

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN062
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Wee Drummers Preschool
-------------------------	------------------------

Address of Service:	Drum Village, Drum, Co. Monaghan
----------------------------	----------------------------------

Eircode:	H16 XW08
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Janet McConkey
-------------------------------------	----------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	17/10/2024
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	No.
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No. 18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan
---	--

Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader
----------------------------------	--------------

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

Wee Drummers Preschool is a community run service established in 2008 and offers a sessional preschool service. The service caters for a maximum of 17 pre-school children and operates from 09:15 – 12:15hrs Monday - Friday. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme. The service operates over 2 care rooms in a renovated 2 story old school building. There is sanitary accommodation off the 2 care rooms and an office and kitchen upstairs. The children have access to an outdoor play area to the front of the premises.

Staffing

There are 2 staff employed in the service working directly with the children.

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.

Additional Information

A safety Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider following inspection on the 18/10/24 in relation to a raised radiator surface temperature and potential burns risk. A response was received from the registered provider on the 21/10/24 which addressed the non-compliance adequately.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff member 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*
- (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. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

There were 2 staff members employed in the service and the 2 staff files were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for 1 staff member and 1 written and validated reference for the 2nd staff member.
- There was 1 written reference available for the 2nd staff member.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 2 staff members and the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented for inspection documentary evidence indicated that international police vetting was not required as none of the staff members had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the childcare qualification for both members of staff in the service met the minimum qualification required to enable them to work directly with the preschool children

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) One staff member did not have their second reference validated.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) The staff member is no longer employed by the registered provider and her personal information has subsequently been removed from the service files.

For future reference all information will be filed in staff folders on commencement date of employment.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response is accepted and addresses the non-compliance.

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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

Compliance Information

- (1) There were an adequate number of staff members present with the preschool children attending the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (3) The following adult: child ratios were observed in the care room:

Preschool Room:

There were 11 preschool children (aged 2 years and 9 months - 4 years) attending this room with 2 staff.
The child adult ratios were correct.

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

- (i) There was no written staff rota available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (i) (i) A new typed rota is now displayed in the preschool room.
The staff rota will be signed off each day. This action has been implemented and is monitored by the service manager.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of staff rota.

The registered provider's response has adequately addressed the non-compliance.

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 examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs:

- The children's lunches were provided by the parents and were stored appropriately in the fridge on the premises. Healthy eating was promoted in the service. The children always had access to their individual drink bottles and were given plenty of time to eat the lunches with the staff joining them.
- The personal care provided met the needs of the children attending the service e.g., hands were washed, and noses wiped as necessary. There was a nose blowing station available to the children to promote independence with this task.
- Independent toileting was promoted for all children however assistance and supervision was given as necessary. Gentle reminders were given to encourage hand washing.

- All children attending the service had a change of environment to the outdoor area and were dressed appropriately when going outside.
- The staff reported that individual “homework / plans” developed by the speech and language therapist who attended the service recently would be carried out with the various children in the service who may need support with speech.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

- The adults demonstrated sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for the children as evidenced in the positive use of language and kind soft tones in the care room.
- It was stated that communication with parents is generally at and drop off and pick -up.

Physical and Material Environment:

- A variety of age-appropriate toys and equipment were available on low level shelving in both the care rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children.
- There were resourced defined interest areas such as the home corner, messy area with sand, water trays, art supplies and painting easel, dolls, small world items, role play items such as hair dressing equipment and books.
- Upstairs there was also sensory lighting, puzzles and a selection of Montessori equipment.
- In addition, there was a storeroom with a large stock of toys for staff to rotate out to the rooms.

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

The Inspectorate was not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service in relation to the following observations made during the inspection:

General Safety:

1. In the downstairs care room, the radiator surface temperature was recorded at 60 °C. This exceeds the safe surface temperature of 50 °C and is a potential burns risk. A safety Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider following inspection on the 18/10/2024.

2. The cupboard under the sink in the downstairs care room was unlocked and contained a basket with rolls of plastic bags and a broken light bulb. This is a safety risk.
3. In the upstairs care room, there were sharp unprotected corners on the brown shelving units and on the small tables which are a potential injury risk.
4. In the upstairs room there was a free standing unsecured tall bubble lamp which was accessible to the children and a potential impact hazard.
5. Upstairs the doors to the kitchen and office areas were jarred open and these areas were accessible to the preschool children as they were off the care room and directly beside the children's sanitary accommodation. These are a health and safety risk.

Infection Control:

6. The staff sanitary accommodation downstairs was used for the storage of the service mops, bucket and cleaning equipment. There was also a box of Halloween decorations in this area. This is a cross-contamination risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Following the issue of an Immediate Action notice, a surface temperature device was purchased and all radiators within the service set to a temperature of 18 degrees with a surface temperature of 48 degrees. This surface temperature device is now used on a daily basis.
A daily record is documented and displayed in each room.
2. The cupboard downstairs was cleaned and the plastic bags were removed and put into a box with other cleaning products which were placed on high shelf. The broken light was removed and disposed of.
Child locks were put onto the cupboard doors.
3. Soft padding was placed on all the brown shelving and small table units in the upstairs preschool room.
All padding has been attached securely to the furniture.
4. In the upstairs room the sensory lamp was removed straight away and put into storage, until a secure fitting is purchased and fitted.
Going forward a secure fitting will be purchased and fitted to the wall and lamps to prevent any hazards.
5. The kitchen and office doors are now closed and not accessible to the children.
A reminder sign is now in place stating doors to be closed at all times.

Infection Control:

- The mop and bucket, all cleaning products and a box of Halloween decorations were removed from the staff sanitary room. Staff have been informed that room is not to be used for storage and will be monitored by the service manager.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

A response was received from the registered provider on the 21/10/24 which addressed the non-compliance in the Immediate action notice adequately.

The registered provider's response and supporting evidence has been reviewed by the Inspectorate and accepted. All non-compliances in Regulation 23 have been adequately 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 attending the pre-school service at all times.*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response for children, on the premises at all times.

(2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and available to the preschool children.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance cover was available for up to 22 children and expires 27/03/2025.