

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK085
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Name of Service:	Hospital Community Preschool Playgroup Ltd
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Address of Service:	Community Hall, Main Street, Hospital, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V35 X2P1
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Name of Registered Provider:	Clodagh Murphy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/12/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	0
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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 community operated service first notified in 1998.

The service is registered to provide a sessional service for children aged 2– 6 years, Monday – Friday 8:50 – 12:00 for 38 weeks of the year, including the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme for eligible children.

The service operates from 2 designated rooms at the local community hall which is located on the main street in the village of Hospital, Co Limerick.

The pre-school children have access to 2 rooms, sanitary accommodation area and an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

There are 2 staff members who work directly with the children on a daily basis. The registered provider does not work in the service.

The adults who work in the service, all hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 6 and 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 24, and 26; however, on inspection additional non-compliances which posed a risk were identified under Regulation 25 First Aid and Regulation 29 Premises These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Record of a preschool child.

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

06/12/2023

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider as there was no person trained in first aid for children (FAR – First Aid Responder) available in the service at all times while the children were in attendance. Please refer to Regulation 25 - First Aid in the body of the report.

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 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) On the day of the inspection there was a designated person in charge and a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a) There were written references from past employers available in respect of each staff, with recorded validations where required.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, references from an alternative source such as work placement and college were provided.

(c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available in respect of all staff members.

(d) No overseas police vetting was required as none of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(4) The staff who work at the facility all hold an award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The service operated a morning sessional session from 08.50am to 12 midday. There were 10 preschool children with 2 adults attending the morning session. This met the requirements of Regulation 11.
- (3) At all times the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in 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 sample of 12 children's registration forms were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars in each of the forms examined:
- (a) The name and date of birth of the child.
 - (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
 - (c) Provision to record 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.

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) **Basic Needs:**

A healthy eating policy was in place at the service and parents provided children with a healthy snack each day for their lunch. All perishable foods were stored in a fridge. Childrens drinks were accessible to them on a low shelf at all times during the session.

All children were toilet trained and were able to access the toilets and handwashing facilities independently.

Assistance from staff was on hand if required. Handwashing was observed to take place with the encouragement of the staff following messy play and before snack time.

A supply of tissues and wipes were accessible to the children. Lidded bins were available for the safe disposal of waste.

A designated area with soft couches were available to the children if they wished to rest and relax away from more active play areas.

The staff responded to the children's cues for assistance in a prompt and sensitive manner. The children were supported as they played individually and as part of a group. Children were observed moving freely indoors between the two playrooms working in a small group or on their own and they appeared to be content and happy in their chosen activity.

Physical and material environment:

The children had access to the main playroom and a smaller playroom which was used mainly for messy and sensory play .

The main playroom was laid out with uncluttered, clear floor spaces for the children to play safely. Designated areas of interest were available with appropriate supporting play materials and equipment. The smaller playroom had the turf table filled with rice and seeds for sensory play and a well-resourced art and craft area where play equipment and materials were easily accessible in labelled boxes for the children. This area had appropriate tables and chairs for table top activities and later the tables were cleaned for the children to sit and have their lunch.

The outdoor area on the day was inaccessible due to weather conditions. There was frost and ice on the ground. However, the children engaged in a variety of song and dance movements with the staff indoors which encouraged social play and gross motor movement. The children appeared to enjoy these activities and many moments of fun were observed.

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) Each pre-school child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by staff. This record was available on the digital attendance register.

3)(a) The person in charge ensured that no person other than the following were allowed enter the service.

(i) Pre-school child attending the service.

(ii) A person dropping or collecting such a child.

(iii) An employee.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(3)(b) A daily record in writing was not kept of persons who entered the preschool.

The visitor's logbook did not contain the following details.

- The persons contact number.
- Their reason for entry.
- The name of the person who approved access.
- The check in and out times.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service has now introduced a sign in-sign out sheet positioned near door for any visitor to sign when entering the preschool service.

Supporting documentation submitted

No

Summary Comment

The action as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 24 point (3)(b) has been adequately addressed.

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

(2) (a) The first aid boxes were safely stored and easily accessible in a conspicuous position at the premises.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) Evidence was not available to demonstrate that there was a staff member who had completed up to date training as a First Aid Responder and that a staff member with this training was available to children at all times during the operation of the service.

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the 06/12/2023 requesting that a person trained in First Aid response be available on the premises at all times during the operation of the service. The person in charge confirmed by email that a place on a First Aid response course was booked which commenced on the evening of Wednesday the 6th of December and to be completed by the Friday 8th December.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action:

(1) The 2 staff working in the service have been trained in FAR training which commenced on the 6th of December to the 8th of December and the certificates will be issued in January.

The expiry date of certificates will be noted to ensure they will be renewed before end of date period.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence was submitted to indicate that the FAR has been completed by the 2 staff.

Summary Comment

The action as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 25 First Aid has been adequately addressed.

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) Records were available to show that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis. The most recent fire drill took place on the 9th of November 2023.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises. The last maintenance check for firefighting equipment was in November 2023.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the service and a fire assembly point was located in the outdoor area.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Non-Compliance Information

(d)

1. In the outdoor area the concrete yard surface was poorly maintained. It was slippery and unsafe for the children and staff to use due to moss, ice and its uneven surface.
2. The carpet in the main playroom was lifting near kitchen area posing a tripping hazard and it appears to be difficult to maintain as its old and worn.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(d)

1. The yard has been power washed since inspection. The service plans to have the yard resurfaced and was given a start date for the work to commence on the 8th of January but that is subject to how busy the construction company is.
2. The carpet issue has been brought to the attention of the community council as the service are renting the building. The community council will host a meeting the end of January 2024 and will have the issue of the carpet on their agenda. The issue will hopefully be resolved by the end of February 2024.

Supporting documentation submitted

Picture and receipts were provided.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 Premises point (d) has been only partially addressed. This will be assessed at the next inspection.