

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK107
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Lios Na Si Broadford Community Childcare
-------------------------	--

Address of Service:	Broadford Community Childcare, Broadford, Charleville, Co. Limerick
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	P56 RX25
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Marie O'Donnell
-------------------------------------	-----------------

Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

Date(s) of Inspection:	23/02/2024
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	63	PM	54
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

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

Líos Na Sí Broadford Community Childcare is a full day, community childcare service located in Broadford in Co. Limerick. It caters for pre-school children of all ages. A service for school aged children is offered each afternoon during school terms. The service is open Monday to Friday, 7.30am to 5.30pm.

The service operates from a large single-story purpose-built facility. The premises consists of 6 Pre-school rooms, 3 designated sleep rooms, sanitary facilities, a kitchen and an office space. It has large well-resourced outdoor play areas to the side and rear of the premises. A modular structure located on the same grounds is used to accommodate the school aged children during school terms.

Staffing

The registered provider is the chairperson of the pre-school committee. There is a designated person in charge who manages the service. All staff hold a qualification 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 announced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23 and 29.

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*

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 present on the day of the inspection. There was a person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present, and the staff roster indicated that a person in charge was always available at the service.

The records of new staff who had taken up employment in the service since the last inspection were reviewed and the following findings were documented.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all 4 new staff employed at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from reputable sources available.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for each new staff member.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 new staff who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction.

(3) All of the above documentation was furnished to the registered provider prior to each new staff member taking up employment at the facility.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education. Staff continuously engaged in onward professional development.

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.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-

(a) a sessional pre-school service, and

(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection there were 63 pre-school children present with 11 staff members during the morning. In the afternoon there were 54 pre-school children present with 10 staff members. The adult/child ratio was correct both in the morning and in the afternoon.

(2) The registered provider always ensured that the number of adults present in the service met the requirements of the regulations. Relief staff were available to cover while staff took their meal breaks. Separate staff worked in the kitchen preparing and serving foods at mealtimes.

(4)(a) The adult child ratio was correct each morning while the sessional ECCE programme was in operation.

(b) When the sessional service was ended, the adult/child ratio relevant to full day care and part time care were maintained as specified under the regulations.

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) BASIC NEEDS:

Children's basic needs were met in the service each day with a clear focus on the importance of healthy eating, adequate exercise, lots of play time and rest. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were prepared daily by kitchen staff and were served to all rooms at regular intervals throughout the day. A menu plan was shared with parents via the parental digital app. The plan was also displayed on the notice board in the main hallway. Children had easy access within each room to their drinking bottles throughout the day.

Sanitary accommodation and nappy changing facilities were located next to each playroom. Children's toiletries were stored close to each nappy changing unit and were located within easy reach of the staff. Hot water, liquid soap and paper handtowels were accessible in all nappy changing areas and in all sanitary accommodations. A change of clothes was available for all children if needed.

Separate sleep rooms were located next to the Baby and Toddler room, with an adequate supply of good quality standard cots available for all children under 2 years of age. Low level beds were used by all children over 2 years who required a sleep. Children were closely monitored while sleeping and all checks were documented. Rest areas with soft couches, cushions and blankets were accessible in each of other rooms accommodating the older children to rest at any stage during the day when tired.

Children spend long periods of time outside every day with each age group having access to their own outdoor space. The outdoor area for the Babies, Toddlers and Preschool children has lots of equipment and materials which support children's play, movement, learning and exploration exclusive to outdoors. Sheltered space outside facilitated play in all weather conditions. Bikes, trikes, cars, and scooters were available outside. Areas for messy play, for gardening and planting were accessible outside.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN

Parents were actively involved in all aspects of the service. At enrolment information of children's daily routines were shared in writing. Details of each child's likes and dislikes were noted. Family photographs were displayed in all rooms to support a sense of belonging and connectedness for each child. Parents received lots of information throughout each day on the activities the children participated in, the meals they had and how they slept during rest times. This information was uploaded on a digital app for the parents. At drop off and collection time staff updated parents on any additional information. Parents were actively involved in fundraising for the service and a recent winter wonderland evening for all families helped raise funds used to enhance the outdoor facilities at the service.

Regular staff meeting took place at the service. Agendas for these meeting were shared and agreed outcomes from the meetings were agreed. This ensured a strong sense of teamwork at the service.

Non-Compliance Information

Basic Needs

A low-level partition wall separated the Baby room and the Toddler room. During busy periods the noise level from both rooms was very high. The ability to concentrate in a noisy environment can affect a child's capacity to learn. An arrangement to fully separate both rooms would create a more restful environment in both rooms.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In reply to the inspection report the registered provider stated that they are currently applying for the Building Blocks expansion grant in order to build up the half wall between the Baby and Toddler rooms. This will create two separate individual rooms helping reduce noise levels.

The service will maximise the use of the outdoor areas especially during the spring/summertime. This will help to reduce noise levels inside. This will help ensure children in each individual room will have the opportunity for quiet time during the day.

Supporting documentation submitted

N/A

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the corrective actions outlined by the service. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 is in the process of being adequately addressed. A review of the changes will take place at the next inspection.

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:

All internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas such as kitchens and sluice rooms.

All external areas were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and prevent unauthorised people entering the building.

All emergency exits and fire doors were unobstructed.

All blind cords were secured on tension hooks and made safe in all rooms.

All highchairs were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.

All toys, furniture and play equipment were in good condition and free from sharp edges or corners. No broken toys were noted on the premises.

No flexes or cables were located within reach of children.

Infection Control:

A detailed infection control policy was in place and all staff were familiar with the procedures outlined in the policy. A high standard of operational hygiene was observed in all areas of the building. All waste was adequately disposed of in foot pedal operated bins. Nappy changing policies were displayed in the sanitary areas. Staff were observed appropriately handwashing, wearing gloves, and cleaning all surfaces after each nappy change.

Administration of Medication:

All medicines were stored in safe areas well out of reach of children at the service. Parents gave written consent for the administration of all medicines.

All medication administered was checked by 2 staff members and all details were clearly documented.

Safe Sleep:

A detailed safe sleep policy was in place at the service. Staff knew the requirements of the policy and had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to monitoring all children who slept at the service.

Room temperatures in all rooms were recorded at 19 degrees Celsius. The colour, position and breathing observations of each child were recorded every 10 minutes.

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 building appeared safe and secured. A buzzer system on the entrance door ensured all who entered the building were checked in by an authorised person in the manager's office. Outdoors the play areas were surrounded by secure high walls and gates where no unauthorised access to or exit from the area was permitted. All visitor access was managed appropriately with a visitor book available at the front door to record details of all who entered the building.
- (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 all well maintained and routine cleaning schedules were in place for all internal and external areas. Indoors all areas were being repainted with these works completed during out of hours times.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing areas available in the service. All waste was managed appropriately with lots of foot pedal operated, lidded bins in all areas. Handwashing and drying facilities were suitable and adequate.