

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

USLA Identifier:	TU2015WD090
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Name of Service:	Tina's Playschool (Kinder Care)
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Address of Service:	Friars Walk, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, Waterford
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Eircode:	X35 TY75
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Name of Registered Provider:	Catriona Shanley
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	15 February 2023.
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No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	17
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Waterford Community Services Cork Road Waterford
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

Tina's playschool is a privately managed service. The service has operated since 1986 and is presently located on the grounds of the national school in Abbeyside, Dungarvan, in county Waterford. The service is purpose built with two early years rooms for sessional childcare, a kitchen, staff and children's toilet facilities, an office, and storage rooms. The premises has two outdoor play areas adjacent to each early years room. The service has the use of a green area off the school grounds and a large hall in the school premises. The opening hours are from 08:50 to 11:50 hours and 12:30 to 15:30 hours for the Early childhood Care and Educational scheme (ECCE) and 08:50 to 13:30 hours for part-time care from Monday to Friday. The maximum capacity of the service is for 44 children aged 2 to 6 years of age.

Staffing

The registered provider is the owner and part of the staff compliment. The service employs a manager and four childcare workers, all of whom hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher.

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. The inspections 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 registered provider, 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.

(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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge and the manager was the second designated person in charge in the service.
- (b) Both the registered provider and manager remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) There was documentation available that clearly outlined the management structure of the service and identified the lines of authority, accountability and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker in the service.

(2) On review of the staff files it was evident that one new staff member was employed to work with the children since the last inspection on the 10 January 2020.

The following was observed on review of the staff file:

- (a) There were two written validated references from past employers.
- (b) Not applicable as all written references were from past employers.
- (c) There was evidence of a completed Garda vetting disclosure certificate from An Garda Síochána.
- (d) Not applicable as the staff member had not resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

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 policies, procedures and statements as specified in Schedule 5 of the CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) REGULATIONS 2016 were available for inspection. For the purpose of this inspection the following policies were reviewed.

- Policy on infection control

The infection control policy included exclusion times for the various childhood illnesses and procedures for reporting notifiable diseases. The policy detailed general infection controls such as cleaning schedules for all rooms, and hygiene procedures for children’s personal items and soft furnishings. This policy was last revised in July 2022.

- Policy on administration of medication

The policy for the administration of medication had a protocol for dealing with prescribed medication. This policy detailed how prescribed medications should be labelled and stored as well as procedures for the safe administration of any such medication by designated staff.

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 morning of the inspection there were 33 children aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years old being cared for by 4 childcare staff. In the afternoon of the inspection there were 4 childcare staff working directly with 17 children, aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years old. The registered provider was available to help if required.

(2)
The staff: child ratios in each room met the requirement for the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, throughout the duration of the 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

Compliance Information

(1)(a) Each child's development and wellbeing was facilitated in the service as reflected under the following two headings:

Supporting Relationships

The atmosphere in the service was welcoming and energetic, the children were observed to be excited about a visiting activities company that was on the premises on the day of the inspection. Staff and children were observed to be comfortable and familiar in the setting. The children were cared for by the same staff each day and were noticed to be familiar and comfortable with each other, the children referred to the staff on first name terms.

The registered provider informed the inspector that a parental pack was given out to all parents at an open day in the service, this took place on the 20 May last year. This pack was observed to be graphic and colourful with photographs of the outdoor environment, activities and toys as well as a shortened version of the service's policies and procedures. The service respected and valued parents as primary caregivers and encouraged parental involvement with activities. On the day of the inspection one parent had brought in a pizza oven and was observed making pizzas in one of the outdoor play areas. Small groups of children were involved in this activity with the support and supervision of the staff. The registered provider reported that parents welcomed the opportunities when invited to participate in engaging with the service, the previous week a parent from Australia had talked to the children about Australian animals.

The registered provider stated she was available by telephone to parents during the day and after the service had closed. Group texting was used as a further means of communication with parents as well as notes for reminders. The registered provider reported that parents received a weekly email to keep parents informed of the activities and forthcoming events.

The service was located on the grounds of the local national school. The service had strong links with the national school and provided a school age care service for children attending the school. The service had use of the school hall and daily use of a large green area on the school property. Some festivals and special school occasions were celebrated together.

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 external door was appropriately secured to restrict unauthorised persons gaining access into the service or prevent children exiting unsupervised. The total perimeter of the facility was secured and separated from the school premises by high wire PVC fencing.

All sharp cement corners accessible to the children were protected and rendered safe. The external play area at the rear and both sides of the building was solely accessible from the premises ensuring that children did not exit the area unsupervised. A two-way radio system was in place for staff communication and safe collection of children.

All cleaning agents were stored in a locked high press out of children's reach. Since the last inspection the heavy fire doors leading into the children's toilets had finger guards installed to avoid finger injuries.

INFECTION CONTROL:

It was observed that steps were taken to prevent the spread of infection through a picture booklet which was compiled for the children explaining germs and good hygiene practices such as hand washing and coughing and sneezing into the elbow. On the day a few children were coughing, it was observed that they had been well instructed in hygienic respiratory techniques as all children were noted using their elbow sleeve to cough into as well as disposing of tissues in pedal bins available throughout the service.

A contract cleaner was employed after the service closed for one hour each day Monday to Friday to carry out maintenance cleaning. Cleaning schedules were documented and displayed in all the rooms.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

On the day of inspection, emergency medication for one child attending the service was observed to be labelled with the child's name and safely stored in a box out of children's reach. Protocols were in place for managing a medication emergency and all staff had acquired the competency to administer these medications if required.