

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MO117		
Name of Service:	The Haven Community Childcare Centre		
Address of Service:	Barnaderg, Ballina, Co. Mayo		
Eircode:	F26 KD52		
Name of Registered Provider:	Padraig Moore		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	19/02/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	46	PM 17
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 and L Costello		
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 Haven Community Childcare Centre is registered to provide full day, part time and sessional services to children aged from 0 to 6 years of age in a residential area of Ballina, Co Mayo. The service opens from 7:45 to 18:15 hours with sessional services provided from 9:15 until 12:15 hours. The service is registered to provide school aged services. The premises is a two-storey building, purpose built for the provision of childcare services. There are five playrooms, one of which is located on the first floor of the building. Dedicated sleep areas are provided in two of the playrooms. There is a reception area, kitchen, staff room/kitchenette, office and sanitary facilities. There are five separate outdoor play areas in the service, one of which was not in use at the time of the inspection.

Staffing

There were 23 staff members including a manager, childcare staff, a cook and cleaning staff at the time of the inspection. Four staff members were employed through the Access and Inclusion Model. An adult student was on placement in the service at the time of the 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 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 sections of regulations 9, 11, 15, 16, 22, 23, 25 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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 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 service manager was the named designated person in charge in the service and there were two named staff members to deputise as required in her absence.

(b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of the unannounced inspection. A sample review of records found that the designated person in charge of deputies were available at all times during opening hours in the service.

(2)

(a),(b),(c) and (d)

The inspectors were informed by the staff that that there were 23 staff and one student in the service at the time of the inspection. It was confirmed that the vetting documentation for nineteen staff had been reviewed during previous inspection in the service and were found to be compliant under this regulation. The following vetting documentation and qualifications were available on file for the five adults new to the service since the last focused inspection of the 2 November 2021:

(a) Two written validated references from past employers including their most recent employer for one adult. One written validated reference from a past employer was on file for two adults.

(b) Two written references from a source other than a past employer for one adult and one written validated reference from a source other than a past employer for two adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 24 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available on file for two adults new to the service who had lived outside of the State for greater than six months as adults.

(4)

The qualifications for the three staff new to the service who worked directly with children were reviewed and deemed to have met the requirements of this regulation.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (a) The two written validated references on file for one adult were from sources other than past employers where the adult had previous employments and was required to have references from past employments.
- (d) There was a gap in employment history for one adult and it was unable to be confirmed if international police vetting was required for this time frame.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The service advised in a written response that:

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2) (a) Two written references have been sourced for the adult and validated. In future the service will ensure that references are from last employers where applicable.
- (d) The curriculum vitae has been amended and international police vetting is not required. In future the service will ensure there are no gaps in employment history records.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of validated references and employment experience history were submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the service has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and found to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found 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.

(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) There were 14 adults working directly with 45 children on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service. A review of a sample of attendance records showed that an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children during service hours of operation. One adult employed under a community employment scheme and one adult student were also present in the playrooms.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

Alevins playroom: 2 adults cared for 1 child aged under 1 year and 4 children aged from 1 to 2 years of age.

Toddler playroom: 3 adults cared for 9 children aged from 2 to 3 years of age.

Little Frys playroom: 3 adults cared for 1 child aged 1 to 2 years of age and 5 children aged 2 to 3 years.

Busy Parrs playroom: 3 adults cared for 14 children aged from 3 years to 5 years of age.

Smolts playroom: 4 adults cared for 13 children aged from 3 years to 5 years of age.

At 2.15pm in the afternoon the adult: child ratios were found to be as follows:

Alevins playroom: 2 adults cared for 1 child aged under 1 year and a second child aged 1 year of age.

Toddler playroom: 2 adults cared for 5 children aged from 2 year to 3 years of age.
 Little Frys playroom: 2 adults cared for 5 children aged 2 years to 3 years of age.
 Busy Parrs playroom: 2 adults cared for 10 children aged from 3 years to 5 years of age.
 Smolts playroom: The playroom was not in use.

(8) The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises when children were present in the service as evidenced in a sample of attendance records reviewed.

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)
The inspectors reviewed a random sample of ten children’s records from the children currently attending 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 inspectors by the staff 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.*

Compliance Information

(1) Written records were kept of the following information in the service:

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the staff members was recorded on file.
- (b) Information on the service types and ages of children that the service is registered to provide services to that was displayed on a wall in the service's entrance hallway.
- (c) Details of the adult to child ratios in the service.
- (d) Information on the type of care or programme provided in the service in the service's statement of purpose and function.
- (e) Details of the facilities available in the service in the parent's information handbook.
- (f) Information regarding the service's hours of opening and fees that was displayed in the entrance hallway.
- (g) The service's policies, procedures and statements as required under Regulation 10 that were kept in a service policy folder in the entrance lobby.
- (h) Details of the attendance of each pre-school child recorded daily in attendance books.
- (i) Details of the staff daily working hours on a staff roster.
- (j) A system to record medication administration should it be required to be given to a child.
- (k) An accident and incident record book recording details of accidents and incidents that had occurred in the playrooms.

