

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX007		
Name of Service:	Ard Aoibhinn Services		
Address of Service:	Ard Aoibhinn Centre, Belvedere Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford		
Eircode:	Y35 YR29		
Name of Registered Provider:	Gerard Heaney		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	04/07/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	6	PM 3
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspector, Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.		
Inspection undertaken by:	C. 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		

Description of service

Ard Aoibhinn Pre-School is part of the Ard Aoibhinn services. The pre-school service supports children with additional needs. The service implements a play-based curriculum and programme of care that is underpinned by individualised programs recommended for each child by the multi-disciplinary team members. The service is located within the Ard Aoibhinn services premises and consists of a large playroom, and toilet facilities suitable to meet the needs of children with extra requirements. The service has a designated outdoor play area directly off the playroom, with an all-weather surface to facilitate daily access for the children.

Staffing

There are four staff employed in the service. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. The service employs a manager who is the designated person in charge daily on the premises. All staff working directly with the children held the minimum of level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education or hold a nursing qualification.

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.

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 21 Equipment and materials,

Regulation 22 Food and Drink,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,
Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),
Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4) and
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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.*

(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)(b)(c)

On inspection there was a designated person in charge of the service. There was evidence that clear lines of management and staff supervision were in place.

The staff files for all staff working directly with children were reviewed on inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

There were validated references for all employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were on file for each staff member working in the service.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were not required as none of the staff had lived outside the state for more than six consecutive months.

(4)

Certificates of qualifications for all staff members working directly with the preschool children were available on file.

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)(2)

Throughout the period of the inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children attending the service.

During the morning there were six children being directly cared for by three staff. During the afternoon there were three children being directly cared for by three staff, ensuring there were adequate staff available to work with the children and to maintain staff/child ratios at all times.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The playroom was well equipped and furnished. The room layout changes daily to reflect the needs of the individual children attending. The service had sufficient toys, equipment and was well resourced. The staff set up the room to meet the individual needs of the ages and stages of the children using them. For example, children with sensory/tactile challenges were provided with a variety of toys and materials to support and stimulate this such as sand, water and playdough. Toys and equipment were added to support children who required more variety and stimulation such as the kitchen for social play and role play. The toys and materials were pared back or removed when needed to support children who required a calmer environment to reduce over stimulation.

The room had low-level shelving units which made play equipment such as the small world and puzzles, and bricks easily accessible to children. There were child sized tables and chairs in the rooms that were used for dining as well as tabletop activities.

The playroom was warm and bright with natural day light. The outdoor play area was accessible directly off the playroom. The use of visual cues and photographs were used throughout the room, with staff showing the inspector a programme that was developed to support children with speech development, communication and the daily routine.

The outdoor play area had an plenty of toys outside including slides, swings, a playhouse, footballs and bikes. The outdoor play area had an all-weather soft surface and was fully enclosed.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service promoted healthy eating and parents provided the snacks for their children. The food was stored in the fridge in the room. The snack time was relaxed, with children afforded plenty of time to eat their food and snacks. Parents supplied a variety of foods for their children including sandwiches, fruit, yogurts and cheese. The staff helped the children with hand washing before eating and sat with them at snack time, helping and chatting with the children.

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:

Children were dropped off and collected at their own designated entrance to the service. The entrance door to the playroom was secured and visitors to the centre were required to sign in on arrival. The outdoor area was fully enclosed and consisted of an all-weather soft surface.

Infection Control:

The playroom was clean and well maintained. There was warm water, liquid hand soap and hand towels available in the toilets. There was consistent good hand hygiene observed on the day, with children hands washed after toileting and before eating. Nappy changing practices observed on the day were in line with the services policy.

Administration of Medication:

The service had an administration of medication policy and medication was administered in line with the policy. The staff discussed the procedures in place and identified where medication was stored. Individual care plans for children were in place as needed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years. Garda vetting was available for all staff. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous 3 years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice EYI-RN12.3 renewal of Garda vetting. It is acknowledged that the registered provider has a history of compliance with this requirement and had plans in place to renew Garda vetting during the summer.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

All staff Garda vetting was renewed immediately. The service has an electronic system that identifies all staff Garda vetting renewal dates and when they will expire (3 years) and will ensure there are no longer delays going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of the renewed Garda vetting disclosures

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

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)
There were staff trained in FAR and first aid for children available to the children attending the preschool service.
- (2)(a)(b)
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

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)
Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill was carried out on the 25 June 2024.
- (1)(b)
A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm were serviced in April and June 2024.
- (4)
There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available to demonstrate that insurance was in place.