

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN012			
Name of Service:	Castleblayney Community Childcare CLG			
Address of Service:	Iontas, Conabury, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan			
Eircode:	A75 HK09			
Name of Registered Provider:	Darren McQuillan			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date(s) of Inspection:	12/04/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	51	PM	28
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Office of Early Years Inspectorate No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan Co. Monaghan			
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader and M. Flood			
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			

Description of service

Castleblaney Community Childcare CLG is a community run non-profit service in operation since 2005. The service provides full day-care, part-time care and sessional care to children aged 0-6 years of age and caters for a maximum of 92 children. The service operates Monday -Friday from 7.50 am – 6.00 pm. The service is located in a purpose-built building in the Íontas Arts and Community Resource Centre in Castleblaney Co. Monaghan. The service consists of a reception area, 4 care rooms, 1 large sleep room off the Baby/Woddler Room and a kitchen. There is an enclosed outdoor area to the rear and side of the building.

Staffing

There are 28 staff members employed in the service, 18 of whom including the person in charge work directly with the preschool children, 1 employed as admin, 2 members of staff employed in the kitchen and 1 as cleaner. There were 4 adults present on a community employment scheme and 2 other members of staff who worked with the school aged children only.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 25 however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 16 and 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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 can 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. On the day of the inspection the deputy person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived at the premises and was present throughout the inspection. The registered provider also arrived at the service in the afternoon for a short period.

Six new staff files were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) There were two written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for all 6 staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 6 new staff members. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to

renew Garda vetting every three years in relation to 4 other staff members. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 4 of the 5 staff members working directly with the preschool children had a childcare qualification which met the minimum qualification required to enable them to work directly with the preschool children.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) Following a review of the staff files presented for inspection, documentary evidence of international police vetting was not available for 1 member of staff for whom it was required.

(4) A qualification in childcare at a minimum Level 5, or equivalent was not available for 1 member of staff working directly with the preschool children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) The police vetting has been obtained for the staff member.

All police vetting must be obtained and filed in staff folder prior to commencement of employment.

(4) The registered provider has acknowledged that the staff member does not have the minimum Level 5 qualification in childcare, therefore she has been relocated to the School Age Service until her qualifications are obtained.

The full Record of Award of a childcare qualification must be obtained and copy in staff folder prior to commencement of employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of international police vetting.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the registered provider's response, and it is accepted. The non-compliances under Regulation 9 have been addressed.

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 the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children attending the early years service.

(2) When inspectors arrived for an unannounced inspection, the adult to child ratios were correct and remained so throughout the day.

The following adult to child ratios were observed on arrival of the inspectors on the day of inspection:

- In the **Baby/Woddler Room** there were 10 children aged between 6 months to 1 year and 9 months being cared for by 4 adults. A 5th adult was also present in a supernumerary capacity. One additional adult arrived at the room at 12.00pm.
- In the **Toddler Room** there were 10 children aged between 2 years and 1 month to 2 years and 8 months being cared for by 3 adults.
- In the **Junior Preschool Room** there were 12 children aged between 2 years to 3 years, being cared for by 3 adults. One additional adult was also present in a supernumerary capacity.
- In the **Senior Preschool Room** there were 19 children aged between 3 to 5 years and 6 months being cared for by 3 adults.

(8)(a) Following a review of the available documentation e.g., staff rotas and children's attendance records this information demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that there were always at least 2 adults on the premises.

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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

1. In the Toddler Room, 2 accident/incident forms reviewed were not fully completed as they did not contain the signatures of the staff member or person in charge.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Full completion of documentation has been addressed at staff meeting on the 16/04/24, as a result staff are aware that all signatures are required following an accident/incident.

The room leader is responsible for ensuring staff fully complete documentation and it will also be regularly checked by the manager.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of staff meeting agenda

Summary Comment

The response has been reviewed and the requirement of Regulation 16 has been addressed. This will be for review 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

There were 4 rooms in operation on the day of the inspection: namely the Baby/Woddler Room, Toddler Room, Junior Preschool and Senior Preschool Rooms.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

BASIC NEEDS:

- In the Baby / Woddler Room, individual child-led sleep needs were facilitated in the service as the staff followed the children's routines. In the Toddler Room children who required a sleep had their sleep needs met after their dinner when the room converted to a sleep area. Two children who did not require a sleep were allowed to play outside and then came back inside and partook in activities. There was adequate lighting to allow the children not sleeping to partake in activities.
- Nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with pleasant interactions observed between children and staff. The children who were toilet trained were encouraged to be independent with toileting. Discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children after toileting.
- A homemade dinner consisting of potatoes or pasta, chicken nuggets, gravy, and beans was served to the children staying on a full day care basis. Assistance was given to the younger children who required feeding. Bibs were put on the younger children before meals and hands and faces cleaned appropriately after the meals. Staff were observed to sit with the older children at mealtimes and this time was used to encourage conversations between the children. Consistency of the dinners were observed to be age appropriate throughout all rooms.
- The children had free movement in the care rooms and most children were dressed appropriately to avail of a change of environment to the newly resurfaced and redeveloped outdoor area to the side and rear of the building. The children had access to a number of new interest areas such as the large wooden boat, new water shoots, the climbing frame and numerous ride - on toys.

