

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX120
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	The Children's Learning Garden
-------------------------	--------------------------------

Address of Service:	Summerhill, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
----------------------------	--------------------------------------

Eircode:	Y21 V4D7
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Diarmuid Furlong
-------------------------------------	------------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	21/05/2024
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	12
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

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

The Children’s Learning Garden is a privately operated preschool service. It offers a Montessori and play based sessional service to children aged 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates from 9am to 12pm and 12.30pm to 3.30pm Monday to Friday and can accommodate up to 38 children. The aim of the service “to provide the stimulation and security that your young child needs. We are committed to the best interests of your child, promoting and respecting their rights as our future generation.”

Staffing

The service employs five staff who work directly with the children. The registered provider is the designated person in charge who assists across the service. The staff working directly with the pre-school children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at the minimum Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework. There is also an in case of emergency person available to the service in the event of an emergency.

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 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and Recruitment,
Regulation 11 (1)(2) Staffing levels,
Regulation 21 Equipment and materials,
Regulation 22 Food and drink,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,
Regulation 25 First aid,
Regulation 26 Fire Safety 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 registered provider, 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

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

On the day of the inspection there was a designated person in charge of the service. The registered provider was available to assist as needed. The staff files for all five staff working directly with children were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a)(b)

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

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were available on file for the staff who 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 children ensuring that the correct adult to child ratios were maintained at all times. During the morning there were 25 children being directly cared for by 3 staff between the 2 rooms. In the afternoon there were 12 children being cared for by 3 staff. The registered provider was also present to assist as required.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(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)(a)(b)

The two playrooms were well equipped and furnished with a variety of furniture, toys and materials. There were child sized tables and chairs suitable for tabletop activities and snack time. There was sufficient space for children and staff to move around and enjoy various activities and play. Open shelving units allowed children to freely access what they wanted to choose to play with. There were sufficient variety including manipulative play materials, fine motor skills and life skill materials.

The outdoor play area was large and divided into two areas, which were developed and resourced for the children using them. The rooms had direct access to the outdoor area and garden. Outdoor equipment included items such as a covered area, a mud kitchen, playhouse, seating, ride on toys and sand pits.

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 service consisted of two interconnected rooms. Both playrooms were well equipped and furnished with a variety of furniture, toys and materials. There were child sized tables and chairs suitable for tabletop activities Montessori work and snack time. There was sufficient space for children and staff to move around and enjoy circle time. There were open low-level shelves available where children could freely access toys and materials of their choice. The staff set up tables with different activities during the morning including a table for gluing and sticking their artwork and another table to develop pencil skills. The children and staff were engaged in play and chat throughout the morning.

There was a sufficient variety including manipulative play materials, fine motor skills and life skill materials. A painting station was set up, dress up material was available and both rooms had large fish tanks, where the children took turns to feed the fish. Other toys and materials included a kitchen/home corner, reading material, a shop, a rest area, bricks, cars, a chalkboard, Montessori material, puzzles and jigsaws. Around the room there was photographs from the local community, birthdays, photographs from the farm and their daily routine.

Outdoor equipment included items such as the mud kitchen, playhouse, seating, balance beams, ride on toys and a sand pit. There was a variety of surfaces such as lawn and concrete areas. The concreted area was covered, and tables were set up with small world and painting materials for 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:

The entrance to the premises was secured. The outdoor play areas were fully enclosed and secured to the rear of the premises. Cleaning products were stored out of reach from the children.

Infection Control:

The playrooms were 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.

Administration of Medication:

The service had a medication policy and staff were able to demonstrate to the inspector how medication administration was managed in the service in line with the service policy on administration of medication. Health care plans were in place in collaboration with parents for children requiring medication/support while attending the service.

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 three years. Garda vetting was available for five staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to 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 and update staff training during the summer.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

General Safety:

Corrective & Preventive Action:

The registered provider submitted the following response:

All 5 staff applied for new Garda vetting on the evening of the inspection. I will ensure it is completed every 3 years going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Garda vetting for all 5 staff renewed and submitted to the office of the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The registered provider response was satisfactory to meet the requirements of the registration.

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 17 May 2024.

(1)(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm were serviced in September 2023 and January 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.