

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY128
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Name of Service:	Brothers of Charity Services Ireland South East Region
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Address of Service:	Boherduff, Fethard Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary
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Eircode:	E91 XY63
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jeannette McLoughlin
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	08/12/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	N/A
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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 non-profit service was established in 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 service currently provides a service for children from the age of 2 years 6 months of age. The detached single storey premises was converted for use as an early years service. The premises consists of three base classrooms, one of which is not currently in use, a sensory room, physical activity room, ball pit room, sanitary accommodation, staff and storage spaces. 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 eight staff members who work directly with children. Staff members held qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care or equivalent as recognised by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth at Level 5, 6, and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The registered provider does not work directly in 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, safety and 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 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

(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

(2) Documentation was reviewed for the nine staff members employed by the service.

(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.

(4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 or equivalent as recognised by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

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.

(2) The staff to child ratios were maintained above the minimum requirements. There were 5 children aged 2 to 6 years being cared for by 4 staff members.

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;

(g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;

(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

The registered provider ensured that all relevant information was accessible and available for inspection by authorised persons. Staff information was available on file. The Tusla registration certificate was on display providing confirmation of the class of service registered. Staff rosters were available at reception. The parent's handbook provided information on the programme available, facilities and operational hours.

Records of attendance, administration of medication and any accident or incident records were accessible.

Policies and procedures were available for staff in the office and a parent's handbook was also available.

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.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service consisted of six rooms for use by the children attending the service. The mighty ducks and snowflake rooms were used as base rooms by the two groups of children present on the day of inspection. A third base room was not in use, however available for individual programmes when required. Each room was designed with the needs and interests of the specific children attending the respective rooms.

The children also had use of additional rooms each of which had a specific focus. The sensory room was well equipped to meet a variety of sensory learning needs. The physical education room was designed to support gross motor and physical development skills. The ball pit room was added since the last inspection as an extension of the physical education room on a smaller scale.

(b) There were suitable facilities available on the premises for children to rest in each room and in some of the auxiliary spaces also.

(3)(a) Children in the mighty duck's room could directly access the enclosed outdoor play areas from their early years room. On the day of inspection children were observed to use the all-weather surface. A grass area with fixed play structures was also available. The play spaces were free from hazards and equipment was safe for use by the age groups of children in attendance.

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

Each room available for use by children was very well equipped with play and learning materials, including specialised equipment to meet the developmental needs of children attending the service. The snowflake room had designated areas of interest, which included: a home corner with kitchen, play materials and dolls pram. A role play area was well resourced and had a play table with props and a dolls house. A library nook with mat, couch and accessible books and an arts and crafts zone with art easel were present. This classroom had appropriately sized table and chairs and low-level open shelving units. Visual displays of prompts, now and next boards and Lámh visuals were available to support communication and routine based learning. A separate area to the rear of the classroom was used to store children's belongings.

In the mighty ducks room, there was a section of the room covered in a soft wipeable padded floor and wall covering. A range of large, padded wedges, blocks and tunnels were in use to support the developmental needs of children in the room, who were predominately pre mobile.

An interactive plasma touch screen has recently been added to the classroom, which can be a height adjusted for individual children. Appropriate seating, tables and supportive furniture were used on the day. Resources, play materials and specialist equipment were rotated depending on the children who were in attendance on specific days.

The sensory room was designed to meet a variety of sensory needs. A range of visual displays from a projector, numerous lighting features including an ultraviolet light and bubble tube were available. The space was creatively designed to create cosy spaces where children could engage with resources individually or in a group. A heated waterbed with a canopy, tactile steps and large bean bag with inbuilt speaker system offered a variety of sensory learning opportunities. Music and auditory resources were also used. The room was used with the individual needs of children, being tailored as a calm or more active space.

The physical education room was designed for active play, half the floor and wall space were covered in a soft padded surface, with a range of climbing and sliding soft play resources. A ceiling mounted swing with numerous attachments, tunnel, bean bags, exercise balls and tactile matting were used. The ball pit room also had a range of soft play resources with a large ball pit.

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 fire fighting 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) There was a record of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 24 November 2023.
- (b) There was a record available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 22 November 2022 and the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 27 August 2023.
- (4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed beside each emergency exit door on the premises.