

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018MN500				
Name of Service:	Carrickroe Community Childcare				
Address of Service:	Deravoy, Carrickroe, Co. Monaghan				
Eircode:	H18 PW06				
Name of Registered Provider:	Rosemary Coyle				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	04/05/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>37</td> <td>PM</td> <td>29</td> </tr> </table>	AM	37	PM	29
AM	37	PM	29		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange, Plantation Walk, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan				
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader and M. Flood				
Title:	Early Years Inspectors				

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

Carrickroe Community Childcare have been operating as a community run childcare service since 2018. They provide full day care, part-time and sessional education and care to pre-school children aged from 4 months - 6 years of age. The service is open from 07:30am to 18:00 each weekday and caters for a maximum of 43 children. The service currently has 3 care rooms in operation namely: Baby and Waddlers Room, Toddler Room and Preschool Room. There is 1 sleep room off the Baby and Waddlers Room and 1 off the Toddler Room. There are nappy changing and sanitary accommodations and a kitchen area. The service has 2 outdoor areas to the side and back of the service and the office was located in a separate cabin in the outdoor area.

Staffing

There are 13 adults employed in the service who work directly with the children including a service manager.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspectors arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

The 13 staff files were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) There were:

- 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for 7 members of staff in the service.
- Three staff had 1 written and validated reference.
- Two staff had 2 written references each and 3 staff had 1 written reference each.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for each of the 13 staff members.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented for inspection documentary evidence of international police vetting was available for 1 out of 2 adults who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the childcare qualification for 10 of the adults in the service met the minimum qualification required to enable them to work directly with the preschool children.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) One member of staff did not have 2 written and validated references available for inspection.

The seven written references above were not validated.

(d) Documentary evidence of international police vetting was not available for 1 member of staff who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was not available to confirm that 3 members of staff who work directly with the preschool children held the minimum required childcare qualification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) Post inspection, all staff references have now been obtained and verified by the registered provider and are held on each member's file.

The manager will ensure all references will be obtained and verified before a member of staff begins employment at the service. An administrative staff member has now been employed to help ensure the recruitment paperwork is checked and verified before a person begins employment. Going forward only references that are on headed paper from the previous college/company will be accepted.

(d) The staff member has now obtained international police vetting. Evidence of which is attached to the file.

An administrative staff member has now been employed to help ensure the recruitment paperwork is checked and if required that International Police Vetting is in place, prior to the new staff commencing employment with the service.

(4) Two members of staff have recently completed their Level 5 childcare qualification and documentary evidence of these qualifications is now available and retained on file. The 3rd member of staff has completed a Level 6 Qualification in Early Care and Education and awaiting their certificate of award from the College. Certificates will not be issued until Autumn time. As this remains insufficient the service will adjust the rota so that the staff member will be moved to the senior afterschool room and another staff member with a full Level 5 qualification will take her place in the current room she is assigned to until a certificate is issued in October.

Going forward staff will have to present a full Level 5 certificate before commencing employment with the service. Management will be more aware of taking on students as employees.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written and validated references and, a copy of the International Police vetting and Level 5 qualification Cert and Level 5 transcript of Award were submitted.

11/9/23 Level 6 QQI certificate submitted for remaining staff member

Summary Comment

The registered provider has submitted evidence to demonstrate that the non-compliances found at inspection were addressed.

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

(2) The child: adult ratios were correct during the inspection with the exception of the time outlined in the non-compliance. The following adult: child ratios were observed in the care rooms when the inspectors arrived at the premises:

Preschool Room:

There were 18 preschool children (aged 3 - 5 years) attending this room with 3 childcare staff.

The child adult ratios were correct at this time.

Baby and Waddler Room:

There were 9 preschool children (aged 5 months - 1 year and 9 months) attending this room with 3 childcare staff.

The child adult ratios were correct.

Toddler Room:

There were 10 preschool children (aged 1 and 7 months -2 and 9 months) being cared for by 3 adults. The adult: child ratios were correct.

