

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016CE003			
Name of Service:	Lissycasey Laugh and Learn			
Address of Service:	Ennis Road, Lissycasey, Ennis , Co. Clare			
Eircode:	V95 PT86			
Name of Registered Provider:	Ger Kelly			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection Day 1:	16/01/2024			
Date of Inspection Day 2:	17/01/2024			
No of pre-school children Day 1:	AM	67	PM	61
No of pre-school children Day 2:	AM	68	PM	64
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E			
Inspection undertaken by:	A.McCarthy			
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

Lissycasey Laugh and Learn is a community based childcare facility that was established in 2016. The service caters for children ranging in age from six months to six years attending on a full day, part-time or sessional basis. Care and learning is facilitated Monday to Friday from 07:00 to 18:00.

The building is a purpose built two storey childcare facility. There are four care rooms on the ground floor and one care room on the first floor. A sixth care room is located in a separate building at the rear of the premises. The care room on the first floor is used to facilitate care for pre-school children in the morning and school aged children in the afternoon. A kitchen and dining room are located on the ground floor. A dedicated sleep room, sanitary areas for adults and children, a nappy changing area, and an office are also provided. Four outdoor play areas are located to the front, rear and side of the premises.

Staffing

On the 16th of January 2024 fifteen adults worked directly with sixty-seven children in the morning and sixty-one children in the afternoon. On the 17th of January 2024 fifteen adults cared for sixty-eight children in the morning and sixty-four children in the afternoon. On both days of inspection, the manager provided an administrative role and provided relief during staff breaks. Two auxiliary staff were present to prepare and cook the food and clean the service. The registered provider is part of the board of management and does not work in the service.

The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications ranging from level 5 to 8. The recruitment files demonstrated records of the employee's engagement in continuous professional development.

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 and safety. 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. 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 days 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)

The manager was the designated person in charge and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The manager and the deputy were available on both days of inspection.

(2)

Twenty-six files were available and reviewed by the inspector. The findings included the following:

(a)

Forty written and verified past employer references were available.

- (b)
Twelve written and verified reference were obtained from a source other than a past employer.
- (c)
Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the twenty-six adults working in the service.
- (d)
International police vetting was available for three adults who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months.
- (4)
The adults working directly with the children held qualification ranging from level 5 to 8 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.*
- (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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

Compliance Information

- (1)
On both days of inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.

(2)

On the 16th of January 2024 fifteen adults worked directly with sixty-seven children in the morning and sixty-one children in the afternoon. On the 17th of January 2024 fifteen adults cared for sixty-eight children and sixty-four children in attendance in the afternoon.

(8)(a)

The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available in the service at all times.

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-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
The service held records for the eighty-six children enrolled in the service. The records included the required particulars outlined from (a) to (i).
- (3)(a)(b)(c)
The children’s registration forms were available for review by the inspector in the service.
- (4)
The manager confirmed that the records referred to in paragraph (1) are retained for a period of two years after the children cease to attend the service.

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*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs of Children:

The inspector observed the children’s learning, development, and well-being to be supported by the members of staff. The staff treated the children with positive regard this was observed by the staff conversing with the children at their level in a respectful manner, listening attentively during interactions and responding promptly to their cues for assistance. The staff used positive behavioural strategies offering continuous praise and encouragement. The staff held and comforted the babies during feeding periods and sat next to the children during mealtimes and play periods.

The children were encouraged to be independent while caring for their personal belongings, using the toilet, during mealtime and participation in tasks. The children’s sleep needs were responded to appropriately and children who did not wish to sleep were provided with an alternative room to play and learn in. The infant’s nappies were changed on a regular basis and the staff carried out these procedures in a sensitive manner.

The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their age level of development. Open ended play-based activities predominated for the duration of inspection. The children freely moved and chose their activities in the spacious indoor and outdoor environment. The adults and children sat together during mealtime and conversed amicably. Mealtimes were observed to be a relaxed, unhurried, and sociable occasion. Appropriate crockery and utensils were provided during snack and mealtime. The parents supplied the children's snacks, and the service provided a nutritious dinner on both days. A four-week menu plan was displayed at the entrance to the service. Water was freely accessible to the children throughout the day.

