

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015WW123

Name of Service: Valleymount Community Preschool

Address of Service: C/O St. Josephs National School, Valleymount, Co. Wicklow

Eircode: W91 NY66

Name of Registered Provider: Claire Reid, Yvonne Boud

Service type: Sessional

Date of Inspection: 12/06/2023

No of pre-school children: AM 10 PM N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Tusla Child and Family Agency,
First Floor Trinity Building,
IDA Business Park,
Southern Cross Road,
Bray, Co. Wicklow.

Inspection undertaken by: H. Bourke

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 community based sessional service was first established in 2009. The pre-school is run by a board of management and the registered provider does not work directly with the children. The service is located in the rural setting of Vallemount in Co. Wicklow. The pre-school operates from one room within a single storey building which is adjacent to the local national school. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between two years eight months and six years of age and operates a sessional ECCE service for 38 weeks of the year Monday to Friday from 09.15 am to 12.15 pm. The service no longer has a second afternoon sessional service and does not offer afterschool care. The pre-school has a large enclosed outdoor area that the children have access to on a daily basis.

Staffing

There are three adults employed in the service. Two adults were present and were working directly with the children on the day of 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 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 designated person in charge, other staff member 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)

There was a designated person in charge of the service and there was a named staff member who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The designated person in charge was on the premises at the time of arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)

Written references were available from past employers with respect of two staff members.

- (b)
- Written references from reputable sources were available for one staff member.
- (c)
- The required Garda vetting disclosure was available in respect of three staff members.
- (d)
- Police vetting was not required as no adult had lived outside the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.
- (4)
- Three members of staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (3)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were two adults employed and present with ten children on the day of inspection.
- (8)(c)
There were two adults on the premises at all times. The service is not operated single-handedly.

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;*
 - (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
 - (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(h)
There were details available of each child's attendance on a daily basis.
- (i)
There was a daily staff roster available for review.
- (3)
The above listed documentation was available for inspection by an authorised person.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The designated person in charge did not have the name, position, qualifications and experience of two employees available on the day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a)

Curriculum Vitae's have been received from two staff members and verified by the chairperson of the committee.

No preventive actions submitted.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(a)

Photographic evidence of the required documentation was submitted with the CAPA form.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance in relation to Regulation 16– Record in relation to pre-school service (1)(a) has been addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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-

(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(c)

The designated person in charge had a copy of the Act of the Regulations on the premises and the copy was available to an authorised person.

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 entrance door to the service was appropriately secured to prevent the pre-school children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.
- The cleaning agents were stored within a designated area out of the reach of the children.
- The outdoor play area, to the rear of the premises. The entire outdoor area was fenced in and gated to prevent a child gaining unsupervised access to a roadway or other source of danger.
- The outdoor area was suitable, safe and secure.

Infection Control:

- Cleaning schedule for the pre-school room was available and maintained.
- The pre-school room had access to a suitable sanitary area, with two toilets, two sinks, warm running water, liquid soap, paper towels and pedal operated lidded bins, for the safe disposal of used hand towels, by both adults and children.
- Hand sanitiser gel was available in the pre-school room and throughout the service.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snack time, after using the toilet and following outdoor play. Child friendly signs were located within the room to encourage adults and children alike to effectively wash their hands.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The designate person in charge ensured that all children attending the service were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The designated person in charge ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people had access to the service.

(b)

The designate person in charge had a record in writing, in the form of a visitors' book, of all such persons who accessed the service.

(4)

The designated person in charge was able to demonstrate that the visitors book was kept for a period of one year from the dates to which it related.

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)

A staff member trained in FAR first aid was present and immediately available to the children.

(2)(a)

The first aid box for children was stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school room.

(b)

At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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 evidence that regular fire drills haven taken place in the premises. The most recent fire drill took place on 15th of May 2023.

(2)(c)

These records were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, clearly displayed within the pre-school room.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

There was no in date documentation available to show the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b)

Fire extinguishers have been serviced and we have received an up-to-date certificate. A copy of the fire detection and alarm system servicing certificate was received from the school.

No preventive action was submitted.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(b)

Photographic evidence of service invoices for both fire equipment and smoke detection systems were submitted with the CAPA form.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances found in relation to Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures (1)(b) have been addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.