

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MO073		
Name of Service:	Little VIP's Pre-school		
Address of Service:	Breaffy Community Centre, Breaffy, Castlebar, Co. Mayo		
Eircode:	F23 PY23		
Name of Registered Provider:	Tracy Keohane		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	28/09/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM -
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.		
Inspection undertaken by:	M Farrell		
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
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Description of service

Little VIP's Pre-school is a sessional service registered to cater for children aged between 2 and 6 years of age. A morning session from 09:00-12:00 hours and afternoon session from 12:30-15:30 hours is provided by the service. The service is located in a section of a community centre in Breaffy village near Castlebar in Co Mayo. There is one playroom, a storeroom/kitchen area and sanitary facilities in the service. The children have use of an enclosed outdoor space to the front and side of the building.

Staffing

Two staff members including the registered provider work directly with the children with a third staff member available to provide relief services when needed.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16, 23, 27 and 28. 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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

(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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge in the service and there was a named person to deputise in the event of her absence.
 - (b) Both the designated person in charge and deputy were present in the service during the inspection.
- (2)
- The registered provider advised the inspector that none of the staff members were new to the service since the most recent inspection of 8 June 2021. The vetting files for the three staff members in the service had been reviewed during previous inspections.
- (4)
- The qualifications for the three staff who worked directly with the children had been reviewed on previous inspection and deemed to have met the regulatory requirements.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) When the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there was 2 staff working directly with 16 children in the service. A sample review of attendance records found that adequate numbers of adults worked with the children at all times in compliance with this regulation.

(3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio for a sessional service of 1 adult to each 11 children aged from 2 years and 6 months to 6 years was adhered to with 2 adults working directly with 16 children on the day of the inspection.

(8)

(c) Up to six children attended the afternoon sessions in the service at the time of inspection. One staff member was provided to care for the children for periods of the afternoon sessions with a person available nearby to provide help if needed.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1)

A sample of ten children’s records were randomly selected for review by the inspector from the children currently enrolled in the service.

(a) to (i)

The ten records were found to be compliant with the required details as laid out under the regulation.

(3)

(c)

The children’s records were made available to the inspector in the service on request.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that written records were available containing the following information in the service:
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of each staff member.
 - (b) Information on the service type and ages of children that the service is registered to provide services to in the statement of purpose and function.
 - (c) The adult: child ratios provided in the service.
 - (d) The service's type of care or programme.

- (e) The facilities available in the service.
 - (f) The service's hours of opening and fees.
 - (g) The service's policies, procedures and statements as required under Regulation 10 that were kept in a service policy folder in the playroom.
 - (h) Details of the daily attendance of each pre-school child recorded daily in an attendance book.
 - (i) Details of the staff daily working hours.
 - (j) Records of any medication administered to a child while attending the service including signed parental consent on medication record sheets.
 - (k) Written details of accidents, injuries and incidents involving children attending the service in an accident/incident record book.
- (3)
- The preschool records were made available for inspection in the service by the registered provider on request by the inspector.

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 main entrance door had a securing device in place allowing staff to control access to the service and prevent children from leaving without authorisation. Half doors with securing devices were in place in the service's hallway. The outdoor area to the rear and side of the building was secured when the children were playing outdoors to prevent children from leaving the area unnoticed. Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children in the storeroom/kitchen. The toys and play equipment were in satisfactory condition and suitable for the age and developmental stages of the children using them.

Infection Control:

The children were prompted and supervised to wash their hands at appropriate times for example before lunch, after using the toilet and messy play. The children used liquid soap and warm water controlled below 43°C to wash their hands and used paper towels to dry them. Foot pedal operated bins were used to dispose waste including paper towels. The children's lunches provided from home were stored below 5°C in a refrigerator in the playroom. A window was opened to ventilate the playroom whilst keeping the room air temperature between the required temperature range of 18-22°C.

Administration of Medication:

None of the children required medication administration in the service on the day of the inspection. There were medication administration forms available to be completed by staff if a child required medication to be administered to them. The staff demonstrated through discussion with the inspector an awareness of processes regarding the safe storage and administration of medicines.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exit routes were free from obstruction during the inspection. Monthly fire drills were undertaken in the service with the most recent fire drill recorded as carried out on the 13 September 2023.

Outing:

The registered provider advised the inspector that an annual outing had been undertaken by the service with the children brought by parents to a local play centre. A risk assessment had been carried out by staff to identify any potential risks to children before the outing in line with the service's outings policy.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The staff supervised the children appropriately primarily by sight throughout the inspection. The required adult: child ratios were adhered to. Children who were toilet-trained were out of view of the staff when using the toilet but were within earshot if help was needed to be provided. The staff sat with the children when supervising them eating their food at mealtime. When playing outdoors the children were observed by sight by the staff who positioned themselves strategically in the outdoor space to be able to view them.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had adequate insurance in place for sessional services expiring on 27 March 2024 covering the maximum number of children per session that the service can accommodate.