Physical and Material Environment:

The six care rooms were colourful, bright, spacious and the equipment in all the rooms was located on low level shelving which were easily accessible to the children. A large range of challenging and developmentally appropriate play materials and equipment were available in each room to support gross motor, fine motor, cognitive and language development. Each room was individually designed by the staff with defined areas of interest and developmentally challenging supporting materials and equipment. The walls of the rooms displayed numerical, alphabetical and literacy aids, a family area, children's birthday displays and the children's creations. The children chose their individual activities and had the freedom to move around the rooms and freely access their chosen toys and play materials and equipment. Individual learning journals were available captured the children's learning and creative work since commencing in the service.

On both days of inspection, the children played in the outdoor area. The outdoor environment was located at the front, rear and side of the building. The sectioned outdoor areas had all-weather surfaces and were enclosed by high fencing, concrete walls and lockable gates. Each area was appropriately resourced for the age range and developmental needs of the children in attendance. The play resources were predominately wooden and included picnic tables, kitchens, a miniature bus, a selection of construction play equipment and playhouses. The children enjoyed playing football, chasing games, hopscotch, playing with tractors, tricycles, bicycles, scooters, and ride on vehicles. A shaded sheltered area was available to allow children play outdoors in all weather conditions. A shed was available to store the children's equipment and play materials.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

An informal communication approach was observed during interactions between staff and the children's parents. Parents conversed with staff during the children's arrival and departure from the service. The children's daily activities and observations were shared with parents on the service's electronic application device. The staff facilitated the programme of care and learning in a cohesive manner in each room. The members of staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the children's individual preferences, capabilities, and personal interests. The children were consulted in advance of the changes in the programme of care and learning. Each child was supported in individual and group play. A consultative programme is available to support the children to transition to the local primary school.

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:

- A ked coded, bell operated system was in place at the entrance door to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the premises.
- The outdoor areas were secured with high fencing and gates to protect the children within.
- All the children were signed in on arrival and signed out on departure from the service on the service's electronic application device.
- Medication and cleaning agents were stored in a secured area out of reach of the children.
- The blind cords were appropriately secured throughout the service.
- The highchairs were maintained in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.

Infection Control:

- The indoor and outdoor environment was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined pedal operated bins. Child friendly handwashing posters were located above the wash handbasins as prompters to promote good handwashing practices.

- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, toileting and before mealtime.
- The nappy changing procedures were completed in an adequate manner in accordance with the service's infection control procedure.
- The children's perishable food items and infant formula were placed in fridges in each care room.
- An appropriate method was available to sterilise the infant's soothers. The soothers were stored in individually labelled containers.
- The children were provided with individual containers for their bedlinen and personal care items.

Administration of Medication:

- The manager and staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the service's medication administration policy.
- An electronic recording system is in place for administering prescription and non-prescription medication.
- An individual care plan was available for children who required the use of autoinjectors in emergency situations.

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep room accommodated six standard cots for the babies to sleep. Low level beds and mattresses were available for children to sleep in the care rooms and areas with soft furnishings were provided in each care room.
- The sleep room and care room temperatures were maintained between 16-20 degrees Celsius on both days of inspection. A thermometer was available in the sleep room and care rooms to measure and monitor the room temperatures.
- Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the service's safe sleep policy. The children's sleep observations were recorded by staff every ten minutes on the service's electronic application device. These observations included the children's colour, position and breathing.

Fire Safety:

- The staff had records of up-to-date fire safety training.
- The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The fire exits routes and fire assembly points were readily identified with signage.
- The service demonstrated evidence of completing monthly fire drills to prepare the service to effectively respond in the event of fire.

Outing:

- An outing was not conducted on the day of inspection. An outings policy was available to inform practice.

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)

Four staff had a record of up to date First Aid Response training and all other staff held up to date records of paediatric first aid training.

(2)(a)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored in accessible positions throughout the service.

(b)

First aid boxes were available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

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)

Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out in the service. The last fire drill took place on the 20th of December 2023.

(b)

Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system took place respectively in December 2023 and September 2023.

(4)

A fire action notice was available demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for 105 children attending the service on a full day care basis. The policy is valid until the 27th of March 2024.