

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016LK001		
Name of Service:	Kilcornan Preschool		
Address of Service:	Dromlohan Kilcornan Co. Limerick		
Eircode:	V94DY8X		
Name of Registered Provider:	Brid Nealon		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	11/09/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM 4
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2nd floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick		
Inspection undertaken by:	J 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

This is a private preschool school which opened in September 2016. The service provides sessional care and education to preschool children aged 2.5 years to 5 years of age. The service operates two sessions from 08.45hrs - 11.45hrs and from 11.55hrs – 02.55hrs for 38 weeks a year. The setting caters for a maximum of 22 children between both sessions. The curriculum is play based being outdoors full time and incorporating Aistear the National Curriculum Framework document. It is located at a domestic dwelling in a rural area. The service has two outdoor play areas located at the entrance to the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge and has completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 7. The second member of staff working in the service has a level 6 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,15,19,25,26 and 28.

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, second staff member 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) The registered provider was the person in charge and a named person to deputise as required was available.

(b) The designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived.

(2)(a) Two written references from past employers were available for both staff members. The manager of the service had validated all references that were on file.

(b) Written and verified references from reputable sources were not required as staff had references from previous employers

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for both staff members and were dated within the previous 3 years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) Both staff working directly with the children attending the service held awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 6 and 7 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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were 11 pre-school children aged 2.5 years – 5 years being supervised by 2 staff in the morning session and there were 4 pre-school children aged 2.5 years – 5 years being supervised by 2 staff in the afternoon session.

The adult/child ratio on the day of the inspection was greater than the minimum requirements of 1:11.

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

(1) A sample of 4 records for preschool children were examined and each record contained the required information from (1) (a) – (i).

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:

Children were observed to eat their lunches outdoors where they sat together around the tables outside and were given as much time as they needed to eat their food. Packed lunches were in line with the healthy eating policy of the service. Food observed on the day of the inspection included: sandwiches, a selection of fruit and drinks of water.

Children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after toileting and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water and liquid antibacterial soap. Children toileted independently with assistance given to those who needed it.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement outside and played outdoors all the time for both sessions. The pre-school room was available should children choose to play indoors however this is not the norm. There was a plentiful supply of play props available to support sensorial play.

The children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level of choice of activities. Staff modelled positive behaviour for the children and the children were praised for their good behaviour. Children were observed to lead their own play and choose different play activities. Learning journals/scrap books for each child with photographic evidence of activities completed were available for parent's information.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

A large boat had been installed in the front lawn and had been filled with sand. It contained buckets, shovels and toys for the children to explore and have messy play activities. Children arrived at the service each morning wearing their wet gear, coats, caps and wellingtons. Wool lined heavier overalls were available for the colder weather.

A range of play areas had been developed outside which included the following: kitchen area - with pots, pans, ladles, whisks, woks, teapots and jugs. Tabletop area – with books, clicks, jigsaws, blocks. Soft seating area with

child sized couches. A tepee with cuddly toys. Gymnastic bars, jungle gym, goal posts with footballs. There were 3 sheltered/roofed areas and all outdoor play equipment was covered at night-time with tarpaulin plastic covers. The playroom was equipped with open shelving units where children could access play equipment and materials independently. Play spaces, such as the library area, home corner, construction area, small world area, arts, crafts area, tabletop activities area and sand play activities were available. Each of the areas was well resourced with toys and accessories including sensory and natural materials. Children were observed to choose play materials, complete an activity independently. Soft seating was available outside where children could rest/ relax in and have some quiet time if they choose to opt out of an activity. Good supplies of books were available inside and outside in the roofed shed which helped support language development.

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) One staff member held current certification in first aid for children.

(2)(a) A first aid box was stored in the playroom.

(b)The first aid box was available at all times if required by a child

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 fire fighting 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) The fire drills were practiced on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill took place in June 2024.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual basis, most recently in December 2023 and a record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment. The smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in September 2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was available to cover the number of children who attended and had an expiry date of 27/03/2025.