

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LS019		
Name of Service:	Graiguecullen Parish Childcare Centre CLG		
Address of Service:	c/o St. Fiacc's Primary School, Killeshin Road, Graiguecullen, Carlow, Co. Laois		
Eircode:	R93 KT68		
Name of Registered Provider:	Terry Smyth		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	08/07/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM 12
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		
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 service is registered as a full day care service. The service operates between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 on a Monday to Friday basis. The service is operated by a community provider.

The Early Years' Service is located in adjacent prefabricated buildings on the grounds of St Fiacc's National School. An office, reception area and a kitchen are provided. Outdoor play areas are located to the rear of the service. On-site parking and set down facilities are available. The service is situated in an urban residential area in Graiguecullen, Co. Laois.

Staffing

The designated person in charge, the centre supervisor, three childcare practitioners working with pre-school children and four staff working with school aged children were present on the day of inspection. Two household and maintenance staff were present at intervals during the day. The registered provider is not part of the staff complement and was not present during the inspection.

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The scope of the inspection included room 3. No other pre-school rooms were in operation.

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 co-operation of the person in charge, supervisor, 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 designated person in charge and the centre supervisor were available in the service.

(b)

The designated person in charge and the centre supervisor were present during the inspection.

Twenty-two files including the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)

The required number of written validated references were available from past employers in respect of the files reviewed.

(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from a source other than a past employer in respect of the files reviewed.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the files reviewed.

In respect of twenty of the twenty-one staff members and the registered provider the service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was available in respect of two staff members who lived outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Staff members working directly with children as part of the adult to child ratio held qualifications at levels 5 to 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications or departmental letters of temporary qualification recognition for the summer period.

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 thirteen pre-school children attending the service supervised directly by three adults.

(8)(a)

The staff roster indicated that two adults are on the premises at all times.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;

(b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;

- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1) (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (h) (i) (j) and (k).

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)

Room 3:

The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development.

Meals and snacks were freshly prepared on site for the children. A menu plan was available. The mid-morning snack consisting of brown bread sandwiches with a selection of fillings and water to drink.

The main meal consisted of a chicken pasta bake. Milk or water was available to drink. Dietary requirements were catered for. Fruit and dairy snacks were provided during the afternoon.

Adults were observed to be positive towards children evidenced by individual names used, eye contact and praise for children on completion of activities. The children were encouraged to be independent, and their choices were supported. Staff were observed to offer support and praise to each child for their involvement in activities.

A digital system was used to record details relating to each child's daily activities including feeding, sleeping, nappy changing, events and activities. There was good communication observed between the adults and children during nappy changing.

A range of developmentally appropriate experiences and materials were available for all children. Play equipment and materials were accessible to children and individual preferences were accommodated as to what and how long children wish to engage with specific chosen activities. Materials included paint, play dough, dolls, dolls houses, buggies, puzzles, blocks, trucks, animals, and fine motor skill toys including pegboards, jigsaws, and shape sorters. Children's artwork was noted and paper, crayons, paint and a variety of open-ended art materials were in plentiful supply. Children enjoyed moving freely from one play experience to the next in the indoor and outdoor environments.

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 19 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)

Adequate and suitable indoor and outdoor facilities were provided on the premises.

(b)

Soft furnishings provided suitable relaxation facilities in the pre-school rooms. Low level beds were in place for children over the age of two who required rest or sleep during the day.

(3)(a)

A large garden area was located to the rear of the service with an all-weather surface. The perimeter was secured by a high-level fence and a gate. A sheltered “castle” play area was noted. The outdoor play area was equipped with a painting area, a build block system and a variety of single, tandem and taxi bicycles.

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 entrance door to each pre-school room was secure to ensure the safety of the children within the service. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents. Monthly safety checklists were in place.

Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. Warm water, paper hand towel and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation.

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the sanitary accommodation and in the pre-school rooms for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Natural ventilation was available through openable windows in the pre-school rooms and in the sanitary accommodation and nappy changing area.

Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature and stored safely in the service. Medication was stored correctly in the service. The medication documentation was available and reviewed.

Fire Safety:

Fire exit routes were unobstructed, and a fire assembly point was noted to the side of the premises.

Outing:

A risk assessment and checklist were available and reviewed in respect of the annual outing from the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

The most recent Garda vetting disclosure presented by the person in charge in respect of one staff member was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting' an expiry date of 29.06.24 was noted. It is acknowledged that the designated person in charge took an immediate corrective action and in date garda vetting was submitted to the inspectorate on 19.07.24.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The designated person in charge stated in the response that the service applied for and received updated Garda Vetting in respect of one member of staff who's vetting disclosure was not dated within previous three years. An excel spreadsheet has been created to allow for forecasting of the requirement to renew Garda Vetting every three years. (Garda Vetting Disclosure 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 and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) no person other than-
 - (i) pre-school child attending the service,
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,
 - (iii) an employee, or
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The records of arrival and departure reviewed verified that each child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by a nominated staff member.

(3)(a)

All entry to the service with the exception of (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) has to be approved by a staff member.

(b)

A visitor log was in place to record the details and purpose of all visitors to the service. The inspector signed the visitor book on arrival.

(4)

The visitor log is retained throughout the annual operation of 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)

Eleven adults were qualified in first aid response (FAR). The roster indicated that FAR cover was provided during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)

A first aid box was available in the entrance hall.

(b)

A first aid box was readily available 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)

There was a record of fire drills carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 29 June 2024.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The firefighting equipment was serviced in November 2023. The smoke alarms were serviced in May 2024.

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were noted in conspicuous locations 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 was 30 November 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 designated person in charge and the supervisor provided the agency with the information required for the inspection.