

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH182
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Sunshine Community Childcare CLG
-------------------------	----------------------------------

Address of Service:	Moynalty Road, Kells, Co. Meath
----------------------------	---------------------------------

Eircode:	A82 AT04
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Pamela Strong
-------------------------------------	---------------

Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
----------------------	---------------------

Dates 1 of Inspection:	20/08/2024
-------------------------------	------------

Date 2 of Inspection:	21/08/2024
------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children: Day 1	AM	22	PM	19
	AM	19	PM	20
Day 2	AM	19	PM	20

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
---	--

Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray
----------------------------------	-----------

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

Sunshine Community Childcare CLG was established 2010. The service provides sessional, part-time and full day care to children from 1 to 6 years and operates from 8am to 6pm each weekday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). A school aged service is also provided.

The premises is purpose built consisting of 5 care rooms, (3 of the care rooms were closed on the day of inspection), cot room, sleep room, office, kitchen and sanitary facilities.

The rooms in the service were as follows:

The **Waddler room** facilitates the care of children from 1 to 2 years. This room was not in use on the day of inspection.

The **Toddler room** accommodates children from 2 to 3 years attending the service on a full day care/part-time basis.

Sessional 1 room provided care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 5 years attending the service on a full day care /part-time basis.

Sessional 2 room provided care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 5 years attending the service on a part-time basis. School aged children will occupy this room in the afternoon. This room was not in use on the day of inspection.

Sessional 3 room provided care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 5 years attending the service on a full day care /part-time basis.

A large outdoor space was located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs a manager, 2 deputy manager, 11 childcare staff, 1 administrative staff and a cook.

20/08/2024 Present on the day of the inspection was the manager, 5 childcare staff, 1 administrative staff and a cook.

21/08/2024 Present on the morning of the inspection were the manager, 4 childcare staff, 1 administrative staff and a cook.

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.

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 manager, 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.

(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.

(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 had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Seventeen staff files were reviewed.

Thirty-four validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.
(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 17 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 was available for 4 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6) (a) One staff member was employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

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) On both days the registered providers ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the service.

20/08/2024 Present on the day of inspection was the manager and 5 childcare staff caring for 22 children.

21/08/2024 Present on the morning of the inspection was the manager and 4 childcare staff caring for 19 children.

(2) On both days the correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed on the days of inspection:

20/08/2024

The Toddler room had 6 children ranging in age from 2 to 3 years attending the service on a part-time /full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults.

The Sessional 1 room had 16 children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 5 years attending the service on a part-time /full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults. An additional staff member was available to provide support to the rooms as needed.

21/08/2024

The Toddler room had 5 children ranging in age from 2 to 3 years attending the service on a part-time /full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults.

The Sessional 1 room had 14 children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 5 years attending the service on a part-time /full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults. The manager was available to provide support to the rooms as needed.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were always two adults on the premises when the service was in operation, as evidenced in the staff roster maintained in the service.

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) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- All children individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required.
- Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Older children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.
- Children were observed enjoying meaningful, sustained play with tabletop activities, art and crafts and free playing with lots of conversation and laughter observed. The summer curriculum was child led with the children's artwork displayed to reflect their chosen themes.
- Sleep was child led with some children availing of afternoon naps when they showed signs of tiredness.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning. Children were observed rotated between their care rooms and the outdoor spaces during the day, enjoying imaginative, energetic play with both their peers and staff members.
- Transitions were handled smoothly with children being given ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Children and parents were greeted at drop off and collection with friendly conversation overheard. Parents were updated on activities pertaining to their children throughout the day.
- The staff members were observed to be very caring, kind and attentive in their interactions with the children and demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's individual needs, likes and preferences. The staff members frequently initiated conversations with the children, responded meaningfully to their verbal and non-verbal cues and provided regular praise and encouragement.

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-
- (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)(b) Cosy areas consisting of mats and soft furnishings were available in each care room for children to take a break from activities if needed. A cot room with 4 cots was available off the Waddler room which was not in use on the day of inspection. Stackable beds were placed on the floor in the sleep room off the Toddler room for the older children who require sleep.

(3)(a) The outdoor space consisted of a low impact surface area which was enclosed by fencing and divided into 3 areas by plastic fencing for the different age range of children. A large grass area was available to all age groups which was secure by gates and enclosed by fencing. Sheltered areas permitted outdoor play in all types of weather.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The care rooms were well resourced and had areas of interest with supporting equipment which incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts and a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving.

- Equipment in the 3 outdoor spaces was age-appropriate to the children using the area. Some of the equipment included wooden benches, water/sand trays, hula hoops, ride on toys, stationary rockers, musical walls, mud kitchen and plastic building blocks. The large grass area had 2 wooden playhouses, 2 wooden partially sheltered areas, planting boxes and tyres, 2 wooden activity units with slides, balancing planks, see saw, fairy garden and a maze made of hedging.

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

The service had a 2-week menu plan with a variety of meals ranging from meat, fish and poultry all prepared onsite by the resident cook. Children attending the service on an ECCE basis will bring their own lunch.

On the day of inspection, the children had a snack at 10am which consisted of crackers, yogurts and toast.

A hot meal was served at 11:45am which was spaghetti bolognaise. An additional hot meal was served at 13:45 which consisted of mash potatoes, sausages and peas. A further snack of crackers and fruit was served at 15:30pm before leaving for home. Water and milk were the drinks of choice.

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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The main door to the service was secured and the outdoor spaces were enclosed and had secure gates. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor space.
- A Health and Safety check list was conducted on a weekly basis.

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained.

Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- A thermometer was available in the sleep room to ensure the temperature was maintained between 18 to 22° C while children were sleeping.
- A sleep log recording the position, colour and breathing pattern on each child was recorded at 10 minutes intervals.
- Children sleeping on stackable beds were supervised at all times.

Fire Safety:

The following fire safety measures were observed:

- Fire drills were conducted on a monthly basis.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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 fire fighting 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 was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place 09/07/2024.
- (b) A record was maintained of the mains powered smoke alarms and firefighting equipment on the premises. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 18/07/2024. The firefighting equipment was last serviced in July 2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the reception area.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 60 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28th March 2024 to the 27th March 2025.