

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2017CC500 |
|--------------------------|-------------|

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Name of Service: | Teach Na Leanaí |
|-------------------------|-----------------|

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Address of Service: | Gael Scoil De Híde Dun Eala Duntahane Fermoy Cork |
|----------------------------|---|

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Eircode: | P61 PF63 |
|-----------------|----------|

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Name of Registered Provider: | Lisa Doran |
|-------------------------------------|------------|

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

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Date of Inspection: | 06/11/2023 |
|----------------------------|------------|

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 39 | PM | 10 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

| | |
|---|--|
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | 134 Bank Place, Mallow, Cork. P51 EC59 |
| Inspection undertaken by: | E. Friel |
| 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 | N/A |
|---------------------------------|-----|

Description of service

Teach Na Leanaí is a private sessional service in operation since 2017. It is registered to accommodate children aged from 2 to 6 years of age, currently children attend aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years of age. The Early Childhood Care and Education (Scheme) is facilitated in both the morning session, which operates from 8.45 am until 11.45 am, and in the afternoon session, from 12.15 pm to 15:15 pm. The service is open Monday to Friday, term time only.

The service, which has its own entrance, currently operates from three classrooms namely; Rooms One, Two, and Three situated on the ground floor of Gaelscoil de Híde, which is in the urban area of Duntahane on the outskirts of Fermoy town in North Cork. Each of the three large classrooms are fitted with two children's toilets and the combined adult and child nappy changing area is located opposite Room Three in the main corridor. The children have access to five shared outdoor areas including three playgrounds adjacent to the classrooms, one large astroturf and two basketball courts in one area at the back of the service. A large car park is available at the front of the service.

Staffing

There were five staff members including the registered provider and an AIM Support Worker working directly with the children on the day of inspection. In addition, a student was on work placement and a relief staff member was on file in the event of staff absence.

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. 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, both deputies, 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*
- (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.

(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 designated person on the day of inspection was the registered provider and two deputies were available as named persons.
- (b) The staff roster indicated that either the designated person or one of the deputies was available at all times, while the pre-school children were present.
- (c) There was a clear management structure available on the notice board in the service.
- (2) Recruitment records for all seven adults were reviewed:
- (a) (b) There were eight validated references from past employers and six validated references from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available for all seven adults.
- (d) There were three international police disclosures for two staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for a period of six consecutive months or longer as adults.
- (4) There was evidence that five of the seven adults who required childcare qualifications all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications. A sixth adult had a Letter of Eligibility to Practice from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The student on work placement did not require a childcare qualification.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) At all times during the period of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(3) Staff attendance records and staff rosters indicated that the adult/child ratios were met.

Room 1 (2 years 8 months to 5 years)

There were twenty sessional children in attendance with two staff and one student in the morning. In the afternoon there were ten children in attendance with two staff members and one student.

Room 2 (2 years 8 months to 3 years 6 months)

There were nine children in attendance in the morning session with two adults.

Room 3 (2 years 8 months to 5 years)

There were ten children in attendance in the morning session with one adult.

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-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of fifteen pre-school children's records were reviewed, each were found to contain the particulars

- (a) to (i) above.

(3) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection on the premises by the inspector.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the registered provider, deputies and of every employee including students was kept in the staff recruitment files.
 - (b) Details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide were available on the Tusla Registration Certificate displayed in Room 1.
 - (c) The details of the adult child ratios were kept in the attendance books and staff rosters available in each room.
 - (d) (e) (f) The type of care programme available was in the parent information displayed on the parent's notice board along with the facilities available, opening hours and fees.
 - (g) The services policies and procedures, required for Regulation 10, were kept in soft form in the service.
 - (h) The attendance records for each child were available and stored in an attendance book in each classroom.
 - (i) Staff rosters were furnished to the inspector and were completed daily.

- (j) There were seven administration of medication records available dating from 18/04/2018 to 28/08/2023, each record was appropriately completed by staff and parents/guardians.
- (k) There were two records of accidents and incidents recorded in the book, each had been completed by both staff and parents/guardians.