(8)(a) Following a review of the available documentation e.g. staff rotas and children's attendance records this information demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The child: adult ratios in the Preschool Room were incorrect during staff lunchtime. Between the hours of 13:00 - 14:00 there were 17 children with 2 staff members, 3 staff were required.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) Staff rota was adapted, and a staff member was rostered on an additional hour each day to ensure that ratios were maintained during staff breaks.

Bookings will be monitored and adjusted accordingly in line with staffing requirements. Staff are aware of ratio requirements in the rooms and must adhere to their lunch break times in line with the rostered times.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance identified has been addressed and will be for review at the next inspection.

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

There were 3 rooms in operation on the day of the inspection namely the Baby/Waddler Room, the Toddler Room and Preschool Room which was spread over 2 rooms.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs

- The children's drinks cups and bottles were stored in the care rooms, and they were accessible as required. Staff were observed to sit with the children at mealtimes and this time was also used to encourage conversations between the children. Assistance was given to the older children who required help with opening lunches and certain foods and to the younger children who required feeding. Bibs were put on the younger children before meals plus hands and faces cleaned appropriately after the meals.
- Highchairs were used appropriately in the Baby/Waddler Room during mealtimes.
- Nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with pleasant interactions observed between children and staff.
- The toilet trained children were encouraged to be independent with toileting and discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children after toileting.
- With the exception of the non-compliance noted below In the Toddler Room, individual child-led sleep needs were facilitated in the service as the staff followed the children's routines and children were offered the opportunity to go for a sleep. The children were observed to move freely in the care rooms and had a change of environment into the outdoor area. All children were dressed appropriately to go outside.

Supporting Relationships

- The adults throughout the service were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children in all the rooms and transitions between activities were organised and swift. The language used by the staff in the service was positive, encouraging and kind e.g., “...we share toys with our friends, really good listening, can we find our seats and use our listening ears”. Encouragement and praise were offered to children who completed tasks or engaged in an activity e.g. “well done... you really like that”
- Staff sat with the children during activities on the floor and at tables and children were observed to actively seek out staff members. Equally children who did not wish to partake in a particular activity were also supported.
- Support and reassurance were given to a child who was teary and missing their “mammy”.
- A key worker system was in operation in the service. Photographs of the children and key workers were displayed.
- The staff reported that most communication with parents was via the electronic application in use in the service and verbally at collection and drop off. Staff meetings are reported to take place monthly.

Physical and Material Environment

- Child sized furniture and equipment was in use throughout the service.
- A variety of age-appropriate materials and equipment were available in the care rooms that support many areas of development such as fine and gross motor skills, role play, speech and language and sensory development.
- Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in all of the rooms, which promoted independence and also facilitated choice for the older children in the Preschool Rooms. In the Baby and Wobbler Room the staff assisted the children in accessing toys.

Programme of Activities:

- Staff were recording observations and emerging interests of the children.
- Artwork was visible such as Spring themed paintings, ladybird handprint art and caterpillars.
- Many of the activities observed during the inspection were child led and the children were facilitated to make their own choices regarding some of the stories that were read or songs that were sung. For example, the children in the Baby/Waddler Room were observed to engage in a sensory play activity involving trays of jelly on the floor. One child who wanted to continue playing with the jelly was facilitated to do so, until they were supported by the staff to end the activity and get ready for lunch time.

Non-Compliance Information

1. In the Toddler Room some children who were visibly showing signs of tiredness for example, rubbing eyes requesting soothers and putting their heads down on the floor matting were not put down to sleep. The inspector heard staff ask the children “*are you tired?*” and “*I think you both would like a sleep*”.
2. There was no adult chair in the Toddler Room for the adults to sit comfortably to nurse a child. Staff were observed sitting on the child sized plastic sofa nursing a child to sleep and then trying to get up with difficulty with the sleeping child in their arms.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Management organised for staff to take part in a certified course ‘Facilitating Safe Sleep’ regarding Safe Sleep and Sleep Practices, which they have since completed successfully. Management has arranged an on-site training with the local support agency to help support the staff regarding quality practices and the learning environment.

