

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH198
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Name of Service:	The Village Playschool
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Address of Service:	Moynalty, Kells, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	A82 V667
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Name of Registered Provider:	Celine Govern
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection: Day 1	26/04/2023
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Date of Inspection: Day 2	03/05/2023
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No of pre-school children: Day 1	AM	18	PM	7
No of pre-school children: Day 2	AM	17	PM	7

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Family Resource Centre, Commons Road Navan Co. Meath
Inspection undertaken by: Day 1	D. Murray & S. Cully
Inspection undertaken by: Day 2	D. Murray
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
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Description of service

The Village Pre-school was first established in 2002 and provides a sessional, part-time and full day care service to children from 2-6 years. The service is registered to operate from 08:00am to 3pm and eligible children participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) from 9:15am to 12:15 pm. The service consists of 2 rooms: The Lunch Room and The Big Room, sanitary facilities and an outdoor space.

Staffing

On the 26/04/2023 the registered provider employed a designated person in charge and 7 childcare staff. A student was also on placement on Mondays and Fridays in the service.

The designated person in charge and 2 childcare staff members were present when the inspectors arrived unannounced to conduct an inspection. An additional staff member and the registered provider arrived when the inspection had commenced.

On the 03/05/2023 the designated person in charge and 2 childcare staff members were present when the inspector arrived unannounced to conduct a follow-up 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 inspections were 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.

On the **26/04/2023** the inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations: 9,11,16,19,20,21,22,23,25,26 & 28 however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 8.

On the **03/05/2023** the inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(1)(a),(b) &(c),11(1),(2)&(8),16 and 23 Safety.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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.

Additional Information

26/04/2023 The registered provider was operating outside the service registration status as the service was registered to operate from 8 am to 3pm. On the day of inspection and from documentation reviewed the service was operating from 8am to 6pm.

03/05/2023 An Immediate Action Notice was issued under Regulation 23 Safety.

04/05/2023 A response to the Immediate Action Notice was received which was accepted by the inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the co-operation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the days of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider was operating outside the service registration status as the service was registered to operate from 8am to 3pm. On the day of inspection and from documentation reviewed the service was operating from 8am to 6pm.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The service is registered as a full day care service, there were no operating hours on the registration certificate. Therefore, it was assumed that 8am-6pm was acceptable.

A Change in Circumstances Form was submitted and the hours are now 8am-6pm.

Supporting documentation submitted

A Change in Circumstances Form was received.

Summary Comment

28/04/2023 The registered provider submitted a Change in Circumstances Form to the registration office for a change in hours of operation from 8am to 3pm to 8am to 6pm which was approved by the Inspectorate.

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.

(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

On the following inspection days 26/04/2023 and on 03/05/2023 the findings were:

- (1)(a) The registered provider had a designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out their inspection.
- (c) The designated person in charge and the role and function of the staff members were displayed on a board in the Big Room.

On the inspection day 26/04/2023 the findings were:

(2) Following discussion with the registered provider, the inspectors were informed that 2 staff members had commenced working in the service since the last inspection with a student on placement. These files were reviewed.

(a) Two validated written references were from past employers.

(b) Four validated written reference were from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for the 3 staff members.

(d) Not applicable as no staff member had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) The 2 staff members whose files were reviewed work directly with children in the service and each held appropriate childcare qualifications at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

On the 26/04/2023 the findings were:

(1)(c) While there was a management structure outlined in the service, the designated person in charge did not demonstrate a clear understanding of their role and range of responsibilities to ensure the quality and safety of the care provided to the children attending the service.

On arrival to the service the designated person in charge and the staff members were unaware of the number of children present and how many children were availing of the full day care service. A head count was conducted by the Early Years Inspectors to determine that 18 children were present.

Only when the deputy person in charge arrived at 11:18pm were the Early Years Inspectors informed that 12 pre-school children and 2 additional staff members were accommodated at a different location and were not signed out on the attendance record.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(c) The service is using a new digital platform to register attendance; this has caused some small difficulties as educators adjust to the new platform.

Extra training has been provided for educators to become more familiar with the system. A new system of documenting children who are staying for full day care has been implemented.

The designated person in charge has been changed which will improve the governance, accountability and transparency with the daily operations of the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

03/05/2023 A list was displayed of the children availing of the full day care service.

Childrens and staff attendance record for the week of 19/06/2023.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has provided assurance that all staff members and children are now signed in on a daily basis. This non-compliance has been addressed. This regulation will be reviewed at the next 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

On the 26/04/2023 and on 3/5/2023 the findings were:

(1) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service on 26/4/2023; there were 3 adults working directly with the 18 children ranging in age from 2 years 5 months to 5 years.

On 3/5/2023, there were 3 adults working directly with the 17 children ranging in age from 2 years 5 months to 5 years.