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

BASIC NEEDS:

- Children were observed eating healthy and nutritious food which had been prepared by the parents/guardians at 10.45 am. Examples included filled sandwiches, cheese, yogurt and fruit which had been halved and cut into bite sized pieces.
- Water was available throughout the session from individual water bottles which were stored on a shelf which was easily accessible to the children.
- Children had access to crockery and cutlery at snack time, if required.
- The atmosphere during snack time was relaxed with staff and children engaging in social conversation.
- Children were observed accessing the toilet areas independently, staff were nearby to provide help with turning on the tap and reminding children to dry their hands.
- A nappy changing area was available with children's personal belongings located nearby. No children were observed to require nappy changing on the morning of inspection.
- A visual toilet routine was observed in the children's sanitary area helping the children to know what is expected, increasing the children's independence in using the toilet.
- Staff in the classrooms were responsive in promoting positive behaviours for example encouraging the children to listen to each other stories at news time and to think about others less fortunate in discussions about the shoe box appeal at circle time.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S NEEDS:

- Staff stated a key person approach is in operation with staff responsible for building relationships with the children and their parents/guardians. The key person in the service records observations of their key children which reflect the children's needs and interests, and these are then shared with parents and also used to inform planning. Examples of the observations were furnished to the inspector.
- Children's individual needs were facilitated with staff heard assisting a child whose first language was not English, staff stated they also translate words to facilitate understanding.
- Children were given indicators of transitions in the room with staff providing audio and visual indicators such as turning on the interactive board and choosing the clean-up song, creating a more predictable environment for the children.
- Communication with parents was observed at collection time with staff talking with parents at the main door. Staff stated that they also use email, letters and phone calls to exchange information.
- Staff meet with management monthly, and minutes of meetings were furnished to the inspector.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- All three classrooms were laid out in clearly defined areas with age and stage appropriate resources which provided playful opportunities to enhance the learning needs of all of the children across all developmental areas.
- The children were observed to be engaged in a variety of activities which offered stimulation, exploration and imagination. These materials were easily accessible from baskets on low-level shelving which offered choice and independence and included sensory play with playdough, construction, and imaginary play materials including tracks and trains.
- Walls were decorated with posters where the colours, numbers and words were in the Irish language. Children's seasonal artwork was visible as were family photographs of the children along with details of each child's birth month.
- The children have access to a number of outdoor play areas which provide alternative environments for the children including a play area which has a variety of play equipment which offers opportunities to practice and enhance physical skills. Examples of the equipment available includes climbing walls, bridge, slide, balls, steel pods tractors and tricycles.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES:

- Opportunities for children to speak in Irish were encouraged and supported with staff talking to the children through one to one and group discussions in Irish. Examples included staff discussing with the children what they had dressed up as for Halloween and the children answering in Irish.
- Details of short-, medium- and long-term planning of the service was available and furnished to inspector. They included seasonal themes and the children’s emergent interests.

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:

- Each classroom door was fitted on the inside with a sliding bolt located out of reach of the children, ensuring no unauthorised adult could enter the classrooms and no child could leave unsupervised.
- Staff were observed collecting the children from the main door from the parents/guardians at the beginning of the session and escorting the children to the main door at the end of each session, ensuring the safety of each child.
- Windows in each classroom were fitted with restrictors preventing children from exiting from them.
- All blind cords in the classrooms were secured with hooks, out of reach of the children.
- Railings were fitted on the ramps enroute to the outdoor play areas ensuring all children could access the area safely.
- Toys and play equipment appeared in good working order.
- Interactive board cables were inaccessible to the children in each classroom.
- Each classroom was fitted with large storage areas which were fitted with locks.
- Pedal operated bins were available for the disposal of waste in each classroom.
- The entrance to the outdoor area was secured with large metal gates and the perimeter was secured with stone walls and metal fencing preventing children gaining unsupervised access to unsafe areas.

Infection Control:

- Wash hand basins and sinks in use by the adults and children were supplied with thermostatically controlled hot water, dispensing soap, dispensing paper towel roll and pedal operated bins for the disposal of waste.
- Children were observed washing their hands before snack and after toileting.
- Staff were observed cleaning the tables with disinfectant spray and paper towels.
- Tissues were available and accessible to the children.
- Each child had a personalised hook for hanging their belongings, ensuring they were stored off the floor area.
- Disposable gloves and single use aprons were available in the nappy changing area.
- Windows in the classrooms were open providing for the circulation of fresh air.

Administration of Medication:

- Anti-febrile medication was available and was stored in a locked cupboard in its original container.

Safe Sleep:

- Each room had a rest/quiet area where the children could relax and sit away from noisy activities. These were fitted with soft mats and cushions. Books were located nearby should a child choose to read while sitting/resting.

Fire Safety:

- All fire/exit doors were fitted with thumb twist cylinders ensuring a quick evacuation of staff and children in the event of an emergency.
- Fire equipment was stored securely on frames on the walls.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was insured. The policy stated that the service is insured for 55 children on a sessional basis. The expiry date of the policy was recorded as the 27 March 2024.