

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WH022		
Name of Service:	Children of Lir Multyfarnham Children Services		
Address of Service:	The Old School, Donore Drive, Multyfarnham, Co. Westmeath		
Eircode:	N91 XT88		
Name of Registered Provider:	Martin Tormey		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	04/05/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM NA
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co Westmeath		
Inspection undertaken by:	C O' Connor Hughes		
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

This sessional service provides an Early Childhood Care and Education programme to children aged 2 to 6 years from 09:30-12:30. The service operates on a Monday to Friday basis.

The service is located in an adapted former national school in Multyfarnham, Co. Westmeath. The service consists of a large open plan playroom and an office. There is an outdoor play area at the back of the service.

Staffing

The designated person in charge and two staff members were present and working directly with the children on the 4 May 2023. All adults held a major award at Level 6 in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications. The registered provider does not work with children.

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 announced 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.

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
- (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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available in the service.

(b)

The designated person in charge was present for the duration of the inspection.

The designated person in charge stated that one new staff member was employed in the service since the last inspection on the 10 June 2021. The file of the new staff member was reviewed, and the following was noted;

(2)(a)(b)

One written reference was available from a past employer in respect of the new staff member.

(b)

One written reference was available from a source other than a past employer in respect of the new staff member.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the new staff member.

(d)

Police vetting was not required in respect of the new staff member as they had not lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(3)

The procedures in respect (2)(c) were carried out by the registered provider prior to the employment of the new staff member.

(4)

The new staff member held a major award at Level 5 and Level 6 in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

The written references available in respect of the new staff member were not validated prior to the new staff member commencing employment in the service.

(3)

The procedures in respect of (2)(a)(b) were not carried out by the registered provider prior to the employment of the new staff member.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(2)(a)(b)

Two references for a staff member have been validated and copies of these have been forwarded to the TUSLA Early Years Inspector.

All the required references have been obtained and validated.

(3) All references of staff will be completed prior to staff commencing in our services.

Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

Staff will no longer be employed without the appropriate references and validations completed. The recruitment policy states the references must be completed prior to commencing in our services.

(3) As above all references of staff will be completed prior to staff commencing in our services.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

Evidence submitted and reviewed by the Early Years Inspector met the Regulatory requirement.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was exceeded during the inspection.

(3)

There were twelve children attending the service supervised directly by the designated person and two staff members.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1)
The records of the fifteen children enrolled were inspected. Information relating to (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h) and (i) was available in respect of the children attending the service.

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;*
- (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

(1)

Written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16

(1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) and (k) were available and reviewed.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

Parental information was available in a handbook format. The designated person in charge stated the handbook was emailed to parents/ guardians prior to their child commencing in the service in respect of Regulation 16 (1)(a) to (g).

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

The designated person in charge presented a copy of the of Part V11A (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No.40 of 2013) of the Act and Regulations for inspection of (a)(b)(c).

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)

There was a calm and happy atmosphere as the children enjoyed free play in the colourful and bright pre-school room. Some children were engaged in sand play, water play, in the play farm and construction interest areas. Other children sat at low level tables enjoying painting, sticking and gluing stickers supported by the adults. Aprons were worn by children to protect their clothes. Adults encouraged children to participate in singing songs near the musical area. A cosy rest area was noted with a library located nearby. Children enjoyed moving freely from one play experience to the next. Children's artwork and displays included a detailed map of the world and a compost display.

Parents provided a healthy snack for lunch which consisted of sandwiches, crackers, fruit, yoghurts and pasta with water to drink. Delph plates were provided for children to eat their snack. Children were given plenty of time to enjoy their snack while talking to their peers.

Adults were positive towards children which was evident in their soft language tones, use of individual names and positive praise, hugs and cuddles given to children. Adults were familiar with each child and their personality. A child requiring extra support was attended to closely by the adults. Good teamwork was noted amongst adults.

Partnership with parents was evident in the following ways: updates are sent on a short messaging system (SMS), one to one telephone calls to parents as required, a parent handbook, the child's learning journal including artwork is shared with parents at the end of the pre-school term, a Christmas concert and an Easter fancy dress parade was held for parents.

Children were observed to enjoy the play experiences in the outdoor play area which consisted of a large, grassed area. Toys and equipment included a large climbing frame with two slides, water funnels, a mud kitchen, tyres and natural trees. A shed was available for the storage of toys and equipment.

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:

Entry to the service was secure to prevent unauthorised access and to ensure children's safety. Parents and visitors ring the doorbell for access to collect children. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks, after wiping their nose, after messy play and after toileting.

Children's snacks were stored correctly in the fridge in the pre-school room.

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. Staff were observed to use correct cleaning procedures to clean up a spillage in the pre-school room.

Warm running water, hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the pre-school room and in the sanitary accommodation. The temperature recorded was 35-41 degrees Celsius at the wash hand basins.

Foot operated pedal bins were available in pre-school room and in the sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Natural ventilation was noted through openable windows in the sanitary accommodation.

Administration of Medication:

No medication was given at the time of the inspection. Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature. A record book for the administration of medication was available for documentation as required. An emergency care plan was in place for a child with a defined medical condition.

Fire Safety:

Emergency exits were unobstructed. Children were observed to evacuate to the fire assembly point in the outdoor play area to the rear of the service supervised by adults during a fire drill conducted 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 designated person in charge and a staff member were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available in the premises. Both adults were certified to administer an auto adrenaline injector (AAI) for a child with a defined medical condition.

(2)(a)

The first aid box was available in accessible and conspicuous location in the service.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school 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)

A written record for the completed fire drills was available on the premises. A fire drill was undertaken on the day of the inspection.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The smoke alarms and the firefighting equipment were serviced in September 2022.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service and the expiry date noted as 27 March 2024.