

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018GY513				
Name of Service:	Footsteps Preschool Headford				
Address of Service:	Headford Girl's National School, Church Road, Headford, Co. Galway				
Eircode:	H91 FD71				
Name of Registered Provider:	Edel Hyland				
Service type:	Full Day				
Date of Inspection:	15/11/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>51</td> <td>PM</td> <td>47</td> </tr> </table>	AM	51	PM	47
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	F Kelly
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 located in Headford Boy's National school, in Headford Co Galway. The service consists of 4 playrooms and both adult and children's sanitary areas. The service also has access to a large extensive outdoor play area at the rear of the building and the school's indoor school gym.

Staffing

There was 17 staff members employed in the service. The registered provider was on the premises on the day of inspection.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 11, however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 9 and 19. 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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) During the period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.

- (2) At 10:30 am on the day of inspection, the following playrooms were in operation:-
- Footsteps Room, (Footprints in the Pm) there were 3 adults and 1 student working with 20 children.
 - Next steps room , there were 3 adults working with 17 children.
 - First Steps room 2, there were 5 adults working with 14 children.
- At 15:30 am on the day of inspection, the following playrooms were in operation:-
- Footprints there were 3 adults working with 15 children.
 - Next steps room , there were 3 adults working with 17 children.
 - First Steps room, there were 5 adults working with 15 children.
- (8)(a) The staff roster of the service indicated that there were two adults on the premises at all times during the operational hours of 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.

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS

- Children's toileting and nappy changing needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Self toileting was both supported and encouraged by adults depending on the child's age and stage of development.
- Children are provided with labelled individual spaces for their belongings e.g., individual coat hooks in each of the playrooms.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed during the inspection, the children were observed washing their hands when they returned from outdoor play and before their lunch..
- Bibs were available for children to use during messy play.

Non-Compliance Information

1. Children were not offered a plate to eat their snack or hot meal from. The children in the footprints room and the next steps room were observed eating their main meal from their lunch boxes or the food containers that the staff member had used to reheat the lunches in the microwave. The crockery used was not suitable for the children's age or development.
2. Children's need for sleep was not meet in the First Steps room, Next step room and the Footprints room on the day of inspection. The service did not provide for the children's comfort and need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
 - First Steps room: At 11:00am. A young child (less than 18 months) was observed asleep in the buggy in the outdoor play area. This was at variance to the service safe sleep policy. The staff were asked to put the child down to sleep in the sleep room attached to the playroom. A buggy is prohibited to be used for sleep in a child service as it poses a risk to safety of children while sleeping.
 - Footprints room: A child aged (over 2 years) was observed to fall asleep in the arms of a staff member during lunch time. On instructions from the inspector the child was put down to sleep. A stackable bed was put down in the cosy corner of the room, which was not ideal as the other children in the room wanted to use this space.
 - Next step playroom: Two children (aged over 2years) were put down to sleep on stackable beds during lunch time. One child was observed to sleep, the other child was distracted and was unable to rest ,as the area was not quiet as the rest of the children in the playroom were eating their lunches and playing and exploring the playroom during this time.
- 3.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Appropriate crockery is available and offered to all children at mealtimes .
2. Buggies will not be used for children to sleep in when attending the service. The appropriate sleep equipment and provision for sleep is in place for infants and children.

The service will ensure that the dedicated time for sleep and rest for over 2 years is scheduled during a quiet time within routine; before lunch time .

Supporting documentation submitted

None submitted.

Summary Comment

While the actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified, evidence to support these actions has not been submitted to the inspectorate. These actions will be reviewed at next inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Non-Compliance Information

Adequate quantities of suitable nutritious and varied food was not available to the children attending the service on a full day care basis. All food served in the premises was supplied by the parents of the children attending the service.

This was at variance to Footsteps Preschool healthy eating policy which stated that the registered provider ensured that all food served will be nutritious and suitable.

1. Some children attending on a full day care were not provided with at least 2 meals, 2 snacks, one of which must be a hot meal. Some children were not offered a hot meal and only offered a sandwich.
2. One child did not have a meal and the only alternative offered by the service were plain crackers. A healthy alternative was not offered.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. All children who are attending over the 5 hours will receive a nutritional hot meal in suitable and age-appropriate crockery.
2. All meals for children are now checked in the morning to ensure that each child has a healthy meal provided, including a hot meal for the children attending over 5 hours . In the event where a child does not have a meal, a healthy alternative will be provided by the service.

Healthy policy has been reviewed to include an information letter to parents about the importance of providing healthy meals and also the need to provide a hot meal for children attending over 5 hours.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of the letter sent to the parents.

Summary Comment

While the actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified, evidence to support these actions has not been submitted to the inspectorate. These actions will be reviewed at next 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 service manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

- (b) During the period of inspection, the manager and the registered provider was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.

It was confirmed that there were 17 members of staff employed in the Early Years' service. On the day of inspection there were 3 students on placement in the service.

(2)(a) There were 22 written and appropriately validated references available from the adult's most recent employer.

- (b) There were 13 written and appropriately validated references available from a source other than recent

employer for the staff working in the service, which included 2 students.

- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service.
- (d) Police Vetting disclosure was available for 2 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) There were 16 adults working directly with children who had obtained at least an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) Two validated references from past employers or a reputable were not available on file for 2 students that were on placement.

A second validated references from past employers or a reputable were not available on file for 1 student that was on placement.

- (4) One adult who worked directly with the children in the service could not provide evidence that they had acquired appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education to a minimum of a level 5.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The register provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective and Preventive Action

All staff files have been checked to ensure that validated references, copy of qualifications/DCEDIY eligibility letter for practice) are held on file in respect of all adults and students working in the service. Staff files will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the required documents are held on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Validated references.
- Copy of Eligibility to practice letter submitted on the 3rd of Dec.23

Summary Comment

(2)(a)(b) The outstanding validated references for the students, were accepted and noted on the report.

(4) The letter of eligibility to practice letter was submitted for the named person that did not have proof of qualifications on the day of inspection, therefor this regulatory requirement has been achieved.