

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW208		
Name of Service:	Small Talk Playschool		
Address of Service:	Ballyknocken, Glenealy, Co. Wicklow		
Eircode:	A67 R768		
Name of Registered Provider:	Fiona Duffy		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	10/12/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	5	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 sessional service operates in a purpose-built premises adjacent to the registered provider's home which is in a rural setting of Glenealy in County Wicklow. There were five children present on the day of inspection. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09.30am and 12.30pm hours for 38 weeks of the year. The children presently attending are aged between two years and ten months and five years of age. The service has one care room and a sanitary area. An outdoor area is available to the children at the front of the building. A proportion of the area is fully covered, and rain proofed allowing the children to play outdoor in all weathers

Staffing

The registered provider was present working directly with the children. An additional adult is employed as an emergency person but was not present 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/ 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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the 11th of December 2024 in relation to regulation 25 First Aid, the registered provider did not have a current certificate in FAR first aid training. The registered provider responded on the 12th of December and this response was accepted by the inspector.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider 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

Following a discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed that the service is operated single handedly and that there is an emergency person, who is familiar with the running of the service, available if the need arises. The registered provider works in the service full time. The staff files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

The registered provider was present in the playschool and there was a named adult who was able to provide emergency cover as required.

(b)

The registered provider 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)(b)

Validated written references were available in respect of the registered provider and the emergency adult.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the registered provider and the emergency contact person. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(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)

Two adults 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 playschool.

(3)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained during the inspection. There was one adult present with five children.

(8)(c)
The registered provider was able to demonstrate that there was a second person familiar with the running of the service, available to take over the running of the playschool should the need arise.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the playschool service.

(3)(c)

The registered provider ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

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;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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.*

(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)(a)-(k)

The registered provider made sure that a record in writing was kept of the above information in relation to the service.

(3)

The registered provider ensured that these records were available for inspection 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 main door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspector to the service.
- All toys were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route from the playschool room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary area was in the playschool room. There was warm running water at 30°C, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- A foot pedal bin was available in the sanitary area and in the playschool room for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other waste matter.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.
- Hand washing by the registered provider and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and outdoor play.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for two adults; however, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Garda vetting has been applied for and staff files will be checked at the beginning of each year for vetting dates.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

No documentation supplied with CAPA

Summary Comment

The actions taken will address the non-compliance found in relation to Regulation 23 General safety and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that all children attending the playschool were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)
The registered provider ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people has access to the playschool.

(b)
The registered provider had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the playschool.

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

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place within the playschool.

(b)

The first aid box was available to the children attending the playschool at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

The registered provider did not have a current certificate in FAR first aid training, an immediate action notice was issued on the 11th of December and the registered provider responded on the 12th of December and this response was accepted.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)

FAR training has been booked and paid for. All staff files will have dates of FAR training highlighted and checked at the start of every year.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)

Confirmation of a booking for FAR training was submitted with the immediate action response.

Summary Comment

The above actions, when completed will address the non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 25 First Aid and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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 of regular fire drills haven taken place within the service. The last fire drill took place on the 12th of November 2024.

(b)

There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated March 2024.

(2)(c)

These records were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the playschool room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had adequate insurance for the playschool covering eleven children on a sessional basis and this policy expires on the 22nd of March 2025.