

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO018		
Name of Service:	Holy Family Pre-School		
Address of Service:	Clarion Road, Sligo, Co. Sligo		
Eircode:	F91 RH99		
Name of Registered Provider:	Nigel Mc Carley		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	17/11/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM n/a
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84		
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello		
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

Holy family preschool is an early years service established to meet the needs of children in the area with a diagnosis of an intellectual or physical disability and could not attend mainstream early years education.

Attending children have been referred to the service by the HSE Childrens Disability Network Team. The service is registered for children aged 2- 6 years. It is a sessional service; however children will have staggered start and finish times.

Staffing

On the day the service had sixteen staff employed in the service. Thirteen staff were providing direct care to the children. The service also employed two bus drivers and one housekeeper. The person in charge is also available to provide direct care as required.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following: Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment, Regulation 11 - Staffing levels, Regulation 15 – Record of a preschool child, Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child, Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, Regulation 28 – Insurance and Regulation 31- Complaints.

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 wish 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

(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) (b).

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) (a) (b).

The records of all 16 adults employed in the service were reviewed.

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all 16 adults employed in the service.

- (c)
A garda vetting disclosure was available for all 16 adults in the service.
- (d)
International police vetting was not required for any of the 16 adults employed in the service as no adult employed in the service had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (3)
The procedures specified in paragraph (2) had been completed prior to any adult being appointed, assigned or allowed access or contact with a child attending the preschool service.
- (4)
Nine adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement. Two adults had qualifications in Nursing and Two adults were qualified in social care.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service. There were nine adults working directly with eighteen children in the morning. The manager was available to cover breaks throughout the day if required.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children ratio were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ration considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service and the needs of the child. The skill mix provided in the service ensured that those children with complex health needs received the support required.

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.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

1) (a-i)

10 records of the children attending the service were reviewed. The required information including the authorisation to collect the child, details of illness or special needs of the child, emergency contact and record of immunisations were fully completed for each child.

(3) The records in writing were available for inspection by the early years inspector.

(4)

The person in charge confirmed that the records are retained for the required period of time as set out in the regulations.

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

On the morning of inspection, the staff employed in the service were busy getting the service ready for their first pyjama day. This involved using the main foyer open space to provide opportunities for sensory stimulation and relaxation in line with the themed pyjama day. This space was decorated with fairy lights, soft furnishings, and sensory resources. This area was observed throughout the day being utilised by all the four care rooms, providing a different space for the children to explore and enjoy. The service consists of four care rooms that are structured to meet the development stage of the children attending those rooms. The service is an early years' service for children with varying levels of physical and intellectual disabilities and children attend the care room most suitable to their abilities. The red room caters for children with complex health needs. In this room the adults supporting the children have a varied skill set including nurses, social care staff and childcare educators. This holistic approach ensures that the early years curriculum is adapted to meet the age and stage of development of the children, while other medical and social care needs are also met. The blue, yellow and green room provide early years' service for children with various abilities. All rooms are adequately equipped with a variety of materials and resources suitable to the stage and development of the children using them. Opportunities for gross skill development is provided in the outdoor area with use of bikes, trikes and footballs. There are four outdoor areas all interconnecting for ease of movement.

The outdoor area has a sensory garden with musical instruments, flowers, and areas for sitting and relaxation. The service provides two sensory rooms for use throughout the session. One large sensory room contains ball pond, swings and soft matting for movement and exercise. The other sensory room provides opportunity for calm and relaxation with low lighting, bubble tubes and soft matting.

All staff in the service were observed to be positive and kind in all their interactions, children were offered affection and held and cuddled as required throughout the session. Staff appeared skilled in de-escalation and distraction techniques where children became upset or frustrated. It was evident that community engagement and inclusion was strongly encouraged in the service and recent day trips to the library and McDonalds had taken place. Risk assessments were completed prior to trips and consultation with families. The photographic evidence of these trips were displayed on the walls of the care rooms.

The curriculum in the service incorporated both the Aistear model as well as programmes specific for children with varying abilities including the 'portage education program'. Self-care needs were promoted in the service, focussing on activities to optimise the child's independence including dressing and toileting. Communication was mainly in picture format throughout the service and each individual child had their picture board and pictures to communicate their needs.

The children with complex support needs had thorough support plans in place and all staff were knowledgeable of same. The service availed of extra support through the HSE Childrens disability network teams with support from speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. The staff supporting the children daily incorporated these support plans into their play and time at the service.

While the service is established for children who are unable to attend mainstream early years education, it is important to note that one child had recently progressed to mainstream service due to the skills learnt and support received 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 into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- The outdoor area perimeter was secure.
- All cleaning products were stored out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Blind chords were secure to the wall.
- High level door latches were in place to prevent children having unsupervised access to areas within the preschool.

Infection Control:

- There were adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes and after messy play and snack times.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean, with deep cleaning schedules in place.
- The service was observed to be clean and well maintained and the service employed a house keeper who was present on the day of inspection.
- Children were observed to be supported to wash their hands regularly including before snacks and meals, following using the toilet and nappy changing.
- Child friendly hand wash posters with picture instructions were placed above the wash basins and toilets with instructions of how to complete the different tasks.

Administration of Medication:

- The Nursing staff on duty administer medication if required.

- Individual support plans are in place regarding the administration of medication.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors are free from obstruction throughout the service.
- Assembly points are clearly marked in the car park of the service.

Outing:

- Risk assessments are in place for all outings within the service.

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 a current insurance cover valid until 31.12.2024 . The insurance provided cover for 22 preschool children.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured a complaints policy was available in the service, outlining the guidelines of how to make a complaint, guidance on how this complaint will be investigated and the procedure of how to keep the complaint up to date with the process.
- (2) The service has not had a complaint in the previous two years, however the person in charge on interview was knowledgeable about how to keep records and the process outlined in the complaints policy.
- (3) The service had not received a complaint in the previous two years.