

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LM008
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Name of Service:	Childhood Days
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Address of Service:	Laird House, Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim
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Eircode:	N41 H3C5
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sean McGloin
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	14/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	2	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello
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

Childhood Days is a not-for-profit early years' service. The service is registered to provide care on a full day care basis to children aged 2 – 6years from 10:00hrs to 19:00hrs each weekday and from 10:00 to 17:00hrs on a Saturday. The service states that it is a voluntary support group for children with special needs and their parents/guardians.

The early years' service is located on the ground floor of a large three storey premises in the town of Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim. The service consists of one large open plan room care room, a sensory room, a dining room, a kitchen, and sanitary accommodation. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area adjacent to the premises.

Staffing

On the day four staff were working in the preschool service. The person in charge works directly with the children.

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 on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 25 and 28. 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 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*

(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) (b)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2)

The records of all four adults employed in the service were reviewed.

(a) (b) Two written and verified past employer references were available for all four adults employed in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for all four adults in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Four adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service. There were two adults working directly with two children in the morning of the unannounced inspection and three adults working directly with two children in the afternoon. The person in charge also provided care to the preschool child.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children ratio were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent 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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1) (a-i)

The registered provider ensured an accurate record of the preschool's child information was kept on file including date of birth, Name and contact details of the child's medical practitioner, who was authorised to collect the child from preschool and a record of vaccinations.

(3) (c)

These records specified in (a-i) were made available to the inspector on the day.

(4)

The person in charge is aware of the requirement set out in regulation for the retention of these records.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

Physical and Material Environment:

The preschool consists of one large open plan space with an additional smaller room and one sensory room. The large open plan room is the main care room, and the children were observed to move around this area freely. The room is resourced with suitable materials and resources suitable to the age and stage of development of the children attending the preschool service. In the main care room, interest areas included home corners, construction areas, musical instruments, building blocks and arts and crafts. A second smaller room is equipped with more educational resources such as jigsaws, puzzles and tabletop activities. A sensory room with dimmed lighting, soft furnishings, visual and auditory aides allow opportunities for movement, relaxation, and regulation for the preschool child. The outdoor area is located adjacent to the property and is equipped with impact absorbing flooring. Raised flower beds and a seating area provides for an area of relaxation in the spring.

Curriculum:

The curriculum in the preschool is child led and focuses on the stage the child is at. One child is preparing for accessing primary school in September and this child was supported to develop independence to prepare for entry to primary school. Another child only starting in the preschool was being supported to transition, play and fun was the main goal.

Basic Needs:

The children attending the preschool service have additional needs which the service thrive to support. One to one staffing allows for independence to be promoted and developed. Staff communicate to the children verbally and in lamh, picture social stories are also used to explain a task or inform of a transition. Meals are provided from the family home and meals are reheated if required in the service. Due to the various sensory needs of the children, meals may include various textures that are of preference to the children including bread sticks, rice cakes, various fruits, crackers, sandwiches etc.

There are some children in nappies and children are supported to have regular nappy changes in line with the service policy. Those children who are independent in toileting are supported and encouraged with various prompts in use for pulling up trousers and washing hands.

Supporting Relationships:

The staff members were observed to be kind and gentle in their interactions with the children. Soft voice tones were used to guide and encourage during tasks, such as building blocks and completing jigsaws. Staff were observed to give regular reassurance to the children. Children were observed to be held and cuddled as needed. Where children were becoming frustrated, staff used distraction techniques to deescalate the behaviour. The service placed a strong emphasis on family involvement and communication between the family and the service was evidenced in support plans and the likes and wishes of the child.

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:

- The main entrance into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.

- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The outdoor area was secure with access to the outdoors accessible by key only.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available for hand hygiene.
- Foot operated waste bins were available throughout the service.
- Children were observed to wash their hands prior to eating and after using the toilet.
- Tables were cleaned down prior to meals being served.

Administration of Medication:

- There was no administration of medication on the day of inspection.
- Staff members were knowledgeable about the service medication administration policy.
- Staff were trained in emergency medication administration e.g. buccal midazolam.

Safe Sleep:

- A rest area with soft furnishings was provided in the care room, where children could rest.

Fire Safety:

- Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the care room.
- The fire assembly point was clearly displayed to the left of the property adjacent to the outdoor 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 had ensured that a person trained in first aid is available to the children at all times.

On the day of inspection two staff members present were trained in First Aid Responder training.

(2) (a) (b)

A suitable and fully stocked first aid box is available to the preschool children throughout the day. This box is stored in a conspicuous location in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The preschool service is insured to provide care for 30 children at any one time up until the 29.08.2024.