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

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:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(i) On the 26/4/2023 the registered provider was signed in at 08:13 am but arrived to the premises at 11:40 am. On the 03/05/2023 the registered provider and 3 staff members were signed in and were not on the premises. The staff roster on both days did not reflect the staff members present on the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(i)The service register is a document that is used for both staff in ratio and staff who work outside of ratio, on administration, compliance and items that are essential to operating a service. Therefore, it is normal that staff may be working outside of ratio but not directly with the children. Those members of staff will be marked in. The company who manages our online platform has been contacted and have been requested to put a system in place so that staff members can be marked in when in ratio and outside of ratio but still working.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff roster for the week of the 19/06/2023

Summary Comment

The registered providers in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan have addressed the non-compliance for regulation 16(1)(i). The staff roster submitted did identify which staff were working in the Moynalty service. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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,

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:

- The children availed of outdoor play for the entire morning and were dressed appropriately in their coats and hats before going outside. The door remained opened in the service with the children returning to the service for snacks and to use the sanitary facilities. Children individual needs were meet with additional care, attention and supervision given as required. Children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing and caring for their belongings.
- The service provided a rolling lunch where children choose when they wanted to eat. Snacks were prepared according to the children's individual choices. The atmosphere was relaxed with lots of conversation and interactions observed among the children and staff member.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Positive engagement between the staff members and children were noted. Staff members were observed encouraging and collaborating with children in their outdoor play activities.
- The children showed confidence around the staff members and an eagerness to engage with them in conversations and play.
- Transitions were handled smoothly with staff giving the children ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- Challenging behaviour when presented was dealt with in a calm and caring manner and the children responded well to distraction and re-direction. The children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

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) Within both rooms there were soft furnishings for children to take a break from activities and rest if needed. No sleeping children attend the service however 2 sleep mats with linen were available should a child require a sleep.
- (3)(a) There was a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space which was enclosed by fencing and had a combination of surface covering consisting of artificial grass, paving stones and rubber mats.

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 Big room was well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving at their height which supported children to select and become involved in meaningful, sustained play experiences.
- The outdoor area consisted of an open area, partially enclosed sheltered area and a cabin.
In the open area equipment included swings, digging area, plastic kitchen, water collector container for messy play, gutters mounted to the wall for pouring, see saw, wooden climbing frame with a slide and a sand/water table.
The partially enclosed sheltered area permitted outdoor play in all types of weather. Equipment in this area included a mud kitchen, sand/water table, children table and chairs, push along bicycles and ride on tractors.
The cabin consisted of an outdoor room for art and crafts and imaginary play. On the day of inspection children were observed enjoying energetic outdoor play with their peers.

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 provides all the food to the children attending the service. From 10 to 11 am the service operated a rolling lunch where children can come to the table when they choose. On the day of inspection children had ham, cheese, toast, fruit, pancakes and yogurts.

At 1pm the children have a choice of food from the snack bar consisting of ham sandwiches, fruit and yogurts. The main hot meal of the day was served at 3:20pm which was chicken casserole and potatoes provided to the service by a catering company. Additional snacks were available if needed. 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

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

General Safety:

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

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The main gate to the service was secured and the outdoor spaces was enclosed with fencing. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- All play materials were placed on stable based shelving units. Play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children present in the service.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.
- Fridges were available in the Lunch room and in the Big room for the refrigeration of perishable items.
- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and following outdoor play.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. On the inspection carried out 26/04/2023, mixer taps were in use at the sinks in the children's sanitary and when turned to hot temperature readings recorded were between 51°C and 52.4°C. Adequate supervision by staff members was observed when children were using the sanitary facilities. Assurance was given by the registered provider that corrective action would be taken immediately to ensure the temperature was lowered with evidence submitted to the Inspector on the 27/4/2023 that the water thermostat had been turned down.

On the inspection carried out 03/05/2023, the hot water was recorded at 55.7°C. An Immediate Action Notice was given as the corrective action taken by the registered provider after day 1 of inspection did not ensure that the hot water did not pose a scalding risk.

Infection Control:

2. The bin used for storage of nappies was not suitable as the lid had to be opened by hand and pose an infection control risk. All nappy bins must be foot pedal operated to prevent the risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The thermostat has been replaced.

The registered provider will ensure that the water temperature is checked on a regular basis.

Infection Control:

A foot pedal nappy bin has been sourced and is now in place.

The registered provider will ensure that a regular risk assessment is conducted to ensure all appliances are maintained and in working order.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Documentation from a reputable source that the thermostat has been replaced.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of a foot operated nappy bin.

Summary Comment

An Immediate Action Notice was issued on the day of inspection in relation to hazard due to the hot water. A response to the Immediate Action Notice was received which was accepted by the inspectorate. The registered provider has in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan addressed the non-compliances for regulation 23 General Safety. The response and evidence submitted has been reviewed and accepted.

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 3 staff members had up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) course completed.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1) On the 26/04/2023 there was no staff member with current First Aid Responder(FAR) training from 12:15pm to 6pm. Although it is acknowledged that 3 staff members had current FAR training on the day of inspection 1 staff member was not onsite, 1 staff member was off and another staff member was finished work at 12:15pm.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service will be closed for the summer. All staff will undergo First Aid Responder (FAR) training in August 2023 before the service re-opens.

In the interval the roster has been changed to ensure that one of the three staff members with FAR training is present in the service at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff roster for the week of the 19th of June indicating that 1 staff member with FAR training was present on the premises at all times.

Summary Comment

The registered provider in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan has addressed the non-compliance for regulation 25(1). The evidence submitted has been reviewed and accepted.

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 on the 08/03/2023.

(b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment was last serviced in January 2023. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 08/07/2022.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the service.

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 33 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 06/03/2023 to 27/03/2024.