

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017GY504
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Name of Service:	St. Pat's Pre-School And Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Lombard Street, Galway, Co. Galway.
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Eircode:	H91 K3C7
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Name of Registered Provider:	Fiona Kelly, Helen O'Flynn
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	27/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	11
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulations Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan.
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
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Description of service

The service is in the centre of Galway city in St Patrick's national school. The service first opened in September 2017. The service operates a part-time service for pre-school children aged 3 years – 6 years from 08.30 am – 01.30 pm, Monday – Friday. The service also offers a sessional service for preschool children. The service also has a breakfast club which caters for school aged children from 08.00 am to 08.30 am and a school aged care from 1.15 to 6.00 pm. The service has 2 playrooms, sanitary facilities, kitchenette and a staff office.

Staffing

The registered providers are not on the premises daily and has appointed a manager. There is a named person in charge and a named designated deputy. There is a total of 7 adults working in the service which includes the registered providers. Six adults work directly with the children and hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28. 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

- 28/06/2024 An Immediate Action Notice was issued under Regulation 9(2)(c), a mandatory vetting disclosure was not available for 2 adults working in the service contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.
- 02/07/2024 An Immediate Action Notice Final Reminder Notice for Garda Vetting was issued on the 02/07/2024 as no response had been received from the registered provider.
- 02/07/2024 The registered providers responded to say that the outstanding vetting for 2 adult had been applied for and a copy of these vetting disclosure will be forwarded to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate. These adults are on leave and will not work directly with children until the Garda vetting is received.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered providers, 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.

(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.
- (b) The registered providers were on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.
- All 9 adults files were reviewed:
- (2)(a)&(b) Eighteen of the validated references on file in respect of 9 adults were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

- (d) Documentary evidence indicated that 1 adult had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years and therefore required police vetting. The police vetting was available for inspection.
- (4) Eight adults held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of Level 5, in Early Childhood Care and education.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(c) Garda vetting disclosures were not available in respect of the 2 adults. An immediate action was issued to the registered providers on the 28/06/2024 and a reminder notice was issued on 02/07/2024.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(c) The registered provider responded to say that the 2 adults were rostered off until the registered provider received the Garda vetting.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)(c) Documented evidence of Garda vetting which was in date was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The documented evidence submitted for the 2 adults was reviewed and it has been deemed to have met the requirements.

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) The preschool attendance records and roster for the previous 3 weeks were reviewed and indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. On the day of inspection, the adult and child ratio were correct and maintained.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to, during the inspection.

On the morning of the inspection, there were 11 preschool children being directly cared for by 6 adults.
In the afternoon of the inspection, there were 11 preschool children being directly cared for by 6 adults.

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

19 (1) (a)

BASIC NEEDS:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and the food observed was healthy and nutritious. The snacks provided by parent and guardians consisted of a selection of sandwiches, fruit and yogurts.
- The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their snack in a relaxed and unhurried manner. Crockery and plates were given to children during snack times, laid out on age-appropriate low tables.
- Perishable items belonging to children were stored in the service fridge.
- The children had access to a water station on a low-level table, which allowed them the opportunity to take a drink if thirsty.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.
- Each child's privacy and dignity were preserved, while they were either toileted independently or with some assistance as required.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax on large couches, in a designated rest and relaxation area, in the playrooms. Sleep mats were available for children attending on a part time basis.
- On the day of inspection, the children were observed playing in the outdoor area, in circle time, table top activities and free play.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- A key person system was in place for each child to support their development and to inform curriculum planning. The role of the key person was to liaise with parents and guardians. Individual care programmes were in place where required.
- Staff stated that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the pre-school including the child's likes, interests, preferences, and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection and drop off times, via text messages, multimedia application and by phone calls.
- Each child had a learning journal identifying their likes preferences and showing their art and craft work.
- Staff were observed helping children find solutions, supporting them and talking to children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, commentating, extending a child's activities, and initiating games and activities.
- The programme of care was flexible and guided by the children's choices. Children were supported by the staff during periods of individual and group-based activities, the staff sensitively supervised and intervened when necessary.

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

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for all 5 staff members, however for 1 of the adult their vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. Preschool children's grapes were not quartered or halved at snack time by adults which may pose as a choking hazard for a preschool child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response that:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Up to date Garda vetting has been sourced and submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate. In future we will ensure that garda vetting is in date.
2. All staff has been informed and a letter issue to parents to ensure that grapes are quartered. We will ensure in future that grapes are quartered.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Copy of updated Garda vetting was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.
2. Copy of letter was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

1. and 2. The evidence submitted has been reviewed and has met the requirements of this part of the regulations.

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) The service did provide evidence from the roster that a person trained in first aid responder for children was available during the operational hours of the service to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) (a) There were first aid box was easily accessible and in a conspicuous position in the service.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation.
- (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) A record in writing of fire drills indicated that the last fire drill was conducted on the 13/06/2024.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that firefighting equipment was checked annually and the last service was the 13/10/2023.

The records for the smoke and fire detection alarm system were maintained and was last serviced on the 13/06/2024.

- (4) The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire was available on file and was displayed in the lobby and each playroom of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had up to date insurance for up to 44 preschool children attending on a part-time basis.