

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX118		
Name of Service:	Teach Spraioi Community Preschool		
Address of Service:	Teach Spraioi Community Childcare, Coolateggart, Taghmon, Co. Wexford		
Eircode:	Y35 HR66		
Name of Registered Provider:	John Waters, Teresa Waters		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	07/09/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	47	PM 8
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
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Description of service

This full day care service is located in the village of Taghmon, Co Wexford. A service is provided to children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 9.00 am and 6.00 pm (including a sessional service from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm for 38 weeks of the year). A registered school age service is also provided. The premises is a two-storey purpose built early years facility. The service consists of four early years rooms, sticky fingers, muddy boots, happy handprints, and jumping beans. There are toilets, nappy changing facilities, and a hallway in the service. The children have access to large outdoor play areas to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The service employed a total of 18 staff, including the manager, a chef and a maintenance person. Certificates of qualification were available for all staff members working directly with the preschool children.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

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

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),
Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child (1) (a)(b),
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).
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.

(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 manager was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 18 staff employed in the service, including the manager. All 18 files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)

There were 31 written and validated references available on file from past employers.

- (b)
There were 5 written and validated references available on file from reputable sources.
- (c)
There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for all 18 staff members.
- (d)
Police vetting was not required as no staff member had worked in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4)
All staff working directly with the early years children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 at all times an adequate number of staff working directly with the early years children.
- (2)
At 10.30 am there were 47 children aged from 2 to 6 years in the care of 11 staff.
At 1.00 pm there were 18 children aged from 2 to 6 years in the care of 5 staff.
At 3.30 pm there were 7 children in the care of 2 staff.
- The manager was also available for the duration of the inspection and was available to assist across the rooms as required. The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times for the duration of the inspection.

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The manager ensured that each child's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of appropriate activities during the inspection including playing together in the outdoor areas, doing tabletop activities, and having stories read to them in the rest area by the staff who were caring for them.

Children were observed enjoying free play in the outdoor area on the morning of inspection. Staff facilitated children to enjoy water play. Large containers which were at the children's waist level were filled with water for the children to play with. Children were given aprons to protect their clothes. It was a particularly warm day and staff who spoke to the children said this activity was planned to keep the children cool.

The children in the sticky fingers room were observed by the inspector. These children were aged from 2 to 3 years of age. Many of the children were new to the service and were settling in. The staff in the room were observed to be attentive to the children in their care. Staff demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. They communicated with the children using soft and gentle tones and promptly comforting children when they became upset. One child was held in the arms of a staff member for a considerable amount of time. The child was observed to become calm in the arms of the staff member. Staff who spoke to the inspector said they were assigned to the same rooms to provide continuity for the children attending the service.

The play equipment in the service was well organised and easily accessible to the children.

The inspector observed that all the early years rooms were developed with care and attention, for example the sticky fingers room had a cosy rest area which the children were observed to relax in while they had stories read to them by the staff. The areas of interest in jumping beans were well developed and resourced with toys and equipment suitable to the ages and stages of the children attending. For example, there was a home corner and a dress up area for the play and stimulation of the children.

All the early years rooms had direct access to their own outdoor areas. Staff who spoke to the inspector said this enabled the children to always have free access to outdoor play when attending the service. The areas were covered in artificial grass which was comfortable and practical for the children. The children also had access to a large playing field, which had a jungle gym, climbing frame, swings, slides, picnic benches, and goal posts. To the side of this large field there was a natural garden. This garden was enclosed by a wooden fence. The ground was covered in bark mulch. There were diggers and ride on toys for the children to play with.

During activities staff used opportunities to extend children's learning and development. Staff were observed playing with the children in the outdoor area. Staff were observed to be constantly engaged with the children in their care, singing and talking to the children, helping them to share with their friends and enjoy their free play time.

1(b)

The manager had ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently and were encouraged to wash their hands afterwards. Care was given to children's appearance. For example, children who got their clothes wet while playing with the water games in the outdoor area were changed promptly when they came back inside. The children's hands in the jumping beans room were washed before eating at snack time at 11.15am.

Children were well supervised in the outdoor area to the side of the service. It was a particularly hot day. Children who did not have sunhats were provided with them by the service. Staff who spoke to the inspector said parents were asked to apply sunblock to the children before they came into the service in the morning. Children also had labelled tubes of sun block which staff applied later during the day if required.

A hot meal was given to all the children who were attending the service on a full day care basis. This meal was provided by parent and heated up in the microwave in the service. The children's parents provided snacks which the children enjoyed on the morning of the inspection. At 3.30 pm children were given apples which were sliced and served on plates. The children had picked these themselves from a tree in the outdoor area. This encouraged and supported healthy eating habits. Water was offered with food and was always available to the children in the rooms. The children's nappies were changed regularly, and staff interacted attentively 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

The manager had taken the following steps to ensure the safety of the children attending the service.

General safety:

Access to the service was gained through the front door directly beside the office. There was a call bell system in place where parents rang the bell to gain access to the service. Staff could see who was seeking to gain access to the service through the glass door. The outdoor play areas were safe, suitable and secure.

Infection control:

The service appeared to be clean on the day of inspection. Staff who spoke to the inspector were clear in their understanding of the importance of infection control in the service. For example, there was a system in place in the sticky fingers room for the regular cleaning and disinfecting of the mouthable toys in the room. Cleaning templates were available throughout the service to document the regular cleaning of the early years rooms and toilet areas. There were large fridges available in each of the rooms to store perishable food provided by parents for the children.

All sinks for hand washing in the service were equipped with warm thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap, and foot operated pedal bins. The temperature of the hot water flowing from the wash hand basin in the toilets beside the muddy puddles room was recorded at 34°C on the day of inspection.

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 was a person trained in first aid for children immediately available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises which was available to the children attending the early years service

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 template in place in the service to record any fire drill that takes place in the service. The last fire drill carried out in the service was recorded in September 2023.

(b)

There was a record available on file stating the firefighting equipment was last serviced in March 2023. The smoke alarm was last serviced in July 2023.

(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 insured to provide full day care for 70 children.