

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK058		
Name of Service:	Cute & Clever Playschool		
Address of Service:	Richill School Road, Lisnagry, Co. Limerick		
Eircode:	V94 V6W8		
Name of Registered Provider:	Philomena Foley		
Service type:	Sessional, Childminder		
Date of Inspection:	21/03/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM 4
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick		
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne		
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

This privately owned and operated service provides a sessional service from 09:30 – 12:30 hours, Monday – Friday for 38 weeks of the year for children aged 2– 5 years, including the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE/free pre-school) for eligible children and a childminding service from 12:30 – 16:00 hours, Monday – Friday for children aged 2 – 5 years. A service for school aged children is provided each afternoon.

The children have access to a designated playroom, sanitary accommodation and enclosed outdoor play areas.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge at the service. There are 2 additional staff employed to work in the pre-school. All staff hold a major 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 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 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise if required.
- (b) The registered provider and the two staff members were on the premises when the inspectors arrived at the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.
- (2) All the staff files were checked on the day of the inspection and the following documents were available on file for these staff:
- (a) References from the person's past employers and the most recent employer were available for all staff.
- (b) References from reputable sources in the case of a person who had no past employers were available where required.
- (c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of all staff.
- (d) Police vetting was in place for the staff member who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The registered provider and the 2 staff members all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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.

Compliance Information

(3) There was the registered provider and 2 staff present caring for 20 preschool children in the sessional service from 09:30am to 12:30pm .

The registered provider ensured that the adult child ratios were correct at all times throughout the morning.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

(a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,

Compliance Information

(1) The registered childminder ensured that no more than 5 preschool children were in her care at any given time.

On the day 4 preschool children aged from 2 to 5 years of age stayed in the care of the childminder from 12:30 hrs until 16:00 hrs. These preschool children were present in the sessional ECCE service from 09:30 to 12:30 pm.

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:

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service to encourage and educate the children about the importance of good nutrition. The parents supplied healthy snacks and drinks for the pre-school children.

Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator until required each day. Staff sat with the children at break time and actively encouraged mealtimes to be a social occasion. Childrens drinks were stored out of their bags and were

easily accessible to them throughout the day. The children who stayed in the childminding service in the afternoon were provided with an additional meal by the childminder.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets which were located next to the preschool room. A nappy changing facility was available in the providers own bathroom with access to hand washing facilities if required. Staff were available to assist children at all times if needed.

Lots of soft seating and rest areas were evident in the room for children to relax and rest if time away from active play was needed.

An enclosed sheltered outdoor play space directly off the playroom was used by the children for long periods each morning. A tarmac area to the front of the premises was available and it was here children had lots of opportunity for active movement and exploration.

The staff were observed to be interested in the children, listened to them and spoke to them using a soft tone of voice and positive language, engaging them in conversation and giving each child the opportunity to express themselves.

The children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow.

The staff modelled positive behaviour for the children and the children were praised for their good behaviour. Documented curriculums were based on children's emergent interests.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The preschool children had access to one playroom which contained many interest areas for the children. Low level tables and chairs were accessible for dining at break time and for tabletop activities. Imaginative play areas with dress up clothes, play kitchen and a home corner were available. A reading area with soft seating and a wide range of books, a construction area with building materials and an art and craft area with paints, brushes and paper were also provided in the room.

A large sand box was located in the outdoor sheltered space and children were observed spending long periods engaged in sand play.

All equipment was stored at children's eye level and was well labelled and easily accessible. Children were observed directing their own play, working in small groups and staff were observed joining with them when invited.

On the day the children were observed in the outdoor space to the front of the premises on their tricycles, having their snacks in the playroom and at play in the outdoor sheltered space to the rear of the service.

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

Infection Control:

Hand operated lidded bins for waste disposal were in use in the children's bathrooms and the playrooms instead of the pedal operated lidded bins. This posed a risk of cross infection to the children and staff.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The registered provider stated in the corrective and action form that two new pedal operated lidded bins were purchased for the service and were placed in the bathroom and playroom setting.

The service will ensure that only pedal operated, lidded bins will be used for the safe disposal of waste.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Photographic evidence was submitted to Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 23 Infection Control.

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) There was the registered provider and a staff member on duty with an up-to-date certificate in first aid response training.

- (2)(a) There was a well-stocked first aid box located on the premises.
(b) The first aid box was readily available and easily accessible if required

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)(a) A record that fire drills were practiced on a monthly basis was available up until October 2023 .
(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in playroom of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(a)
The last recorded fire drill took place on 17/10/2023. The registered provider stated that fire drills had been practised but were not recorded for December 2023, January and February 2024. This posed a risk to the safety of the children and staff at the service.
- (b)
There was no annual record of the number, type and maintenance of the smoke alarm system and the firefighting equipment. The firefighting equipment was last serviced in November 2022. This posed a safety risk to the children and staff at the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action:

The registered provider has stated in the action and preventative form that the following measures were taken:

- (1)(a)
A monthly fire drill on the 11th of April 2024 was carried out. The service will continue to practice monthly fire drills and will maintain a written record of all the fire drills that take place in the service. These monthly fire drills will be logged and displayed.

(b)

The firefighting equipment was serviced on the 10/04/2024 and an electrical contractor checked and tested the Fire Detection Smoke Alarm System on the 12/04/2024

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the service records of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system were submitted to Early Years Inspectorate

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement of Regulation 26 Fire Safety point 1(a) and (b).

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a current insurance certificate which outlined that adequate insurance was available for 22 preschool children to attend the sessional service and for 5 preschool children in the afternoon in the childminding service. The insurance cover commenced on the 28th of March 2023 and will expire on the 27th of March 2024. The registered provider was aware that the insurance was due for renewal.

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,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (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) The building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally and no obvious defects were noted on inspection.
- (b) The premises indoors appeared safe and secured. On arriving to the service, the front gate was closed and the registered provider was present with children in this play space.
- (c) All areas were well lit by natural light and by artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation.
- (d) The areas outside were maintained and routine cleaning schedules were in place for all internal and external areas.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets, and wash hand basins in the service for the number of children and adults in the service. The nappy changing facility will be located in the childminders main bathroom if required.