

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY047		
Name of Service:	Tullamore Community Pre School-Ltd		
Address of Service:	Arden View, Tullamore, Co. Offaly		
Eircode:	R35 F992		
Name of Registered Provider:	Gerard Galvin		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	20/06/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM 9
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co Offaly.		
Inspection undertaken by:	K. Murphy		
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

The service is registered as a sessional service providing a service to children aged between 2 and 6 years. The service is open Monday to Friday for 38 weeks. A sessional ECCE service operates in the morning between the hours of 09:00 and 12:00 and in the afternoon between the hours of 12:30 and 15:30.

The Early Years' Service is located in a prefabricated building within the grounds of St. Josephs National School in a residential area in the town of Tullamore, County Offaly. One pre-school room is provided. An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the service.

Staffing

A person in charge and two other staff members were present and working directly with the children. The registered provider is not part of the staff complement and was not present during 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/ 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 co-operation 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.*

(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)

A person in charge was available as required.

(b)

A person in charge and an alternative were present throughout the inspection.

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

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from either a past employer or a source other than a previous employer in respect of the files reviewed.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the files reviewed.

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

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

All staff members employed in the service held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at level 5 - 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 exceeded during the inspection.
- (3)
There were fifteen children attending the service in the morning and nine in the afternoon supervised directly by three adults.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

In respect of eight of twelve child records the details relating to (h) were not in place.

In respect of one of twelve child record the details relating to (i) were not in place.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(h)

The registered provider stated in the response that parents were asked on several occasions to bring their child's immunisation records.

Six out of the eight children will not be returning to the pre-school as they are transitioning to primary school.

Two out of the eight children will be returning to the pre-school in September. It has been stated to the parents of the two children returning that they will need to forward on their children's immunisation records for their records based under Regulation 15. The preschool's email address was provided for them to do so. Gentle reminders to the parents will continue until the immunisation records are received. (Communications included for 23rd June 2024 and 8th July 2024) included.

To prevent this from reoccurring in the future all new children to be registered to attend the pre-school will need to have all records on the opening day or first day of pre-school.

This year's open day occurred on 6th June 2024. All parents/guardians were notified of the open day in May 2024 via post and email requesting that they bring the required documents to the open day – immunisation records, PPSN, all about me form and family picture. (Letter and checklist included)

(1)(i)

The registered provider stated in the response that the one child out of the twelve was no longer attending the pre-school and that written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment in the event of an emergency will be in place for all children by the start of the new term. Staff will ensure that all parental consent forms will be signed on the opening day or first day of pre-school. (Letter and checklist included)

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective actions taken documentary evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

The practices as stated will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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:

- (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)(h)

The attendance records for children attending the service were available.

(i)

Details of the staff rosters were available.

(j)

An administration of medicine book was available. No medicines had been administered to date.

(k)

The service maintained a record of any accident, injury or incident involving a child attending the service.

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

A handbook containing the information required under Regulation 16(1) (a) - (g) was available and provided to parents and guardians of children proposing to attend the service.

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

The person in charge ensured that an electronic 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 available for 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 play activities and were observed to move freely around the pre-school room. Children's independence was encouraged as they dressed for outdoor play, went to the toilet and washed their hands before snack time supervised by staff. The mid-session snack was provided by the service. A variety of sandwiches, crackers and fruit products were noted. Children enjoyed their food sitting outdoors in a picnic styled setting. Children were content with their carers. Staff used individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities, toileting and mealtimes. Staff used a gentle approach of redirection for managing behaviour in a positive caring manner. The staff were familiar with each child and their personality. Staff members were observed to be positive towards children evidenced by individual names used, eye contact and praise for children on completion of activities. Good teamwork between the staff members was observed during the inspection. The staff gave a verbal handover to parents on collection at the end of the morning session.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable and adequate play and work equipment were provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, sensory, tabletop activities and arts and crafts.

(b)

Soft furnishings in the pre-school room supported rest and relaxation for the children in attendance.

(4)

The outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises consisted of an all-weather surface area. The area was equipped with a climb/slide unit, covered water and sand play trays and a variety of bikes and trikes.

A high-level perimeter wall secured the area.

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

Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Paper hand towel and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet.

Administration of Medication:

Appropriate documentation was in place to record the administration of medicine should it be required by a child in attendance.

Fire Safety:

Emergency exit doors were in place and were unobstructed. A fire assembly point was noted to the front of the premises.

Outing:

A risk assessment and checklist were in place in respect of a recent outing carried out from the service.

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 adults were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)
A first aid box was available in an accessible and conspicuous location in the premises.

(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.

(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 for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 5 June 2024.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment in the premises was serviced in November 2023. The smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in June 2024.

(4)

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

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 staff during play activities both indoors and outdoors during the inspection. Staff members supervised the children when toileting and handwashing.

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 VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(a)

The premises consists of a prefabricated building and visually appeared to be stable in structure.

(b)

The main entrance door to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within.

(c)

Openable windows provide both natural light and ventilation in the pre-school room. The light fittings were covered and fully operational to provide adequate artificial light to the rooms and sanitary accommodation.

(d)

Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the sanitary accommodation and pre-school room for the hygienic disposal of waste.

(e)

Sanitary accommodation consisting of two separate toilets and wash handbasins were available in the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

(e)

The water pressure at both wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation was insufficient to provide a flow suitable for adequate handwashing.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(e)

The registered provider stated in the response that a plumber assessed the situation in both hand basins on 3rd July 2024.

The plumber stated that there was an issue with the water pressure. The plumber installed new taps at both hand basins. (Email and invoice included)

The water pressure from the taps will be checked on a daily and weekly basis. If the situation reoccurs in the future, the plumber will be contacted immediately to rectify the issue.

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective actions taken documentary evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

The practices as stated will be reviewed on the next inspection.