

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY126				
Name of Service:	Longfield Academy				
Address of Service:	Ardgeeha, Longfield Estate, Cashel Road, Clonmel, Tipperary				
Eircode:	E91 FK20				
Name of Registered Provider:	Donagh McMahon				
Service type:	Full Day				
Date of Inspection:	02/05/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>84</td> <td>PM</td> <td>62</td> </tr> </table>	AM	84	PM	62
AM	84	PM	62		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Tipperary.				
Inspection undertaken by:	E Cullen				
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

This full day care service is located in a residential area, in the town of Clonmel, county Tipperary. A service is provided for children aged 1 to 6 years old, between the hours of 7:30am to 6:00pm. The service can accommodate up to 105 early years children at any one time. The premises is a purpose built detached single storey building with an adjacent modular building. The main building has 4 activity rooms, sanitary accommodation, a kitchen, office and storeroom. The modular building has 2 activity rooms and sanitary accommodation. An outdoor play area is available to the rear of the main building.

Staffing

The service employs eighteen staff members, which includes a management team of three. Staff working directly with children hold qualifications at Level 5, 6, 7 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The registered provider does not work directly with children in the service. An evening cleaner is also employed by the service.

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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9, 11, 16, 19 and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the green, yellow and orange rooms.

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

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

*(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
(c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c) There was a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named person was available to deputise as required. Details of the management and reporting structures within the service were available. Information was available detailing the role of each staff member and specific responsibilities such as fire warden and designated liaison person for example.

From examination of records and on discussion with staff the designated person in charge, it was established that nine of the eighteen staff members employed by the service had commenced employment since the last inspection in 2020. Files for these nine staff members were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b) Two validated references were available for each staff member from either a past employer, or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member.

(d) Police vetting was available for two staff members who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(3) Evidence was available to confirm that the registered provider took appropriate measures to ensure that all employees were suitable to work in an early years service prior to their commencement.

(4) A certificate of qualification was available on file demonstrating that the staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(7)(a)(b)(c) Evidence of initial induction of new staff members was available on file.

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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children at all times.

There were 84 children with 14 staff members directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection.

While in the afternoon there were 62 children directly supervised by 11 staff members.

The management team were available throughout the day to provide cover in individual rooms as necessary to maintain adult to child ratios.

(2) On the morning of the inspection, the staff to child ratios were maintained as follows throughout the service:

- In the green room, there were 8 children aged 15 to 24 months old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the yellow room, there were 14 children aged 2 to 3 years old being cared for by 3 staff.
- In the red room, there were 20 children aged 3 to 4 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the purple room, there were 6 children aged 3 to 4 years old being cared for by 1 staff.
- In the orange room, there were 19 children aged 3 to 5 years old being cared for by 3 staff.
- In the blue room, there were 17 children aged 4 to 5 years old being cared for by 3 staff.

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)(i)(j)(k)

The registered provider ensured that all relevant information was accessible and available for inspection by authorised persons. Staff rosters were available on a staff notice board. Each early years room was responsible for maintaining records of attendance, administration of medication and any accident or incident records.

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

Parents supplied all food and drinks served on the day of inspection. Appropriate storage and preparation of food was observed. Drinks were freely accessible to the children in each classroom throughout the day, drinks stations were on low level shelves. Staff sat with children and engaged in conversation during meal and snack times. The children were encouraged to feed themselves appropriate to their stage of development and were assisted as required. Snack and mealtimes varied from room to room, depending on the age range of children and food requirements.

Regular nappy changing took place throughout the day and staff were observed to engage attentively with children during the process.

Children who were toilet trained, toileted as needed and handwashing was promoted after both nappy changing and toileting. Attention was given to children's appearance with staff observed to clean children's faces and hands.

Sleep was child led and staff worked in partnership with parents to ensure consistency between home and service routines. Children were placed to sleep when signs of tiredness were recognised by staff, this was observed in the green room when staff recognised the sleep cues of a child and placed them to sleep as soon as possible. Most of the children slept after the midday hot meal. Rooms used for sleeping were sufficiently dark and quiet to promote a restful sleep.

