

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX102			
Name of Service:	Rathnure Educare Pre-school and Daycare			
Address of Service:	Monamolin, Rathnure, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford			
Eircode:	Y21 R673			
Name of Registered Provider:	Jean Hayden O'Leary			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	07/08/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	42	PM	30
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.			
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry			
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 full daycare service is located in a rural setting outside the village of Rathnure in county Wexford. The service is registered to provide a preschool service to children from 0 to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 08:30 and 17:00 hours. The premises is a detached single storey building consisting of four preschool rooms. There are toilets, nappy changing facilities, a kitchen, and dining room. The children have direct access to an outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

There are 12 staff employed in the service including the registered provider who also works directly with the children. There is a staff member employed exclusively to provide snacks and meals to the children in the dining room. There is also a person who is employed to carry out the maintenance of the service. All staff working directly with the preschool children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

The inspection focused on compliance based on the following regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment

Regulation 10 Policies and procedures

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 15 Record of a preschool child

Regulation 17 Information for parents

Regulation 20 Facilities for rest and play

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials

Regulation 22 Food and Drink

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child

Regulation 26 Fire Safety

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 registered provider, 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

(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)

The registered provider was the person in charge on the day of inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)
Following a discussion with the registered provider and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 12 staff employed in the service. All staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)(b)
There were 19 required validated references available on file.

(c)
There was evidence of Garda vetting available on file in the service for all 12 staff members. The service had demonstrated compliance with the early years inspectorate regulatory notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for all staff.

(d)
Police vetting was available on file for one staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)
All 11 staff working directly with the preschool children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(a)(b)

1.
There were two staff employed in the service who did not have any written and validated references available on file when two written and validated references were required for each staff member.
2.
There was one staff member with two written reference available on file which were not validated.
3.
There was one staff member with only one written and validated reference available on file when two are required.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All required written and validated references are now available on file in the service. The registered provider will ensure all required written and validated references are in place in the service prior to staff commencing work in the service in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of all required written and validated references were received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is adequate to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

There were policies and procedures in place in the service specified in Schedule 5 of these regulations. The policies reviewed for this inspection were the policy on the administration of medication and the policy on healthy eating in the service.

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)
There was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children at all times for the duration of the inspection.

(2)
During the morning, there were 42 children in the care of 10 staff members.
During the afternoon there were 30 children in the care of 6 staff members.

The registered provider was available in the service for the duration of the inspection and was available to assist in the rooms as required.

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

There was a registration form available in respect of each child enrolled in the service. A sample of 10 forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

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

The service provided parents with a parent handbook to include information regarding the service, curriculum, and policies. The parents handbook provided parents with an outline of the curriculum, the hours of operation, the funding schemes available, contact details and the facilities available within the service. It provided parents with information on the day-to-day requirements and running of the service.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1)(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

There were adequate and suitable facilities for children to sleep in the service. There was one sleep room situated beside the baby room. This room contained six full sized cots for the children to sleep in. The room was well ventilated with openable windows. There was a large comfortable armchair for a staff member to sit in while settling the babies in her care. There was individual linen provided for each child which was stored in the sleep room.

The children in the green bears room which cared for children from 2 to 3 years of age were settled to sleep on the afternoon of the inspection. Their floor beds were set up in their preschool room. A staff member was observed to stay with the children while they slept. The beds were adequately spaced, the children were provided with dimmed lighting to facilitate sleep, and individual linen was provided for them.

There were rest areas available in all preschool rooms. Of particular note was the rest area in the green bears room. This area consisted of a screened off area which contained soft cushions and picture books for the children to look at while they relaxed.

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

There were good quality child sized chairs and tables provided in all the preschool rooms. The highchairs in the dining room were moveable and allowed staff to place in a circle during mealtimes so the babies could look at each other and interact with staff during mealtimes. The baby room was well set up to cater for the play and stimulation of the children attending. For example, the outdoor area was directly accessed from the room allowing the children access all day when required. This area was sectioned off from the larger outdoor area. The babies could still watch the older children playing from their area.

The preschool rooms were well resourced with play equipment for the children. For example, the green bears room had been developed for the children to enjoy free play. There was a shop, a home corner, a construction area, a small hospital area and a well-resourced dress up area. It was evident the play equipment and materials in the room were well maintained and the children were encouraged to take care of the equipment by replacing their play equipment back in its allotted place when they had finished with it.

Of particular note in the service was the large outdoor area situated in a large courtyard in the service. This area was roofed so children had access to outdoor play even when it was raining. The space had a digging area covered with bark mulch for digging. There was a supply of ride on toys such as diggers, tractors and balance bikes for children to ride on.

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 provided all meals in the service from the onsite kitchen. There is a chef employed to prepare all snacks and meals in the service. There is an outside catering company who supplied the hot meals to the service. Snacks are provided by parents and stored in the fridge in the service. All meals and snacks are provided from the dining room in the service. This room allows the children to sit with their friends outside their rooms and chat with the children from the other rooms.

Staff who spoke to the inspector said this room also allows siblings in the service to see each other while attending the service. Platters of freshly prepared fruit are also prepared by the chef in the service. A meal consisting of beef meatballs pasta in a tomato sauce was served to the children at midday. Babies were observed enjoying their dinner at midday. Hydration for the children was encouraged across all the preschool rooms.

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:

Access to the service was gained through the door which was locked on arrival. There was an intercom system in place to verify who was visiting the service.

Infection Control

There was an infection control policy in the service. Staff who spoke to the inspector were aware of this policy and the measures to prevent cross infection included in the document. Nappy changing procedures observed on the day were in line with the services nappy changing policy. The nappy changing policy was on display in both nappy changing areas. The service was clean with no obvious maintenance required. There was warm running water to support hand washing, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand drying throughout the service.

Children were observed washing their hands before meals and after messy play. Staff were observed supervising the younger children who were settling in being taught to wash their hands.

The service was clean with daily and weekly cleaning schedules maintained. Staff who spoke to the inspector were clear on the infection control measures in place in the service. For example, all tables were cleaned after children had eaten their dinner and before the next group of children came in to the dining room in the service.

Safe Sleep

The service had one designated sleep room. Individual bed linen was available, which was laundered as needed and stored in named cubby holes for the children. Staff who spoke with the inspector were aware of safe sleep practices for example, how often a sleeping child is physically checked, recording of the observations such as colour, position and breathing rate and the optimum sleep room temperature. The staff were observed remaining in the room with the children until they settled to sleep. Staff stayed with the children in the toddler room/green bears while they slept. Sleep checks were carried out every 10 minutes as per the service policy on safe sleep.

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)

There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill had taken place in the service in June 2024.

(b) There was a record available on file stating the firefighting equipment was last serviced in June 2024, and the smoke alarm in April 2024

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured for the children who were present on the day of inspection.