met in a sensitive timely manner.
- The children had access to their individual space for their coats and bags.
- Allocated areas in the playrooms were provided for children to rest, relax and opt out of an activity as they so wished. The areas were furnished with soft seating and rugs on the floor.
- The children enjoyed free movement within the well-resourced playrooms and the outdoor play areas.
- The play areas outdoors consisted of: -
 - a playroom equipped with for example tuff trays, a toy kitchen, chalk boards, books and child sized tables and chairs,

- an enclosed tunnel with sand, planting boxes for planting tomatoes, potatoes, carrots and a variety of toys to play with in the sand such as buckets, shovels ,trucks, cars, a toy kitchen,
- a spacious concrete surface area where the children could play with balls, bring the toys from the outdoor classroom outside, use ride on toys.
- The adults caring for the children were kind, caring and respectful towards the children. They offered children choices, for example to play indoors or outside, participation at story time and circle time. The adults interacted in a positive way with the children for example they sat at children’s level, maintained eye contact, demonstrated empathy and a good understanding of each child, some of whom were new to the service and were observed to be caring and supportive in their interactions with the children.
- The children were praised and encouraged by the adults for their efforts and achievements in putting on their coats when going outside, for taking turns in pairs when filling a sand bucket in the outdoor tunnel.
- The children were assisted with preparation for playing outdoors, putting on outdoor protective clothing and wellingtons, in a caring, unhurried manner by the adults.
- The inspector observed the children playing outdoors on arrival to the premise and later during the course of the inspection.

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 provided the food for the mealtime. The food observed consisted of sandwiches, rice cakes and a variety of fruit with milk and water to drink.
- The food provided is in line with the Healthy Eating Policy of the service, the registered provider informed the inspector all parents are issued with the policy.
- The children had plenty of time to eat their food. The adults remained with the children assisting them and supervising them whilst they were eating.

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 outdoor play area was secured and enclosed with concrete walls, timber fencing and gates.
- The fire exit doors were alarmed and unobstructed.
- To ensure safe storage of cleaning agents out of the reach of the children, they were stored on a high-level shelving and secured cupboards.
- All internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas.
- Medicines observed were kept in their original containers, clearly labelled and stored out of the reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- The premise was observed to be clean and well maintained.
- The tables were sanitised prior to the mealtime.
- Hand washing by the children was supported prior to eating, after playing outdoors and after toileting.
- There was thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and disposable paper hand towels for effective hand washing by the adults and the children.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) There were 4 staff members that had up to date First Aid Responder completed and the certification were 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 for the service was on file.

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
- the number of children covered by the insurance was for 30 children.
- The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27/03/'24.

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*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities*

Compliance Information

(b) The premise was observed to be safe and secure.

(c) Adequate lighting was provided on the premise by means of enclosed lighting fixtures and windows in the rooms.

The room temperatures recorded were between the recommended ranges of 18 -22 degrees Celsius.

The rooms were well ventilated by means of natural ventilation (openable windows) and mechanical ventilation.

(e)The service did provide adequate and suitable sanitary facilities. The toilets were partitioned with suitable doors, there was warm water provided at the sinks to a temperature of no greater than 43 degrees Celsius, liquid hand soap and paper hand towels for hand-drying.