

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015TY128 | | |
| Name of Service: | Brothers of Charity Services Ireland South East Region | | |
| Address of Service: | Boherduff, Fethard Road, Clonmel, Co Tipperary | | |
| Eircode: | E91 XY63 | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Stacey Coonan | | |
| Service type: | Part Time, Sessional | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 26/01/2026 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 7 | PM N/A |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary E91RF38 | | |
| Inspection undertaken by: | Antoinette McNamara | | |
| 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 | N/A | | |

Description of service

This non-profit service operating from its current premises since 2015 and is registered to provide part-time and sessional care programmes to children aged 2 to 6 years of age with complex needs. The detached single storey premises was converted for use as an early years service. The premises consists of three base classrooms, a speech and language room, physical activity room, physical education room, sensory room, sanitary accommodation, utility room, sluice room, kitchen/staff area and two administration offices. Outdoors there is an enclosed play space to the rear of the building, with an all-weather surface and grass areas. Operated by the Brothers of Charity South East services, this service is one of two services in the South Tipperary area.

Staffing

The service currently employs 10 staff, including relief staff, who work directly with children and the registered provider. The registered provider does not work directly in the service daily. Staff members held qualifications at level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications. On the day of inspection there were five staff members, one student and the team leader present onsite.

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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and recruitment,
Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels,
Regulation 15 (1) (a-i) (3) Records in relation to a pre-school child,
Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, welfare, and development of the child,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of the child,
Regulation 25 (1)(2)(a)(b) First aid

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 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) There was a designated person in charge and a named deputy who was able to deputise, as required.

(b) A person in charge was present on the day of inspection. A person in charge was present daily.

The staff files for 10 staff, 1 student and the registered provider were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for each person working at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting was available on file for everyone working in the service. Garda vetting had been renewed, in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting documentation was available for three staff working in the service, who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

(4) Certificates of qualifications for the staff working with pre-school children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at level 5 and above 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.

(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 adequate staffing levels to respond to the children’s needs on the day of inspection.

(2) The adult child ratios during the day of inspection were above the minimum regulatory requirements. The ratios were as follows:

- Snowflake room: Four children cared for by two staff members.
- Mighty Ducks room: Two children cared for by two staff members.
- Raccoon room: One child cared for by one staff member.

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-

(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

A sample of 10 completed registration forms were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

(1) The registration forms contained the required information as detailed under parts (a) to (i) of this regulation.

(3)(c) The registration forms were available on the premises for inspection by an authorised person.

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)

Basic needs:

The available space within the care rooms supported the children to explore their environment and to freely engage with materials. Outdoor play was promoted and included as part of the programme of activities. There was a sensory room and a physical education (P.E) room that was used by individual children or small groups of children as required. A speech and language room was also available to the children. Rest areas were incorporated into each of the playrooms and available for use by children as needed. Toilets and nappy changing areas were directly accessible from each activity room. Children's independence and privacy were considered and promoted by the staff, with staff talking gently to the children if they demonstrated cues for toileting or required a nappy change. The staff responded to each child's individual personalities, sensitivities and needs in relation to nappy

changing and toileting ensuring their privacy and dignity was always respected. Healthy eating was promoting within the service. Children brought snacks from home which they could eat at snack time.

Physical and material environment:

The environment in the service was comfortable and inviting. The walls were painted with bright colours and murals. The halls were decorated in the children's pictures, life skills boards and picture boards. Handrails were present in the halls at children's height to help the children move independently. Music played in the background of all the classrooms. The service had appropriately sized tables and chairs for the children. The service had personalised coat hooks for each child attending the service. The environment was inclusive and representative of the children attending, with images of the children and their families displayed along with a birthday wall. Adjustments to the learning environment and teaching strategies were used to support the learning and development of all children attending the service. The large outdoor play space was divided into areas which were directly accessible from the early years classroom and consisted of a soft fall surface. Children had a range of materials to play with, including a messy play area, ride on toys, a large blackboard and a playhouse. One large outdoor area was completely covered and had removable side so was able to be used all year around.

Supporting Relationships:

Interactions between staff and children were warm and sensitive. Staff spoke in low tones of voice and interacted with children at their level in all rooms. The children were cared for by the same team of staff, which supported the development of secure relationships between the children and their main carers. The favourable adult to child ratios in each room ensured that each child received as much individual time as they required and helped the staff to know the children better, to discover their likes, needs and interests.

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 premises was adequately secured to prevent children leaving unsupervised and unauthorised persons gaining access. The main door to the premises was locked and needed to be opened from the inside. Staff were required to answer a call bell system to grant access to the preschool area. The outdoor play areas were secured to prevent children leaving. Cleaning agents and hazardous materials were stored inaccessible to children. Radiator covers were present to prevent injury to children. Pinch protectors were present on the door hinges. Blind cords were secured to the walls. There was soft fall matting present in the outdoor areas. There were large areas of soft fall material in the classrooms. The kitchen area was separate from the classrooms.

Infection control:

The service was clean and well maintained. There were children's toilets off the classrooms with changing facilities. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand drying throughout the service. Staff adhered to the services nappy changing policy. Staff ensured that gloves and aprons were worn during the nappy changing process. Designated staff toilets were also provided. Handwashing reminders and steps were present in the sanitary accommodation. Hand sanitizer was present throughout the service. Pedal bins were in operation to avoid cross contamination. Perishable foods were stored in a fridge.

Fire safety:

Fire exits were found to be unobstructed on the day of inspection.
There were fire evacuation procedures displayed in a prominent area within the service.
Firefighting equipment was present in 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) There were staff trained in First Aid Response (FAR) available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the service.