

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY029			
Name of Service:	Rhode Community Pre-School Ltd.			
Address of Service:	Rhode Community Centre, Rhode, Tullamore, Co. Offaly			
Eircode:	R35 H3N3			
Name of Registered Provider:	Gillian Kelly			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	04/10/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	NA	PM	3
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co Westmeath.			
Inspection undertaken by:	C.O' Connor Hughes			
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

This community sessional service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme. The age range of the children enrolled in the service is from 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates between the hours of 09:00 to 12:00 and 12:30 to 15:30 on a Monday to Friday basis.

The Early Years' Service consists of pre-school room 1 in the main building with an office. Pre-school room 2 is located in the main community building. This room was not in operation on the afternoon inspection of the 4 October 2024.

An outdoor play area is attached to the side of the premises. Onsite parking and set down facilities are available. The service is situated on the outskirts of the village of Rhode, County Offaly.

Staffing

Three adults were present on the 4 October 2024. The designated person in charge and staff member were working with the children. The registered provider facilitated the inspection and attended the closing meeting.

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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff member and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Compliance Information

The service submitted a change in circumstance in respect of the new registered provider on the 4 June 2024 to the TUSLA registration office. This change was approved by the registration office.

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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

The registered provider and designated person in charge was present for the duration of the inspection.

Ten staff files including the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

Two written validated references were available in respect of the staff members and the registered provider.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the staff members and the registered provider.

The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(3)

The registered provider ensured completed vetting procedures were in place before staff members commenced employment in the service.

(4)

The staff members working directly with children attending the service and held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 5 to 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.
- (3)
There were three children attending the service supervised directly by two adults including the designated person in charge.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
In a review of eleven child enrolment records information relating to (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h) and (i) was available in respect of the children attending the service.

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;*
- (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)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1) (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) and (k).

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

An extensive parent booklet for parents was available for review with information about the pre-school service and in respect of 16 (1)(a) to (g).

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

A copy of the of Part V11A (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No.40 of 2013)) of the Act and Regulations was reviewed on inspection by (a)(b)(c).

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)

Children enjoyed the various play experiences in the pre-school room including creative play, free play and outdoor play during the afternoon session supported by staff.

Children enjoyed a healthy lunch provided by their parents consisting of sandwiches, crackers, fruit and yoghurt with unsweetened juice to drink. The service participates in the Healthy Eating Ireland project.

Staff sat with children and encouraged conversation and interactions. Children washed their hands before lunch. Children went to the toilet independently supervised by staff.

A key person approach was used in the service thus helping to promote the emotional security of children.

Staff were positive towards children using their individual names and maintaining eye contact during conversation and play activities. Positive praise was given to children on the completion of activities. Staff were familiar with the children and their personalities. Children requiring extra reassurance were attended to by staff in a calm and caring manner. Good teamwork was observed amongst staff.

Partnership with parents was noted in the service as a verbal handover is given to parents on collection of the children. A parent information handbook is given to parents at the start of the pre-school term. Information and daily activities are shared with parents through a short messaging system. Children's child developmental observations are shared with parents at the end of each pre-school term. The service operates an open-door policy for parents to call to the service.

The pre-school room was bright and colourful. A range of developmentally appropriate experiences to meet children's learning needs was available in the pre-school room. Interest areas included a home area, construction area, a dolls house and cosy corner with reading books. Children's artwork and family photographs were displayed.

Children were happily engaged at play activities in the outdoor play. There is a sheltered area for children to use in inclement weather and an open area with a tarmac surface. Toys and equipment included a set of swings, water funnels, a wooden kitchen, construction bench, tricycles and bicycles. The walls surrounding the outdoor play area were painted with child friendly murals.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Age-appropriate toys, play materials and equipment were available for children’s use in the service.

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 to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within pre-school room 1. Access is provided through a gated outdoor play area and the pre-school room 1 entrance door is secured by an adult. The inspector signed the visitors book in the service.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed.

Children were observed to wash their hands during the inspection.

Warm running water, hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. The water temperature recorded at the wash hand basins was 41 degrees Celsius.

A nappy changing unit and correct nappy changing procedure was noted in the sanitary accommodation.

The pre-school room and sanitary accommodation was ventilated by openable windows.

A refrigerator was available for the storage of perishable foods in the pre-school room. A record of fridge temperatures was available and indicated that correct temperatures were maintained at less than 5 degrees Celsius.

Administration of Medication:

No medication was given at the time of the inspection. Temperature reducing medication was stored safely in the service if a child presented with a high temperature.

Fire Safety:

Emergency exits were unobstructed from the pre-school room in the service. A fire assembly point was located to the front of the building.

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)
Four staff members held a First Aid response (FAR) training. A person trained in FAR was in attendance for the afternoon pre-school session on the 4 October 2024.

(2)(a)
A first aid box was located in the pre-school room in the service.

(b)
A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

A written record of fire drills was available. The last fire drill was recorded on the 20 September 2024.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The smoke alarms and firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced on the 15 January 2024 and 24 June 2024 respectively.

(2)

The record was open to inspection by (a)(b)(c).

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in 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

Children were supervised by adults in pre-school room 1, in the outdoor play area and when using the toilet during the inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2025.

Part IX - Inspection and Enforcement

Regulation 33 – Furnishing of information to agency

A registered provider shall furnish the Agency with such information as the Agency may reasonably require for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations and the information shall be in such form, if any, as may be specified by the Agency.

Compliance Information

The registered provider furnished the necessary information required for the inspection.