

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK117			
Name of Service:	Little Wonders Pre School			
Address of Service:	Vermont, Clarina, Co. Limerick			
Eircode:	Y94Y759			
Name of Registered Provider:	Patricia Reid			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	19/02/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	9
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick			
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan			
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 early years preschool opened in 2000 and offers a play-based curriculum. Two sessional services are provided each day for preschool children aged 2 years 9 months to 5 years of age, operating from 08.45hrs to 11.45hrs and 12.15hrs – 15.15hrs Monday to Friday. The service is located in a domestic dwelling in a rural area and there are 3 playrooms in operation with a maximum of 26 preschool children allowed attend at any one time. The dwelling is used solely for the purpose of operating the sessional service. Facilities for outdoor play are provided at the rear of the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment. The ethos of the service is to spend the majority of the sessions playing outdoors.

Staffing

The service employs 3 adults. The adults working in the service have completed major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education from Level 5 to Level 7.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Childcare 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,15,19,25,26 and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 8. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 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.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider did not notify the early years inspection registration office that a second sessional service was operating in the afternoon from 12.15hrs to 15.15 hrs.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has notified the early years inspection registration office that a second sessional service was operating in the afternoon from 12.15hrs to 15.15 hrs.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the completed change in circumstances form was submitted to the early years inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered provider made an application to operate a second sessional childcare service and same was approved by the Early Years Inspectorate.

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) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.
- (b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.
- (2)(a) Two written references were available for 1 staff member employed to work at the service.
- (b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed to work at the service.
- (4) Of the 3 staff files examined all staff working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(a) Two staff present on the day of the inspection did not have a second reference available. References that were available were not validated by the registered provider prior to the person commencing work in the service.
- (d) Police vetting was not available for a staff member who had resided outside of Ireland in another jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(a) Two references are now available for all staff who work in the service.
- (d) Police vetting has been obtained for the staff member who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six months.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of references and police vetting were submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 9 (2)(a) and (d).

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 adult child ratio was correct in the facility. On the day of the inspection there were 18 pre-school children being supervised by 2 adults for the morning session. There were 9 pre-school children being supervised by 2 adults for the afternoon session.

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) – (i) A sample of 9 records for a preschool child were examined on the day of the inspection.

The details required from (1) (a) – (i) were completed on each record.

Records for a preschool child were available for all children present on the day.

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:

Snacks provided by the parents of the children included fruit, sandwiches, yogurts and water to drink for their morning break. Children sat at low tables and had their lunch outdoors in an environment that promoted social interaction with peers and the adults and was unhurried.

There was a comfortable rest area indoors where children could have some quiet time. The children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after toileting and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water and liquid antibacterial soap. Staff were observed to clean the tables before snacks were eaten. Children were observed to use the toilet facilities independently and nappy changing facilities were not required.

Children were allowed to move freely outdoors from one activity to the next and were encouraged by staff to put on their outdoor wet gear and take off their wet gear independently. They were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level of choice of activities. Staff modelled positive behaviour for the children and the children were praised for their good behaviour.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

On arrival at the service all of the children were playing in the outdoor play area which had a grass surface, a matted surface, a concrete surface and it was safe and secure. There was a plentiful supply of play equipment and toys for children. They were dressed appropriately for the weather. They were encouraged to play at the open sand table and enjoyed this form of messy play. A section of the outdoor play area was roofed which allowed children spend additional time outdoors in the fresh air. There was a group singing session and each child got an opportunity to stand up and tell their 'news'.

Playhouses, slides, swings, a fairy garden ,a vegetable garden and a construction area with stones were evident outdoors.

The pre-school rooms were equipped with open shelving units where children could access equipment and materials independently. Play spaces were evident such as the library/quiet area, dress up area, farm area, home corner, construction area, small world area and arts and crafts area and tabletop activities area.

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) The registered provider and two other staff had up to date training in first aid response for children.
- (2) (a) The first aid box was safely stored in easily accessible position in the playroom.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last recorded date of practice of fire drills was January 2024.
- (b)The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced in April 2023. Smoke alarms were last serviced in January 2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a prominent position at the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was available to cover the number of children who attended.