

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015WD021

Name of Service: FerryFun Childcare & Afterschool Centre

Address of Service: Hillsfield Community Centre, Belmont Road, Ferrybank, Co. Waterford

Eircode: X91 W9YY

Name of Registered Provider: Mary Purcell

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 10/08/2023

No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	3

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford

Inspection undertaken by: E Mc Garry

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

Ferry Fun in a community based childcare service located on the outskirts of Waterford city. The service is governed by a management committee. Opening hours are from 8.45am to 6.00pm for 50 weeks per year. The service offers full day, part-time and sessional care to children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. A registered school age service is also provided. The premises is a two-storey purpose-built facility. The service is based on the ground floor. The first floor is used by community groups and a local state organisation. The early years service comprises of five early years rooms, catering kitchen, two rest rooms, sanitary accommodation, a nappy changing room, a staff room, an office and a parents room. There are two outdoor play areas which are adjacent to the childcare facility. There was one early years room in operation on the day of inspection.

Staffing

There were six staff present on the day of inspection and of these, four were working directly with the children. The service employs a cook and a maintenance person who also work in the service. All staff who worked directly with the children held the minimum of level 5 in Early childhood Care and Education and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment, (1) a, b (2) a, b, c. (4).

Regulation 11 Staffing levels, (1) (2) (4).

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child (1) a, b.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child.

Regulation 25 First Aid (1) (2) a, b.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) a, b. (4).

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) (b)

The manager was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 15 staff employed in the service, including the manager, a chef and a maintenance person. All 15 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)

There were 25 written and validated references available on file from past employers.

- (b)
There were 5 written and validated references available on file from reputable sources.
- (c)
There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for all 15 staff members.
- (d)
There were police vetting available on file for two staff members who had worked in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4)
All staff working directly with the early years children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.*
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and*
 - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

Compliance Information

- (1)
There were at all times an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the early years service on the day of inspection.

(2)(3)

Room 1

At 10.15 am there were 9 children aged from 3 to 4 years of age in the care of 3 staff.

At 1.00 pm there were 3 children in the care of 2 staff.

The manager was in the service and was available to assist in the rooms as required.

(4)

The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of staff to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 was maintained at all times during the day of inspection.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(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

(1)(a)

The manager ensured that each child's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of appropriate activities during the inspection including playing together during free play, doing tabletop activities and enjoying circle time which was facilitated by the staff.

Children were observed moving freely, playing, and exploring their environment. Staff demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. They communicated with the children using soft and gentle tones and promptly comforting children when they became upset. For example, one child who did not want to sit down for snack time was given opportunities to explain why they were upset. The child did not want to let go of a particular artwork they had made. Staff suggested the child place the artwork on a higher level to ensure it was kept safe from damage. The child was facilitated to place the artwork securely on a higher shelf.

The child was then invited to join their friends at the table to enjoy their snack. Later the child was observed sitting with their friends enjoying their snack.

Staff were observed to be constantly engaged with the children in their care. During snack time the three staff present sat and chatted with the children. Children chatted about their holidays, trips to the beach and various family events such as the planning in place for upcoming birthday parties.

The play equipment in the service was well organised and easily accessible to the children. The inspector observed that all the early years room was developed with care and attention. There was a selection of toys to stimulate gross motor play. For example, magnetic shapes and plastic pegs which were used to construct various artistic shapes by the children.

1(b)

The manager had ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place. Staff maintained a book detailing the care of one child in the early years room. This book detailed the daily care given to the child in the service. The book was sent home daily in the child's bag. Staff who spoke to the inspector said all parents of children who attended the service were given the option of using this book to communicate the children's care needs with them.

Children were encouraged to be independent appropriate to their age and stage of development, for example, children were reminded by staff to use the toilet. They were given assistance and encouraged with hand washing when required. Care was given in helping the children with their appearance and comfort. For example, one child's tee shirt got wet while they were washing their hands. A staff member was observed to attend to the child promptly. The staff member helped the child to change into a fresh tee shirt which had been provided by their parents.

The service provided the majority of snacks and meals for the children. Parents were also given an option to provide snacks for their children if required. There was a cook employed who worked from the onsite kitchen in the service. At 11.00am children were served crackers, yogurt, freshly made sausage rolls, fruit and drinks. At 1.00pm children were served chicken curry and rice which had been made on the morning of the inspection. Children were also given biscuits which had been made that day.

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

The manager had taken the following steps to ensure the safety of the children attending the service.

General safety:

Access to the service was gained through the front door directly beside the office. There was a call bell system in place where parents rang the bell to gain access to the service. The front door was secured at all times on the day of inspection.

Infection control:

The service appeared to be clean on the day of inspection. There were fridges available in the service to store the perishable food provided by the parents for the children attending the ECCE scheme. All sinks for hand washing in the service were equipped with warm thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap, and foot operated pedal bins. Children and staff were observed washing their hands before mealtimes and after messy play.

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 was a person trained in first aid for children immediately available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises and was available to the children attending the early years 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)

There was a template in place in the service to record any fire drill that takes place in the service. The last fire drill was carried out in the service in July 2023.

(b)

There was a record available on file stating the firefighting equipment was last serviced in November 2022. The smoke alarm was last serviced in July 2023.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance of the service and in the early years room in operation on the day of inspection.