Supporting relationship around children

- A key person system was in place in the service. In the Junior Preschool Room, it was observed that each staff member had a small group of children assigned to them and the key person took the lead in supporting that groups transitions, recording their daily activities, maintaining relationships with their families, and documenting their learning and development. Photographs of the staff and allocated key children were also on display in the care room. In the Baby/Woddler Room documented daily diaries were

completed and this detailed information pertaining to the children’s care needs such as mealtimes, bottles, toileting and nappy changes and sleep time. This information was also verbally shared with parents at drop off and collection. The staff also confirmed that social media, messaging services and emails are also used to share information with parents.

- Throughout the care rooms, children were observed to be provided with sensitive care and nurturing interactions by all staff. In the Baby & Woddler Room staff were observed to sit and hold babies during and after bottle feeding. When communicating with the children, staff were often seen down at the child’s level when listening and responding, they used gentle tones of voice and provided support to children when small challenges arose. Children were spoken to with positivity and staff demonstrated an understanding of their needs. For example, when one child was resting in the Senior Preschool Room they were asked “would you like to rest for another while or come for dinner.”
- The staff promoted the children’s independence in the preschool rooms, by allowing the children to tidy away their own plate and cup after dinner.
- Children from different nationalities were also supported with their language and communication. There were pictures of certain items such as a coat, the toilet and defined interest areas written in different languages beside the pictures.

Programme Of Activities

- A variety of the children’s artwork was on display and included; free art, collage work, flowers, and handprint art. The children attending the Baby/ Woddler Room had carried out a ‘car painting’ art activity prior to the inspector’s arrival and this was on display in the room.
- Evidence of long-, medium- and short-term planning were on display outside the rooms and many of the activities were reflective of the planned curriculum. Individual portfolios were available for each child and the staff reported that these are sent home on a regular basis so that parents can see some of the activities that the children engage in during their day at preschool.
- Transitions between activities and care practices were smooth. The children’s choices were facilitated, and this was evidenced by the children’s emerging interests and emergent responses which were on display in the service.
- Children who required additional supports from the service were supported with various strategies which staff were familiar with and which were detailed on individual care plans.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for 4 additional staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. In the Woddler Room, Toddler Room and Senior Preschool Room there were sharp unprotected corners on the low-level white shelving units and on the toy kitchen unit and bookshelf in the Senior Room.
3. In the Junior Pre-school Room, the hard plastic low level window ledge was broken with sharp edges exposed which is a potential injury risk.

Infection Control:

4. In the Toddler Room one of the foam sleep mats which were used for sleeping children was torn with foam exposed and this does not allow for effective cleaning.
5. In the Toddler Room the children's hands were not always washed after nappy changing.
6. In the nappy changing area of the Baby/ Woddler Room the bin was broken. The pedal operating system was not working, and lid fell off when touched by the inspector.

Safe Sleep:

7. The sleep logs reviewed in the Toddler, Baby / Woddler and Junior Preschool Rooms were completed using the word "ok" for position, colour and breathing which is inadequate.

Corrective and Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting has been applied for the 4 staff members.
A new employees record file has been created detailing all core training and vetting dates for renewal. All vetting will be obtained prior to the 3- year expiry date.

- Protective corners have been installed on the low-level white shelving units in the Woddler, Toddler room and Senior Preschool shelving and on the bookshelf in the Senior Preschool. An external supplier has been contacted about the toy kitchen unit in the Senior Preschool to which they replied that it complies with all toy safety standards for that age.

Daily safety risk assessments of the furniture and equipment are undertaken daily, and any defects are reported to the manager by the room leader.

- A new window ledge has been installed in the Toddler Room.

Daily safety risk assessments of the furniture and equipment are undertaken daily, and any defects are reported to the manager by the room leader.

Infection Control:

- The torn foam mat has been removed. It was not in use in the room so did not need to be replaced.

Daily safety risk assessments of the furniture and equipment are undertaken daily, and any defects are reported to the manager by the room leader.

- A room meeting was held on the 16th April 2024 and the handwashing procedure was discussed.

The room leader is responsible for ensuring all staff wash children's hands following nappy changing.

- A new nappy bin was purchased for the Baby/Waddler Room.

Daily safety assessments of the furniture and equipment are undertaken daily, and defects are reported to the manager by the room leader.

Safe Sleep:

- A new sleep sheet has been drafted with the use of keys for position, colour, breathing etc.

The sleep sheets will be checked regularly and signed off by the manager.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Documentary evidence of garda vetting received.

Documentary evidence of training sheets submitted.

Photographic evidence of protective corner coverings on furniture submitted.

Photographic receipt of purchase of new window ledge submitted.

Infection Control:

Documentary evidence of staff agenda submitted.

Photographic evidence of invoice for new nappy bin submitted.

Safe Sleep:

Copy of sleep log

summary comment

The registered provider's response was reviewed with the supporting documentation and the non-compliances in Regulation 23 have been addressed.

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 always attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

(2) There were first aid boxes available in the service which were adequately stocked and available to the children at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) On review of the documentation and First Aid Responder (FAR) certificates available, there was not a person trained with FAR available at all times, for example the week of the 8th – 12th of April there was no-one with FAR training on the premises from 4 – 6pm.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The staff member working on the 4-6pm has commenced a refresher course on First Aid Responder training. A new employees record file has been created detailing all core training and vetting dates for renewal. Refresher training in First Aid Response will be booked in advance each year.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of FAR training and dates for a staff member to complete training.

Summary Comment

The registered providers response is accepted, and the requirement of Regulation 25 has been addressed.