

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LS011
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Name of Service:	The Village Creche
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Address of Service:	Bog Road, Ballyroan, Co. Laois
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Eircode:	R32 YP94
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Name of Registered Provider:	Edith O'Sullivan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	13/02/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	53	PM	36
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore Co. Offaly R35K1W4
Inspection undertaken by:	D. Molloy
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

The Village Crèche is located in the rural village of Ballyroan County Laois. The service operates as a full day care and can accommodate up to eighty children. The service can accommodate children from 0 to 6 years of age. The full day care service is registered to operate from 8.00am to 6.00pm and the sessional service operates each morning from 9.30am to 12.30pm from Monday to Friday. The service operates from a stand-alone, single-story, purpose-built premises adjacent to the registered providers domestic dwelling.

The larger part consists of a lobby area, a reception area, hallway, an office, laundry room and four care rooms. In addition, two nappy changing facilities, two sleeping rooms, a kitchen and dining room, a staff room and five toilets with wash hand basins for children's use and one for adult use are provided.

These care rooms include the baby room, the wobbler /toddler room, and Junior Preschool room 1 and 2.

Access into the outdoor facility is gained directly from the baby room into its own play area. The other rooms access the play area from the hallway.

The smaller part offers two playrooms, Senior Preschool 1, and Senior Preschool 2, both of which have direct entry into their own play area. Two toilets and wash hand basins are provided.

The extensive outdoor play area is divided for use by the different groups of children, each are enclosed and securely fenced.

Parking is available in the parking area provided in front of the premises

Staffing

The registered provider was present during the inspection and the inspection was facilitated by the person in charge. Sixteen staff in addition to the registered provider were employed in the service. All staff members hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 5,6,7 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, and 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, as far 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.

(6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who-

- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and*
- (b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date.*

(6A) is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present during the inspection and facilitated the inspection and the roster showed that at all times the person in charge was present during the opening hours of the service.
- (2)
- All staff seventeen files were reviewed on site on the day of inspection.
- (a) (b) Validated references from staff members past employers, in particular the most recent employer was available for review. Validated references from reputable sources were available for review.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all seventeen staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting from other police authorities was available as required for staff.
- (3)
- Required vetting had been carried out prior to staff member being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4)
- Staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5,6,7 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- (6)(a)(b)
- Not applicable as no employee had signed a declaration on or before June 30, 2016, to the effect that they intended to retire from employment in a pre-school service.

(6A)

Two employees were working with children under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) on the day.

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 registered providers ensured that there were sufficient adults working directly with the children throughout the opening hours of the service.

(2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained and records showed that the adult child ratio was maintained in the service.

(8)
(a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times, this was reflected in the staff rosters.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker, or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

The registered provider had ensured that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations was available on the premises and could be viewed by

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker, or contractor, and
- (c) an authorised person.

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

It was observed that the care practices were spontaneous, as noted as staff offered comfort, picked up and held a child who was unsettled in the baby room.

Staff remained constant and children could expect the same adult to care from them each day and could form relationships with the adults who took care of them .

Childrens nappies were changed as required and nappy changing was observed to be interactive and a pleasant experience for the infants. Staff were down on the floor with the babies and toddlers and interacting with the children.

Supporting Relationships.

Parents receive updates on their own children’s progress including discussion at daily hand over times, where parents have opportunity to meet with staff. An open-door policy was in place and parents could avail of meetings on a one-to-one basis with the manager if they so wish.

Children were relaxed in the staff company and staff were familiar with the children’s family . Siblings were facilitated to meet and play together during the day and staff were noted explaining to individual children when their younger brother or sister had gone down for a nap to keep them informed about their siblings day .

Physical and Material Environment

The setting was well maintained and was laid out in a child centred manner. The pre-school rooms were bright and cheerfully decorated and laid out to meet the needs of the children. The rooms inspected, the baby room, wobbler room and the junior preschool 1 room were well stocked with a variety of good quality, developmentally appropriate toys and equipment were within easy reach of the children in areas of special interest. Soft matting and soft furnishing was in good supply and rest, cosy areas were used by the children during the 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:

Cleaning, sanitising products and equipment were stored out of reach of children.
A pest control system was in place and was monitored and recorded to safeguard against pests.
Direct access to the preschool setting was gained through the front door, which was monitored, and entry was on a controlled entry system from within.
The enclosed outdoor play facility was securely fenced and was accessible directly from the setting.

Infection Control:

The service was clean and well maintained and a regular and deep cleaning rota was in place and was available on the premises.
Clear guidance on handwashing was outlined in a child friendly manner for children. Children and staff were observed washing their hands and children were reminded to wash their hands if they forgot.

The sanitary facilities and playrooms were well ventilated with openable windows

Administration of Medication:

A site-specific medication management policy had been devised and was available in the service.

Staff were familiar with policy and practice in relation to safe administration of medication and correct storage of medicines.

No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

The designated sleeping rooms were within easy access of the care rooms and were both in use on the day of inspection. Temperatures were monitored in the rooms and sleeping children were monitored and a record of sleep checks were maintained. Rest areas were available in the rooms for children's use.

Fire Safety:

The fire exits were unobstructed throughout the setting.

The fire exits were fitted with exit display signage.

A notice of the fire assembly point was on display to show fire assembly point.

Outing:

The person in charge stated that no outings are conducted from the service.

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)

Six staff had up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and were available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)

- (a) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible location on the premises.
- (b) The first aid box was readily available in the 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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 was available of the fire drills carried out in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as being carried out on January 19, 2024.

(b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The fire alarms were serviced on January 11, 2024, and fire equipment was also checked on July 22, 2023.

(2)

The record was available open to parents, guardians, employees, and the authorised person.

(3)

The person in charge stated that records were retained for a period of 5 years after creation.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the premises

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of up-to-date insurance cover for the number of children attending the service was available in the service.

The insurance certificate was valid until March 2024.

Part IX - Inspection and Enforcement

Regulation 33 – Furnishing of information to agency

A registered provider shall furnish the Agency with such information as the Agency may reasonably require for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations and the information shall be in such form, if any, as may be specified by the Agency.

Compliance Information

The person in charge facilitated the inspection and provided access to information as was required for completion of the inspection.