

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH092
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Name of Service:	Respond Early Years Service, Tredagh Close
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Address of Service:	15 Tredagh Close, Marley's Lane, Drogheda, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A92 RW60
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lisa O'Rourke
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	08/04/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	4
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Coyle
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

Respond Early Years Service, Tredagh Close is a full day care service operated under the auspices of Respond housing association a not-for-profit housing agency which supports the delivery of affordable, accessible Early Years education & afterschool services for all families. This service is located in a housing estate in Drogheda and is conducted from 3 ground floor rooms in a purpose-built building. The service is registered to operate from 09:00hrs to 17:30hrs Monday to Friday providing care to children from 9 months to 6 years and also provides care to school aged children up to 12 years. Eligible pre-school children are facilitated to participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for 3 hours daily from 9am to 12 midday for 38 weeks annually.

Staffing

The service employs 7 staff members including a relief staff member. Five staff members were present in the service on the day of inspection. A manager is employed in the service who coordinates the day-to-day operations of the service. The registered provider was not present in the service during the inspection.

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.

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 person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(3) The registered provider failed to notify the Early Years Inspectorate of a change in circumstances as required as evidenced in the following:

The operational hours of the service are at variance with the registered hours of operation. The service is currently operating from 08:30hrs to 17:30 hrs and is registered to operate from 09:00hrs to 17:30hrs.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(1)(3) The registered provider will submit the change of circumstances to Tusla to ensure that the service is operating as per registration.

Preventive Action

(1)(3) The registered provider will work with the service manager to ensure that all change of circumstances are notified to Tusla in a timely manner.

Supporting documentation submitted

None

Summary Comment

A change in circumstances application was submitted and has been approved. The registered provider has given a commitment that all changes in the future will be notified to the Agency. This non-compliance has been addressed.

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 assistant manager was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise as required.

(b) The assistant manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service.

The files for 7 staff members including a relief staff member were reviewed.

(2) (a)&(b) Two validated written references were available for the 7 staff members whose files were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 7 staff members whose files were reviewed. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate regulatory notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d) Not applicable as following a review of the staff files it was confirmed that no staff members had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 7 staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with the children in the service held an appropriate childcare qualification at level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent.

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratio was correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In room 1 there were 9 children aged 3 years 7 months to 4 years 10 months being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In room 2 there were 6 children aged 2 years 8 months to 3 years 3 months being cared for by 1 staff member.
- In room 3 there were 6 children aged 13 months to 2 years 5 months being cared for by 2 staff members.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times, verified by the staff roster maintained at the service.

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) A sampling process was used in relation to the children’s records. All 11 sampled registration forms were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

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

(1)(a) Each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service in relation to the following:

Basic needs:

- During the inspection the early years practitioners were observed to be caring and kind in their interactions with the children and demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's individual needs, likes and preferences.
- The service provides all meals and snacks to children attending. Mealtimes in the service were observed to be relaxed and pleasant experiences for the children. The children were given plenty of time to enjoy their meals with support and encouragement provided as required.
- The children's nappies were changed at scheduled times and more frequently as required. The early years practitioners were observed to warmly engage with the children throughout the procedure and chatted to the children throughout. The children who were toilet trained were encouraged to be independent in using the toilet and were gently reminded to wash their hands afterwards.
- A separate cot room with 2 standard cots was provided in the sleep room of the service. The youngest child attending Room 3 on the day of inspection was placed to sleep in line with the child's Individual sleep routine. No other child attending the service required to sleep however stackable beds were available as needed. Rest areas including couches and floor mats with cushions were available in the care room to enable the children to take a break from activities as they chose throughout the day.
- The staff members were observed supporting the children's choice when they chose to change or opt out of activities. For example, in room 1 a number of children requested a book to be read which the practitioner facilitated whilst a group of children who chose to play in the construction area were enabled to do so.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members in all care rooms were observed to interact with children in a sensitive and warm manner. Staff demonstrated their familiarity with the children by talking with the inspector about their observations of the children, interests, personalities and developmental stages. Furthermore, staff members expressed awareness and understanding about children who needed additional help and support to participate in their preschool experience in a meaningful way. These practices and attitudes support children to feel safe, secure and respected.

- The practitioners working with the older children supported children to interact positively with each other, praising children for their behaviours particularly when they were helpful to others, took turns and shared resources.
- Throughout the 3 care rooms in the service the children appeared confident and relaxed in their environment and were observed naturally forming small groups and engaging in a range of tabletop and floor play activities during the inspection.
- The practitioners took the opportunity to engage with the children's parents and guardians at collection updating them on their child's progress in the service.

Physical and material environment:

- The care rooms were bright and welcoming, and the play materials and equipment were accessible on low-level shelving to facilitate children's independent choice and play.
- The care rooms were well resourced with the following interest areas provided in each of the care rooms, well-resourced home areas with a range of accessorial play materials including cooking utensils, crockery, dolls, doll care items all of which supported the children's imaginary play experiences. Construction areas including large wooden blocks and plastic blocks were provided along with arts and crafts materials and a wide range of tabletop resources.
- A suitable range of books was provided in each care room which supported the children's language development, in each of the 3 care rooms the children were observed having stories read to them throughout the inspection.
- The children's individual curricular-themed artwork was on display in all of the care rooms in the service.
- An enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the service. The area is surfaced with safety tiles, a see saw and spring mounted toy was provided. A large shed was provided with additional resources to support the children's play experiences.

Non-Compliance Information

Basic needs:

1. In Room 3, water was not available to the children to take as they desired during the day. Children were provided with water at mealtimes but was not available for them to take spontaneously if they needed at other times during the day.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Baic needs:

Corrective Action

1. A jug of water and cups will be readily available for each child throughout the day.

Preventive Action

1. Access to drinking water in all playrooms is included in the daily checklist to ensure it is always available.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated in the corrective and preventative actions addresses the noncompliance identified. The regulatory requirement for regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child has been addressed.

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 entrance doors and gates leading into the premises were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children during the inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available at all the sinks throughout the service.
- Children were observed washing their hands following using the toilet and before they ate their meals. The children attending Room 1 who used the toilet independently were gently reminded by the practitioners to wash their hands afterwards.
- The premises, play equipment and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition and up to date documented cleaning schedules were on display in the service.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No child was observed having medication administered on the day of inspection

Safe Sleep:

- The inspector observed that 10-minute sleep check observations noting each child's colour, position and breathing pattern were being performed and documented on all sleeping children.

Fire Safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors on the ground floor were clear and unobstructed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The service maintained accurate details of all children in attendance during the inspection. The children were entered as present on attendance records in each care room, noting each child's arrival and departure times.

(3)(a)(b) A system was in place to ensure that no person other than the children and their parents or guardians, employees, approved students or authorised visitors could enter the service. The early years inspector was requested to record her attendance on the premises and the purpose of the visit.

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) A person trained in first aid including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service as evidenced in the staff roster and the in-date FAR certification provided for inspection.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible position on the premises, out of the reach of children.