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 provided a warm main meal for the children each day and on the day of inspection a nutritious meal of shepherd's pie with mashed potato and carrots was supplied. A three-week rotating menu was in place in the service with information on the meals available to parents. A morning snack of toast and chopped fruit was offered by the service with the parents providing additional foods from home that included items for afternoon snacks such as yoghurts, sandwiches, fruit and cheese on the day. Porridge and toast were available in the mornings for children who had not already eaten breakfast. Infant formula for children aged under one year was prepared at home and immediately stored in a refrigerator on arrival to the service. The children had individual drink containers and water was available throughout the day to the children.

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:

A bell system was in place on the main entrance door to the service to allow staff to control admission of people to the service. This door was secured during the inspection to prevent children from leaving unauthorised. The gates to the outdoor areas were secured to prevent children from leaving the outdoor areas unnoticed when the children were playing outside. Gates were in place at the top and bottom of concrete steps leading down from the Toddler playroom to their outdoor space and secured following use to prevent children accessing them unsupervised. Handrails were in place on the well-lit stairway to the playroom upstairs. The kitchen was inaccessible to children. Cleaning products were safely stored on high shelving in playrooms and out of reach of children. The toys and play equipment in use in the playrooms during the inspection were in satisfactory condition and suitable for the age range of the children using them.

Infection Control:

Paper towel and liquid soap was used for hand washing and drying with foot pedal operated bins provided in all areas for the disposal of waste. The nappy change areas had foot pedal operated waste bins to dispose nappies, aprons and gloves to facilitate nappy changes. Boxes of tissues were available and used by the children to clean their noses with. The service was observed to be clean with cleaning down surfaces such as tables after use. Cleaning records were kept by staff in the playrooms and available for inspection. The children's snacks that included perishable items such as yoghurts and ham were stored in refrigerators under the required temperature of 5°C. Individual containers were observed to be provided to store soothers in the Alevin playroom. The children's sleep linen and blankets were laundered on a regular basis in the service.

Administration of Medication:

The service had a medication administration policy in place and during discussion with inspectors staff showed awareness of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication.

Safe Sleep:

Sleep/rest areas containing standard cots with safety mattresses were provided in the Alevin and Little Fry playrooms. The cots were positioned at least 50cm apart as required. Staff recorded observations of the sleeping children at ten-minute intervals recording information on their position, colour and breathing patterns. Information regarding safe sleep practices was displayed on the wall of the Alevin playroom sleep area.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed during the inspection. Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the playrooms.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. One of the blind cords in the Toddler playroom was not appropriately secured. It is acknowledged due to its location it did not that provide an immediate action and the service submitted photographic evidence of the securing of the blind cord on the 20 February 2024.
2. A long rubber hose used to fill a tray in the outdoor area was hanging round a tap in a noose formation in the sanitary area of the Busy Pars room, resulting in a potential risk of entanglement for the preschool child. Once brought to the attention of staff, this was removed immediately. Similar rubber hosing was stored in the Alevin sanitary unit and posed an infection control risk.
3. A plastic door on a playhouse in the outdoor area adjacent to Busy Parrs was broken, resulting in a sharp edge being exposed which could cause injury to a child.
4. A row of hooks at a child's eye level in the Smolts rest and sensory area, required to be removed to prevent injury to the preschool child. It is acknowledged that this space had recently changed its purpose of use.

Infection Control:

5. Staff and children did not routinely wash their hands after nappy changes in the Little Frys room, which could potentially cause cross infection.
6. One mattress in the sleep area in Little Frys did not contain the required waterproof protector, resulting in an inability to clean the mattress after use.

Safe Sleep:

7. The air temperature of the sleep area of the Alevin playroom was not recorded by staff whilst children including one child aged under one year slept.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The service advised in a written response that:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The blind cord in the Toddler playroom which was not properly secured has been secured. Staff will ensure all blind cords are able to be secured, check daily, and report to manager if unable to be secured.
2. The long rubber hose removed from Busy Parrs room and Alviens room. The service does not store any toys or equipment in bathroom areas.
3. The plastic door on playhouse in the outdoor area adjacent to Busy Parrs was broken and this door has been removed. The staff use the daily checks to check toys and any toys that are broken are removed from the play area.
4. The row of hooks at eye level in the Smolts rest and sensory area has been removed. The staff will ensure when redeveloping areas that health and safety items are reviewed first.

Infection Control:

5. All staff have completed a refresher update on the nappy changing procedure and wash their hands and the child's after nappy changes in the building. This was implemented immediately. The nappy changing procedure has the washing of adult and child's hands printed in bold to highlight the issue. The service will continue to revise policies at team meetings to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities.
6. There is now a waterproof mattress on the cot in the sleep area in Little Frys room. A new sleep area checklist includes checks for waterproof covers on mattresses.

Safe Sleep:

7. The air temperature in the sleep area in the Alviens room is now being recorded while children sleep. The staff have been made aware to document temperature in sleep area when children are sleeping.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs, copies of updated nappy change procedure and safety checklist submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the service has addressed the non-compliance found under this regulation 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

- (1) Certificates were available in the service showing that three staff members held the required First Aid Responder (FAR) training in first aid for children.
- (2)
- (a) Small first aid boxes were safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the playrooms with a large, equipped master first aid box available in the hallway.
- (b) The first aid supplies were available at all times if the children attending the pre-school service required them.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service provided evidence of insurance commencing on the 1 March 2023 for the maximum number of children attending the service at the time of the inspection.