

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD074
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Name of Service:	St. Brigid's Children's Centre
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Address of Service:	Powersfield, Hennessy's Road, Waterford City, Co. Waterford
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Eircode:	X91 FC42
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Name of Registered Provider:	Karen Ryan
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	28/06/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM	9
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City.
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Ryan
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

St. Brigid's Children's Centre is a community childcare service and is an integral part of St. Brigid's Family and Resource Centre, located in the inner-city Waterford area. St. Brigid's Children's Centre is a purpose built as a community childcare centre, operating from a single-story building accommodating five childcare rooms. The grounds of the premises included a large, landscaped child centered outdoor play area at the rear of the building. The centre caters for children aged from 1 to 6 years of age on a part-time basis, with school aged childcare in the afternoons. The opening hours are 09:00hrs to 17:30hrs. St. Brigid's Children's Centre participates in the following schemes: Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE), the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme, and the Training Employment Childcare Programmes.

Staffing

St. Brigid's Children's Centre is managed by the management committee of St. Brigid's Family and Resource Centre. The service employs a manager, and 10 childcare staff. The service has two part time housekeeping staff and one maintenance person/bus driver. There are two part-time administrators and two part time kitchen staff.

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 and safety on the premises and facilities.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 8(1)(3), 9(1)(2) 4),10, 11(1)(2), and 23,25(1)(2).

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 II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C (2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) It was observed that the details in relation to the named registered provider and designated person in charge contained in the register were no longer correct. A change in this detail had been initiated in November 2022 with Tusla Child and Family Agency but had not been completed. Any proposed change in the details in relation to an early years service contained in the register, are required to be notified to the agency at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

(3) It is acknowledged that a change in circumstances application was submitted to the registration department of the Early Years Inspectorate office on 1 November 2022. This application is currently in process.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The corrective and preventive action form was returned from the service on the 1 August 2023. This contained details submitted to the Tusla and Family Agency registration office for the necessary changes required on Tusla's early years services register.

Summary Comment

The change in the details of the named registered provider and designated person in charge have been corrected on the Tusla Child and Family Agency register for early years service since 11 August 2023. Therefore the requirements for the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulation 8 Notification of change in circumstances have been met.

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,
- (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.

(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) On the day of the inspection there was a manager who was the designated person in charge for the service on the day.

(c) There was documentation that demonstrated the management structure for the service which identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service. The service was observed to be well managed, and this was reflected in the manager's extensive working knowledge of all aspects of the service.

(2) On review of the staff files it was evident that no new staff were employed to work directly with the children since the last inspection on 25 March 2022.

(c) There was evidence that Garda vetting disclosures from An Garda Síochána had been updated for all the staff between May 2022 and March 2023.

(4) All the staff working directly with the children had at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or higher.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider had compiled all of the policies, procedures and statements required under Schedule 5 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. The policies and procedures were available in folders and were clear, relevant and specific to the service. All the policies had been updated and signed by the staff. A condensed version of the policies and procedures were available in a parent handbook, and the manager informed the inspector that this was given to parents prior to children commencing in the service.

The following policies were reviewed on the day of the inspection:

Accident, incident and Injury Policy

This policy detailed procedures to be followed in the event of an accident or injury. The policy clearly defines how information is documented and the protocols to be followed if the incident or accident warrants other interventions such as hospital or general practitioner.

Complaints policy

The service's complaints policy included a compliment and complaints procedure. The complaints procedure outlines the stages for any person wishing to air a grievance. The policy explains that the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress, with anticipated timelines while the complaint is being investigated. The policy had a sample form to be used in the event of resolve not being achieved with the service manager.

Staff Supervision Policy

This policy documented the purpose, role and practices for support and supervision meetings with the staff working in the service. The policy outlined the frequency and duration of sessions and the importance of planning and preparation for these meetings. The policy had samples of forms used in supervision agreements between staff and supervisor.

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) The manager ensured that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the service. On the day of inspection, at all times in all rooms the staff: child ratios exceeded the requirement for the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

(2)
On the morning of the inspection there were 28 children with 8 staff directly supervising them. On the afternoon of the inspection there were 9 children being directly cared for by 4 staff. The manager was supernumerary and was available to help out as required.

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 service has taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending:

The external play area was secured from the surrounding dwellings with hedging, trellising and stone walls. A gate at the entrance prevented children gaining unsupervised access to the adjacent road. The main front door was secured by a keypad locking system that was out of children's reach which restricted children from exiting the building unsupervised.

All fire doors throughout the premises were fitted with finger guards, and overhead door closers had adjustable latch speeds which were timed for slowest possible closures. The blind cords were kept short and secured with a safety device on the wall of the window reveal.

All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to children in a designated cleaning store.

Attendance records were completed daily for the staff and children attending. The attendance book corresponded with the number of children present on the day of inspection.

Warm water at the taps available to the children was thermostatically controlled. All electrical sockets were fitted with safety covers.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy outlined the appropriate exclusion period recommended for childhood infections. Hand washing facilities were provided in the children's childcare rooms. Child friendly prompts with picture instructions for hand washing were displayed on walls in all the toilet areas. Foot pedal bins were available at various locations on the premises. Suitable cleaning chemicals for disinfection purposes were provided for the playroom and sanitary accommodation.

Administration of Medication:

There was a written policy and protocols available for the administration of prescribed medications within the service. High cupboards in the kitchen were nominated for the safe storage of prescribed medicines if required. A previous record of medication that had been administered in the service was reviewed by the inspector. It was clearly documented, and the administration was verified and signed by two staff members and the parent of the child whom the medication was administered to.

Safe Sleep:

The service had a large sleep room with six standard cots and a supply of stackable beds. Room temperatures were maintained around 19-20°C. There were wall mounted thermometers. The room had openable windows that were observed to be kept open during the day for ventilation purposes. Posters on safe sleep practices were displayed and staff were observed checking the children while sleeping. These checks were recorded every 10 minutes. Two children were observed in a comfortable sleep during the inspection.

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)
The service provided evidence that eight of the staff had current First Aid Responder Training for children, and that at least four persons trained in first aid were available at all times during the operational hours of the service.

(2)
(a) Fully equipped first aid boxes were located on high shelves out of reach of children in each of the childcare rooms. An additional first aid box used for outdoors/outings was stored in the office.

(b) All first aid boxes were suitably equipped and available at all times.