

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK099		
Name of Service:	Knockainey Community Pre - School		
Address of Service:	Knockainey Community Centre, Knockainey, Co. Limerick		
Eircode:	V35 RK31		
Name of Registered Provider:	Noreen O'Donovan		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	21/02/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM 10
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.		
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Riordan		
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		

Description of service

Knockainey Community Pre-school service is located in the rural village of Knockainey in County Limerick. It operates a morning sessional service from 8.45am to 11.45am, Monday to Friday and an afternoon session from 12.00pm to 3.00pm, every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The service has 18 preschool children on the register each morning and 12 preschool children on the register each afternoon. The service operates from the local parish community centre. Within the facility the children have access to a well-resourced playroom, a kitchen area which is used for art and craft activities, a large spacious hall for active games and sports. A sheltered outdoor area at the side of the premises has recently been added to the service.

Staffing

The registered provider is the chairperson of the preschool committee. There are 4 staff employed to work at the service.

All staff have achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. Staff engage regularly in ongoing training and professional development.

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 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 designated person in charge was available on the day of the inspection and there was a named person who could deputise if required.

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

(2)(a) There were written validated references available in respect of all staff employed at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, references from an alternative source such as previous schools and colleges were provided.

(c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available for all staff members. All vetting was completed within the last 3 years.

(d) Not applicable.

(4) All staff members had the required qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education. There were 2 staff present who had completed the LINC training, a programme designed to enhance the inclusion of all children in Early Learning and Care settings.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The service operates a morning session from 8.45am to 11.45pm and an afternoon session from 12.00md to 3.00pm. On the day of the inspection there were 16 preschool children present with 3 staff for the morning session and 10 preschool children present with 3 staff for the afternoon session. The adult child ratio met the requirements of Regulation 11.

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 children’s enrolment forms for both the morning and the afternoon sessions were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of the children.
- (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 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 received by the child.
 - (i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

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 management at the service ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a)* The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and each staff working at the facility.
- (b)* Details of the type of service in operation and the age profile of children for which the facility 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. This was clearly displayed on the wall of the preschool room.
- (e)* The facilities available.
- (f)* The opening hours and fees.
- (g)* A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10. A summary of the policies were outlined in the parent handbook.
- (h)* Details of attendance by each pre-school child daily.
- (i)* Staff rosters were maintained on a daily basis and available for inspection. These correlated with the numbers that were present on the day of inspection.
- (j)* The service had a medication administration record template available that could be used in the event of a child requiring medication to be administered at the service.
- (k)* Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

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 and nutritious snacks were provided by the parents for the children each day. All perishable foods in the lunches were appropriately stored in a refrigerator. Drinking water was accessible to the children at all times with a water station located in the kitchen area within easy access for all children.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets located next to the main hall and beside the Preschool room. A nappy changing facility was also available if needed.

A change of clothes was available for all children if needed. Warm jackets were available for outdoor play.

Tissues and wipes were always accessible to the children and all waste was disposed of properly in foot pedal operated lidded bins.

Children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment both indoors and outdoors. A new sheltered outdoor area was recently added to the side of service and children were able to spend long periods outdoors regardless of weather conditions.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service operated from 3 separate locations within the Community centre. The main preschool room was used solely by the preschool and this area was designed with a range of developmentally appropriate interest areas accessible for the children e.g. a construction area, home corner/ imagination play area with a large dolls house, a dress up corner and a rest and relaxation reading corner with a large soft couch next to a book stand. The main hall was used for gross motor play activities and children were observed playing with ride on toys, with slides, plastic hoops and tunnels in this space. The kitchen area contained low level tables and tuff trays which were used for messy play and art and craft activities. Materials required for colouring, for cutting and for painting were all accessible on open shelving within easy reach of the children.

The layout of the facility allowed easy supervision by adults of the children as they moved to the different areas within the service.

Outdoors the children had access to a garden area and to a new sheltered area located directly next to the preschool room. In this area children had access to lots of similar play activities as indoors. A large sand box provided opportunity for messy play activities. Mud kitchens were available for imaginative play experiences. A large picnic table provided seating for adults and children for table tops activities or for dining in favourable weather. Children could move freely from the indoors to the outside as they wished. Children were supervised at all times in all areas outdoors.

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 were staff on duty at all times who had completed First Aid Responder training.

(2)(a) There was a well-stocked first aid box located in the service.

(b) The first aid box was readily available and accessible if required.

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 25 preschool children to attend the service at any one time. The insurance cover commenced on the 28th of March 2023 and is due to expired on the 27th of March 2024.