

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016LK012
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Name of Service:	Ballyhahill Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Ballyhahill National School, Ballyhahill, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 VK23
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sharon Griffin
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Service type:	Part time and sessional
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Day 1 of Inspection:	09/10/2024
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Day 2 of Inspection:	10/10/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	4
Day 2	AM	8	PM	5

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate , Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
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Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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 service provides part time care and sessional care to children aged 2 – 6 years including the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) from 09:00 to 14:00 – hours, Monday – Friday.

The service is operated from a designated room in the National school located in the village of Ballyhahill, Co Limerick.

The children have access to a playroom, sanitary facilities, a sensory room, and outdoor areas such as the school yard, the sports field and a designated enclosed play area for the preschool children only.

Staffing

The registered provider and one staff member work in the service each day. An additional adult is available to work 3 days each week. All the adults working in the service have completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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, and 24, however, on inspection additional non-compliances which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23 and 25. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

Additional Information

10th October 2024

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 10th of October as the 2 staff members present in the service on the 9th of October did not have the First Aid response training.

11th October 2024

The registered provider has stated in her response that the deputy person in charge was booked in for First Aid response training to commence in December 2024.

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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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) On day 1 the named deputy was present with 1 staff member and on day 2 the registered provider and the deputy were present in the service.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of the registered provider and the staff members working in the service.

(2)(a) and (b)

Two written references from past employer and other sources were available for the registered provider and the two staff members. The registered provider of the service had validated all references that were on file.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and the 2 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) The registered provider and the staff working directly with the children attending the service held awards in Early Childhood Care and Education ranging from Levels 5 to 8 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) On day 1 of the inspection there were 8 pre-school children aged 2.5 years – 5 years being supervised and cared for by the deputy person in charge and 1 adult for the am session. In the afternoon 2 adults with 3 children were present in the afternoon.

On day 2 the registered provider and the deputy person were present in the morning session with 8 preschool children. In the afternoon there were 2 adults present with 5 preschool children.

The adult child ratio was correct in the premises on both days of the inspection

(2) The registered provider has ensured that the minimum adult child ratio was maintained at the service. The adult/child ratio on the days of the inspection was greater than the minimum requirements of 1:11 for the sessional service and 1:8 for the part time service.

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) The records for the 9 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:

The healthy eating policy for the service detailed the requirements for parents to supply healthy snacks for their children. The staff sat at the tables with the children and supervised them at all times. Drinking water was available throughout the session if a child needed a drink. The children were given as much time as they needed to eat their food and have their drinks.

Children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after toileting and before eating. Children toileted independently with assistance given to those who needed it.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the setting. Children were observed to lead their own play and choose different play/learning activities. Staff modelled positive behaviour for the children and the children were encouraged and supported throughout the session by the staff. The staff interactions with the children were positive and caring and the atmosphere within the setting was calm and unhurried.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The physical and material environment of the service was organised to ensure each child's learning was facilitated. The playroom had a home corner equipped with a play kitchen, an imagination play area with dolls houses, a rest /relaxation reading corner with soft furnishings located next to a book stand, an art/craft area with lots of paper and painting materials. Language, literacy skills and development of speech and vocabulary were fostered using stories, and conversation. Low level tables and chairs were used for dining at break time and for many tabletop activities at all other times.

Children had access to a variety of materials and equipment which were rotated to suit the changing abilities and emerging interests of the children, and the changing curriculums plans throughout the year. All the play materials and equipment were organised to be visible and easily accessible to the children on open shelving.

Children have daily access to the outdoor areas, the school yard for the ball games and the ride on bikes and tractors: the sport field for exploration and to collect leaves and twigs for the nature table: the enclosed outdoor space with the large open sand pit and the supporting play equipment such as buckets, shovels, spades for their imaginative play and extended learning. The children have the opportunity to be outdoors in most weather conditions. On days of inspection the children were observed in the school yard on their trucks and bikes and on day 2 all were appropriately dressed in their warm outdoor clothing and wellies busy at work in the large sand pit with buckets, spades, pipes and other building materials.

The children appeared content and happy in their environment.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. There was no hot water in the bathroom facilities for the children and adults and at the wash hand basin in the playroom for effective handwashing. This increased the risk of cross infection.
2. A hand operated bin was in place instead of the pedal operated bin in the bathroom facility for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action: The registered provider has stated in the response that:

Infection Control:

1. This issue has not now been corrected and hot water is available at the wash hand basins in the children's bathroom and the playroom.
2. A pedal operated bin is in the main bathroom instead of the hand operated bin.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Confirmation from school management that the hot water issue has been addressed.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement of regulation 23 Infection control points 1 and 2.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

- (i) pre-school child attending the service,*
- (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*
- (iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and
(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

Compliance Information

(1) All adults dropping children to the service checked the child in with the person in charge of the service. At home time children were checked out of the service in a similar manner. The staff documented the children's arrival time and their departure time each day.

(3)(a) The service ensured that only children attending, the person who drops and collects and the employee's gain access to the premises.

(b) All visitors to the service must be signed in and signed out by the person in charge.

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) On day 2 of inspection a person trained in First Aid Responder was present in the service.

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

(b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and available to the children attending the service if required.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) On day 1 of inspection, the 2 staff member present with 8 preschool children had no training in first aid for children or First aid responder training.

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 10th of October as the 2 staff members present in the service on the 9th of October did not have the First Aid response training. The registered provider has stated in her response that the deputy person in charge was booked in for First Aid response training to commence in December 2024.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The registered provider has stated in the response that:

(1) The staff are due to commence the First Aid response training on the new date which is the 21st of November for 3 days.

The registered provider is present in the service each day.

The registered provider will ensure that the First Aid response training will be renewed within the appropriate time frame.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Confirmation of the new date was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement of regulation 25 First Aid point (1).