

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MO114			
Name of Service:	Taugheen Playgroup Limited			
Address of Service:	Taugheen, Claremorris, Co. Mayo			
Eircode:	F12 F5N7			
Name of Registered Provider:	Louise McIntyre			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	22/05/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Taugheen Playgroup Limited is a sessional service in the village of Taugheen near Claremorris in County Mayo. The service is registered to provide services for children aged between two to six years of age from 09:20-12:20 hours. The service is in a dedicated section of a community centre and has one indoor play area consisting of two interlinking rooms and sanitary accommodation. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service is operated single-handedly with a person available to provide relief cover when needed. There is another person available to provide cover in the event of an emergency.

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 sections of regulations 9, 11, 15, 23, 25, 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, 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

(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

(2)

It was confirmed by discussion with the designated person in charge and review of documentation that one new staff had started working in the service since the last focused inspection of the 10 November 2021. The vetting information for the other two adults including the emergency person had been reviewed on previous inspections. The following vetting documentation and qualifications were available on file for the new staff member:

- (a) There was one written validated reference from a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the three adults. However, the service did not always adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(4)

Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available on file for the staff new to the service since the last inspection who worked directly with the children. The qualifications for the remaining staff who worked directly with children in the service had been reviewed on previous inspection and deemed to be compliant.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

- (a) The second reference available on file for the adult was from a source other than a past employer. However, the vetting documentation available showed that the staff had previous employers that the reference should have been sourced from.
- (d) It was unable to be confirmed if international police vetting was required for one staff member due to gaps in the employment history/experience provided on file.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The service advised in a written response that:

(a)

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (a) The required second written reference from previous employer was obtained and validated by the manager and registered provider. A staff personnel checklist is now in use for each staff member,

including members of management, to ensure that all required documents under Regulation 9 are provided.

- (d) The staff member updated CV and filled in any gaps in employment history/ experience. This was validated by manager and registered provider. A staff personnel checklist is now in use for each staff member, including members of management, to ensure that all required documents under Regulation 9 are provided. Curriculum vitae will be examined thoroughly by manager and registered provider to ensure there are no gaps in curriculum vitae during the interview process.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of reference, personnel checklist and curriculum vitae.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the service have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and been found to have addressed the non-compliance found under the regulation on 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.*
- (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) One staff member worked directly with the nine children in the service during the inspection.
- (3) Records showed that one staff member worked directly with the nine children in line with the required adult to child ratios for the age range of the children of one adult for every eleven children attending sessional services.

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-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) to (i)

The records of the children currently enrolled in the service were reviewed and found to be compliant containing the required information detailed under the regulation.

(3) (c)

The children's records were made readily available to the inspector in the service by the person in charge on request.

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:

On the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service the children were playing outside supervised by the staff member in the enclosed outdoor space with the entrance gate secured to prevent children from leaving unnoticed and people from entering without authorisation. When indoors, the main entrance door to the play area and the internal door leading to the community centre hall were secured allowing the staff member to control access to the service. There was an alarm system in place on an emergency exit door in the indoor play area to alert staff if the door was opened and prevent child from leaving unnoticed. Blind cords on windows were appropriately secured with safety devices. A safety gate was in place at the entrance to the kitchenette to prevent access by the children. cleaning products were stored out of reach of children in the kitchenette. The outdoor waste bins and boiler were fenced off to prevent access by the children.

Infection Control:

The staff member was observed to prompt and supervise the children wash their hands with liquid soap, warm water and dry them with paper towels after playing outdoors, using the toilet and before and after eating. The children's food provided from home including perishable items such as cheese and yoghurt was stored in a refrigerator in the kitchenette area. A box of tissues was positioned at a low level for children to access if they needed to clean their noses with the. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of waste in the service. The staff member cleaned down surfaces regularly for example tables before and after eating and painting. Records of cleaning were kept by the staff member in the service.

Administration of Medication:

The designated person in charge informed the inspector that none of the children enrolled in the service at present require medication to be administered to them while in the service.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exit routes were observed to be free from obstruction during the inspection.

Outing:

The designated person in charge informed the inspector that the service is in the process of planning an end of preschool year outing in consultation with parents. A risk assessment is to be completed of the proposed location prior to the outing in line with the service's outings policy.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for the three staff members. However, two of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'. It is acknowledged that copies of renewals of garda vetting were submitted following the inspection.
2. A section of artificial grass under a swing was not adequately secured and posed a tripping hazard to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The service advised in a written response that:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting has been renewed for the two staff members for the next three years. Garda vetting will be checked on an annual basis to ensure no staff member is without current garda vetting. A personnel checklist is now saved in each staff member's file.
2. The artificial grass has been replaced with a new stronger piece of grass under the swing area and the artificial grass is now pinned with plastic pins into the ground to prevent from lifting in the future and to prevent children from tripping.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copies of garda vetting renewals and photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the service has addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on inspection.

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

- (2)
- (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in an easily identifiable location out of reach of the children in the playroom beside an emergency exit door.
 - (b) The first aid equipment was readily available if a child required first aid treatment in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) One member of staff did not have First Aid Responder (FAR) training and a review of records found that a member of staff with the required FAR training was not always available to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The service advised in a written response that:

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) Staff member has enrolled in a FAR training course to take place from the 25th to the 27th of June 2024. When employing new staff, the manager and registered provider will ensure that FAR training is completed before employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation showing completion of a recent FAR training course by a staff member.

Summary Comment

The regulatory non-compliance found on inspection has been addressed by the actions taken and evidence submitted by the service.

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 children were supervised by the staff member mainly by sight. The children were out of sight when using the toilet but remained within earshot of the staff member when using the toilet independently. The staff member moved around the outdoor area to observe the children when playing outside. The staff member sat with the children at lunchtime when supervising them.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had a certificate of insurance displayed valid until the 27 March 2024 to cover the maximum number of children attending sessional services in the service.