Children had free movement and choice of activities in all rooms observed on the day. Children were placed in highchairs when meals were ready to be served and removed promptly when they were finished. An outdoor rota was displayed in each room and children were observed in the outdoor area throughout the day.

Non-Compliance Information

The midday hot meal in the yellow room was not a pleasant social experience for the children, as some children had to wait an excessive amount of time. All children were observed seated from 11:30 while some children ate, and others waited for their meal to be heated and served. The final child was served their meal at 12:05. During this period some children who were waiting, were observed repeatedly getting up from the table to engage with play materials and staff brought them back to the table to continue waiting.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Two new microwaves have been purchased to reduce the length of time required to heat the children's meals. In addition to the new microwave, a new room daily plan has been devised. This plan advises staff to split the children into two groups, allowing them to continue engaging in activities until their dinners, at each table, are served together.

Supporting documentation submitted

Receipt for additional microwaves purchased and copy of new daily plan.

Summary Comment

All evidence submitted meets the requirements Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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:

There was a keypad and buzzer entry and exit system in place on the entrance door of the main building and each external door in the modular building to prevent unauthorised persons gaining entry or children exiting unsupervised. The kitchen and staff areas were inaccessible to children. All cleaning agents and hazardous materials were stored safely and out of reach of children.

Accident and incident books maintained a record of any incidents, these were completed in detail and signatures confirmed that relevant parents, staff and a manager were informed.

All blind cords were securely mounted out of reach of children. Room temperatures were monitored in each room by staff, temperatures were maintained between the required 18°C to 22°C in the early years rooms.

All highchairs, tables and chairs used by children were in good condition and suitable for use by the age range of children using them.

Equipment and materials used in each of the rooms were appropriate for use by the age range of children using them, for example small items which may pose a risk of choking were not observed in room occupied by younger children. The outdoor play area was maintained to a good standard, secure and free from hazards.

Infection Control:

The service was clean and well maintained with cleaning schedules maintained daily by staff. A cleaner was employed to complete a deep clean each evening. Children were observed washing their hands before snack, after outdoor play, toileting, and nappy changing. There was warm running water, liquid soap, electric hand dryers and paper hand towels available for hand washing throughout the service. Hand washing facilities were adequately stocked with liquid hand soap.

A system was in place for the appropriate storage and sterilisation of children's soothers and mouthed toys in the rooms catering for younger children. Tables and equipment were cleaned prior to food being served to children and appropriate safe food storage and preparation was observed.

During nappy changing processes observed, staff adhered to the services nappy changing policy. Staff ensured that they wore gloves and aprons during the nappy changing process and both child and staff hands were washed after nappy changing had taken place.

Administration of Medication:

Signed medication record books documented the details of any medications which had been administered in the service in line with the service's administration of medication policy. Medications supplied by parents were stored securely and inaccessible to children.

Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with best practices in safe sleep and carried out physical checks on individual sleeping children, every 10 minutes, recording individual children's sleep positions, colour and breathing. The sleep room temperatures were continually monitored by staff, with a digital thermometer located in each sleep room.

Staff were familiar with the services sleep policy which was displayed in the sleep room. All cots and low-level beds were spaced the required 50cm apart. A staff member remained in the room while children over the age of two were sleeping on low-level beds.

Each cot mattress was fitted with an appropriate waterproof mattress protector. A system was in place to ensure each child had an assigned cot or low-level bed. There were ten cots available for eight children in attendance under the age of two. Each child over the age of two had an assigned low-level bed.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

A section of concrete flooring in the nappy changing room was exposed and posed a risk of cross contamination as it could not be effectively cleaned.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

A temporary floor covering has been put in place to cover the exposed concrete. This floor covering can be cleaned and disinfected appropriately daily. We have booked a professional flooring company to lay the correct floor material for underground heating permanently. We have added floor inspection to our daily management checklists. Any damage will be reported for professional repair immediately and will be covered by a cleanable material while awaiting repair.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of the temporary floor covering and communication from floor covering specialists with booking confirmation of permanent floor covering installation date. Copy of management daily checklist.

Summary Comment

All evidence submitted meets the requirements Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.