

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015LS001

Name of Service: Fairbrother Childminding Ltd. T/A Orchard Childminding Service

Address of Service: The Orchard Child Minding, Lisduff, Errill, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

Eircode: R32 KH70

Name of Registered Provider: Rosaleen Fairbrother

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 16/06/2023

No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	15

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Inspectorate,
Tusla, Child and Family Agency,
Primary Care Centre,
Church Avenue,
Tullamore, Co Offaly

Inspection undertaken by: K. Murphy and C. O' Connor Hughes

Title: Early Years Inspectors

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

The service offers full time, part time and sessional places. The service operates between the hours of 07:00 and 18:00 on a Monday to Friday basis. The age range of children that the service is registered to accommodate is 0 to 6 years of age. The service is operated by an independent provider as part of a multiple.

The Early Years' Service is located in a purpose-built premises attached to the home of the registered provider. Three pre-school rooms, a dining room, a sleep room, an office, a sluice room, a kitchen /dining area and an office are provided. Three outdoor play areas are attached to the rear of the service. On site set down and parking facilities are available. The service is rurally located in the townland of Lisduff, near the village of Errill, County Laois.

Staffing

There were four staff members working directly with the children. A relief staff member was available to assist as required. Nineteen ECCE children attended their graduation day in the local pet farm supervised by four adults, they did not attend the service during the inspection. The registered provider arrived at the service shortly after the inspector's arrival.

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 inspections 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 inspectors wish 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
- (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.

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider was present during the inspection.

Thirteen staff files were reviewed.

(2) (a) (b)

Validated written references from past employers or a source other than a previous employer were available in respect of all adults.

(c)

Completed Garda Vetting disclosure was available for all adults.

(d)

Police Vetting was available in respect of one adult who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3)

The procedures in respect of (2)(a)(b)(c) and (d) were carried out by the registered provider prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4)

The adults working directly with children held a major award at levels 5,6 and 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.

(2)

There were fifteen children attending the baby and wobbler rooms supervised directly by four adults.

(8)(a)

Documentation indicated that two adults are on the premises at all times.

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)

Children were content with their carers and staff were familiar with each child and their personality. Adults were observed to be positive towards children evidenced by individual names used, eye contact and praise for children on completion of activities. The young children sat together in highchairs in the dining area to aid a family style dining experience. Finger feeding was encouraged and facilitated. Bibs were worn by young children to protect their clothes at mealtimes. Children attending the baby/wobbler rooms slept on a need's basis. Soothers were stored in individually named containers. All children were observed to enjoy free play, choosing their own activity to participate in and playing in the outdoor play areas supervised by staff. Good teamwork between the staff members was observed during the inspection. The service worked in partnership with parents and a communication notebook was used to facilitate information sharing between the service and the parents.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable play equipment was provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, sensory, tabletop activities, arts and crafts and home corners in the ECCE and baby rooms.

(b)

A separate sleep room was available and equipped with five standard cots to facilitate the sleep needs of babies and young children. Low level beds were available for children over two years of age to sleep on as required. Rest areas were available to rest and relax in the pre-school rooms.

(3)(a)

Outdoor play areas were available for children. The toys and equipment included slides, toy kitchen, a tunnel, trikes and bikes, benches, tables and chairs. A separate play area with an all-weather absorbent surface was located outside the baby/ wobbler room. A large green grass area was available for ball games and equipped with goal posts and nets. The perimeter was secured by a wire fence and foliage.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

There was an insufficient amount of age and stage appropriate toys and equipment for the children in the wobbler room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Following the inspection there was a review of the toys and equipment in the wobbler room. Toys more suitable to younger children were stored away. Additional age-appropriate toys and interest corners and areas for the children we added. (Photographs included)

Quarterly a review of the wobbler room and the age and stage of the children in attendance will take place to ensure that the service is meeting the needs of the children in the room with the layout of toys and equipment.

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective actions taken photographic evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector. The corrective actions if implemented should meet the regulatory requirement. The practices as stated will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

A regular schedule of snacks and meals was provided to the children during the inspection. A three-week menu plan was displayed in the premises. At approximately 12:30 a snack consisting of blueberries, banana pieces and cheese sandwiches was served to the children. Water or milk was available to drink. Supplementary watermelon pieces were served to aid hydration and cooling. Named beakers for the younger children with water were stored in the refrigerator to aid cooling. The main meal was served in the afternoon and consisted of fishfingers, with mashed potato, peas, and sweetcorn. Bottles of prepared infant formula were transported to the service in individual cool bags, stored correctly in the refrigerator and available to the children as required.

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 entry to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable and cleaning schedules were available and reviewed.

There was an adequate supply of paper hand towel and liquid soap in the sanitary accommodation. Warm water was noted at the wash hand basins.

The pre-school rooms and the sanitary accommodation were ventilated by means of openable windows. Mechanical ventilation was noted in the nappy changing area.

Foot operated pedal bins were noted in the pre-school room and the sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

No medicine was administered during the inspection. Temperature reducing medication was available if required by a child with a high temperature.

Safe Sleep:

A sleep log was maintained noting the colour, position and breathing of sleeping children.

A wall mounted thermometer was in place in the baby sleep room.

Fire Safety:

The fire exit routes in the premises were unobstructed. An assembly point was located to the back of the premises.

Outing:

The registered provider stated the service does not undertake outings.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

The two nappy changing procedures observed were inadequate for infection control purposes due to the following;

- A staff member did not wash their hands prior to changing the child's nappy.
- A staff member redressed the child with the same gloves used for nappy changing.
- A staff member did not wash their hands between nappy changes.

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

A review was completed. All staff attended a specific purpose meeting following the inspection. Staff were brought to the nappy changing room and given support in following the steps in changing a nappy. All staff current and new will be inducted and reviewed on their method for changing a nappy periodically during the year. An induction sheet outlining exactly how to change a nappy, physical training to support good routines and procedures for every change, a template to fill in on initial training and a review to ensure no steps are being missed have been put in place. Sporadic checks during the year will take place to ensure compliance with procedures. (Procedure for nappy changing induction included)

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective actions taken documentary evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector. The corrective actions if implemented should meet the regulatory requirement. The practices as stated will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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)

Two staff members were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises.

(2)(a)

A first aid box was available in an accessible and conspicuous location in the service.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school service.

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 firefighting 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)

A written record for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on 9 June 2023.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms were serviced in August 2022.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service and the expiry date noted as 27 March 2024.