

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015LS041 | | |
| Name of Service: | Jelly Tots Community Creche and Playschool | | |
| Address of Service: | Fr. Breen Park, Abbeyleix, Co. Laois | | |
| Eircode: | R32 K65X | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Mary White | | |
| Service type: | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 05/03/2024 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 46 | PM 21 |
| 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

Jelly Tots Community Creche and Playschool is located in the town of Abbeyleix in rural County Laois. The service is a community service and has been in operation since 2000. The service is operated by Abbeyleix Women's Development Group.

The service operates as a full day care service and is registered to accommodate up to 50 pre-school children. The full day care service operates from 7.30am to 6.00pm. A sessional service operates each morning from 9.30am to 12.30md.

This Early Years' Service operates from a single-story premises, converted from the community hall, on its own site next to Fr. Breen Park playing fields.

The premises offers an entrance hall and lobby and a long hallway. A reception /office is located at the main entrance door. Three pre-school rooms including the creche room, Preschool room 1 and Preschool room 2 are provided catering for children aged one year to six years of age. A kitchen, a designated sleeping room, seven toilets and seven wash hand basins including one for staff use and two nappy changing facilities are provided.

A large indoor hall is available for children's use as an additional indoor play facility.

Two outdoor play areas are provided to the rear and to the side of the premises.

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

Staffing

The person in charge was not part of the staff compliment but was present during the inspection. Twelve staff were working in the service on the day of inspection. All staff members hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 5 - 9 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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The scope of the inspection was focused on the creche room, the sanitary accommodation, and the outdoor play facility.

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 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.

(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.

(5) Paragraph (4) shall apply-

- (a) on or after 31 December 2016 in respect of pre-school services registered on or before 30 June 2016, and
- (b) on or after the date of registration in respect of all other pre-school services.

(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)

Twelve staff files including the person in charge were reviewed on site on the day of inspection.

(a) (b) Validated references from staff members past employers, in particular the most recent employer were available for review. Validated references from reputable sources were available for review.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all twelve 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 for four staff as was required.

- (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 5-9 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)
One employee was working with children under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) at the time of inspection.

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 providers 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

The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development including self-feeding, self-toileting and caring for their belongings. Healthy eating was encouraged, and the adults present sat at the table with the children during meal times promoting conversation and interactions. A hot meal consisting of a chicken curry, rice and mashed potato was served to the children at 12:00. For tea children had beans on toast, fresh fruit, scones, and milk to drink. Children availing of sessional care brought in their own lunches in line with the healthy eating policy. A combination of outdoor and indoor activities was observed during the inspection. Children availed of fresh air and sunlight in the outdoor play areas and played on the outdoor equipment while being supervised by the adults. Staff in the creche room were observed on the floor with the younger children speaking to them softly, engaging with them in a patient and positive manner, encouraging children and offering praise and positive reinforcement.

Supporting Relationships

An open-door policy was in place and parents could avail of meetings on a one-to-one basis with the designated person in charge if they so wished. Parents receive regular updates on their own children's progress including discussion at daily hand over times, where parents have the opportunity to meet with staff. Children appeared comfortable and relaxed in the staff company and staff were familiar with the children in their care.

Physical and Material Environment

The service was well maintained, and regularly painted and decorated. The setting was laid out in a child centred manner and was bright and cheerfully with art work and murals painted on the walls. The service was 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.

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:

Access to the kitchen and storage areas was restricted.

Refuse bins were stored away from the play areas and were inaccessible to children.

Cleaning, sanitising products and equipment were stored in a designated locked cupboard out of reach of children.

A pest control system was in place and was monitored and recorded to safeguard against pests.

The main door was secured with a controlled entry system which was operated from within and could prevent unauthorised entry and unsupervised exit from the service

Infection Control:

There was an adequate supply of paper hand towel and liquid soap in the sanitary accommodation

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. Anti-febrile medication was available if required by a child with a high temperature.

Safe Sleep:

A designated separate sleep room was available in the service. The room temperature of the sleep rooms was recorded at 18°C. Children under the age of two slept in standards cots with each child's colour, position and breathing checked and recorded every ten minutes. Low level beds and soft furnishings were available in the service for any child over the age of two who required rest or sleep.

Fire Safety:

The fire exits were unobstructed.

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

Outing:

An outings policy had been devised and was held in the setting .Staff were familiar with this policy.

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)
All staff had up to date first aid training and three staff had up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and were available to the children attending the pre-school service. Certificates were available for review on site .

(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 March 04, 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 July 21 , 2023, and fire equipment was also checked on August 02, 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 end of 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.