

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WH079
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Name of Service:	Clonros
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Address of Service:	St. Hilda's Services, No 4 Coosan Park Road, Coosan, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
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Eircode:	N37 HR02
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sheila Buckley-Byrne
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	11/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	4	PM	4
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.
Inspection undertaken by:	K. Murphy
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

The service is registered as a part time service. The age range of children that can be enrolled in the service is 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates between the hours of 09:30 and 13:30 on a Monday to Friday basis. The Early Years' Service is located in an adapted two storey domestic dwelling. A classroom, a dining room, a playroom, and a kitchen are provided on the ground floor. An office, a therapy room and a sensory room are provided on the first floor. An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the service. The service is situated in a residential area in Coosan on the outskirts of the town of Athlone, County Westmeath.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work directly with the children. A designated person in charge and two other staff members were present during the inspection.

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 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 co-operation of the deputy person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

The inspector also wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the Human Resource Manager and the Operations Manager who were present for periods during 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.*

(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)

A named person to deputise was available in the service.

(b)

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

Four staff files were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)

The required number of written validated references were available from past employers in respect of the staff members.

(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from a source other than a past employer in respect of the staff members.

(c)
A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the staff members.
The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4)
The staff members working directly with children as part of the adult to child ratio held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications or an equivalent. Support staff held qualifications relevant to the service provision.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)
Police vetting was not available in respect of one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d)
Police vetting is now available in respect of one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months. (Police vetting included)
The human resource procedures for the service had been reviewed to take account of the requirement for international police vetting.

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective action taken documentary evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and deemed to meet 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.

(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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

Compliance Information

(1)

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

(2)

There were four children attending the session supervised directly by three adults.

(8)(a)

All three adults were rostered to be in the service during the hours of operation.

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)
In a review of the seven-child records 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)

The service kept and maintained 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).

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 person in charge ensured 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 was available for inspection by (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)

It was observed that the children were engaged and enjoyed play activities that included free play, story time, music and movement and circle time supported by the staff. A key person system was in operation in the service. The staff were positive towards the children and were familiar with each child, their personalities and their daily routines. The care for each child was based on an individual needs assessment to facilitate optimum development in the area of health, well-being, learning, self-care, and independence.

Staff provided one to one care to each child ensuring that their needs were promptly identified and attended to. Good teamwork between the staff members was observed. The children were encouraged to be independent, and their choices were supported.

The children had a mid-morning snack. A hot meal with water to drink was served at 12:30 and consisted of bacon or chicken, cabbage and carrots, mashed potatoes, and white sauce or gravy. The children's dietary needs and

preferences were provided for. During mealtimes staff sat at tables with the children promoting self-help skills and independence. Self-feeding was encouraged and facilitated with ceramic cups and plates in use. Self-toileting and nappy changing was facilitated on an individual need's basis. Each child was assisted with their self-care skills including hand washing, hair brushing and teeth brushing.

The children had access to the following four areas within the service. A classroom where one to one programmes were carried out with each individual child. A dining area where the children had their drinks and meals. A large playroom towards the rear of the service where children enjoyed playing with the imaginative play materials, equipment and enjoying a music and movement session. A range of therapeutic and developmentally appropriate play materials and equipment to stimulate each area of the child's development was available. All materials were organised in a manner to be appealing, visible and accessible to the children.

The service operated in partnership with parents and an exchange of information and an update on the child's day was provided as children were collected by their parents or guardians at the end of the session.

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 19 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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable play equipment was provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, tabletop activities, arts and crafts, sensory play and home corners.

(b)

A sensory room was available on the first floor which provided opportunities for the children to relax and rest.

(3)(a)

An outdoor area was available to the rear of the service consisting of an all-weather absorbent surface.

The area was equipped with a climb/slide unit and a stationary rocker with additional outdoor toys and resources available. A concrete wall secured the perimeter of the outdoor area.

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 main entrance door was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

A monthly equipment log was available for review. The log detailed any issues arising for action by the maintenance team for the service in respect of any damage, wear or faults observed.

The oil-fired central heating system was serviced in September 2023 and the electronic bed used for nappy changing was serviced in February 2024.

Infection Control:

Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. All toys and materials were easily cleanable.

Warm running water, liquid soap and hand towel dispensers were available in the sanitary accommodation.

Foot operated pedal bins were available in the pre-school room and in the sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste. Openable windows were provided in each activity area and sanitary accommodation.

Refrigeration facilities were available in the service for the storage of perishable food stuffs.

Administration of Medication:

A drug prescription and administration record was available in respect of the seven children enrolled in the service. Medication entries were co-signed by two staff members.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exit routes were unobstructed from the premises. A fire assembly point was noted to the front and side of the service. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) were in place for the seven children enrolled in the service. The staff present had completed fire safety awareness training. The fire safety policy had been signed by the staff present as part of a recently completed fire safety annual review of the service.

Outing:

Transport for the facilitation of outings was included in the risk assessment documentation for the service.

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)
One staff member was qualified in First Aid Response (FAR) and one staff member had completed training in basic first aid. The staff member who had completed training in basic first aid was present and available in the service.

(2)(a)
A first aid box was available in an accessible and conspicuous location in the service.

(b)
A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school service. Monthly checklists were in place to ensure adequate supplies of first aid equipment and materials.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

The person qualified in First Aid Response (FAR) was not available on the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- The person in charge is qualified in First Aid Response (FAR) and rostered to be on duty during the hours of operation for the service. (Roster included) (FAR certificate included)
 - The deputy designated person in charge has been enrolled on a First Aid Response (FAR) programme to provide a second FAR qualified staff member in the service. The training is due to commence on 21/05/2024 (Confirmation of training place included). The FAR certificate will be forwarded to the Inspectorate upon receipt.
 - Another staff member qualified in First Aid Response (FAR) is available to be called upon if the person in charge is on leave. (FAR certificate included).

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective action taken documentary evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

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 monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The most recent fire drill was recorded as taking place on 02 February 2024.
- (b)
- A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment was serviced in September 2023. The smoke alarms were serviced in January 2024.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the entrance hall and in the pre-school rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Children were supervised by staff during all play activities. One to one supervision and assistance was provided by a staff member to each staff children during nappy changing, the use of the toilet, handwashing, eating and drinking. Staff were observed to hand over each child to their parent/guardian at the end of the session.

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 03 July 2024.