Staff will continue to be supported during the settling in period of the new rooms, further training will be completed as required. Support and Supervision meeting with the staff will be facilitated to understand any areas they may need support with.
2. A new adult sized armchair has been purchased for the Toddler Room to ensure staff have a suitably supportive, safe, and comfortable place to sit with the children.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances identified have been addressed and will be for review at the next inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(2) A registered provider-

(a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, or

shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) There were soft comfortable areas in the rooms which consisted of mats, small sofa and cushions which a child could sit and relax on or take a break from an activity. Soft mats and shaped and supportive cushions were available in the Baby Room where babies were able to sit supported or crawl safely.

There was an adult chair in the Baby and Waddler Room where an adult could sit and nurse a baby or small child.

There was a sleep room off the Baby/Waddler Room where there were 6 standard cots available for the children aged under 2 years of age to sleep on.

There was a sleep room off the Toddler Room with 2 standard cots and an additional collapsible cot if required for children under the age of 2 years. Additionally, there were daybeds for the children aged over 2 years of age to sleep on.

(3)(a) There were 2 outdoor play areas on the premises:

- **Area 1** There was an enclosed outdoor area to the side of the Baby/ Waddler room which the children were observed to access. This area had a tarmac surface and was gated and fenced. A variety of pieces of play equipment were available that promoted many areas of development and included a large climbing frame with 2 slides, a tunnel and climbing wall, a music wall with a variety of chimes, pipes, and a xylophone. A variety of planted areas and boxes, large tyres, wall mounted blackboards and “buddy benches” were also available.
- **Area 2** located to the back of the Toddler Room was a tarmacked and fenced area where the children could take toys out to play in.

It was also reported that the service also had access to the enclosed pitch at the rear of the local primary school.

This was not accessed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

The sleep room off the Toddler Room was used for storage of some equipment such as the water tray, art supplies and baskets. This is not conducive to a sleep environment.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Storage of equipment was discussed at the follow up staff meeting and the importance of not using areas like the sleep room/bathrooms etc as an area for storage.

Staff are now aware of the importance not to use the sleep area to store equipment as it is not conducive with a safe sleep environment. Further storage units were purchased to store art equipment, journals etc. and to utilize the outdoor shed to store objects that are not used daily, this practice can be rotated when needed.

Regular inspections of the rooms by management to ensure quality practices are upheld. Room leader meetings with management to be able to offer support where required.

Supporting Documentation Submitted;

Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate is satisfied the non-compliances identified in Regulation 20 have been addressed.

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.

Compliance Information

Healthy eating was promoted in the service as was evident by the dinner and snacks provided by the service in the various rooms. On the day of the inspection the dinner was provided by an outside cater and served by the service. It consisted of, mashed potatoes, chicken goujons, wedges, peas and gravy. Breakfast of cereal and morning snack of fruit was provided by the service. All other snacks were supplied by the parents.

Potable drinking water was available for the children to access as required in all rooms and in the Baby Room the staff reported that bottles of formula milk are brought in by the parents made-up.

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:

- The external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- All blind cords in the service were restricted or made inaccessible to the children. Documentary evidence of daily risk assessments were evident in the service.
- Cleaning equipment was stored out of reach of the children.
- All highchairs observed were in good condition and were fitted with a safety harness.

Infection Control:

There were individual lidded storage boxes for the storage of the children's soothers.

- There was a constant supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and single use paper hand towels available to support effective hand washing in the service.
- Good environmental cleaning practices were observed during the inspection, with tables being wiped down prior to lunch, snack times and after activities. Staff were able to verbalise correct cleaning processes for toys and equipment.

Safe Sleep:

- Ten-minute physical safe sleep observations were carried out as per best practice guidelines. These were also documented appropriately.

Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service. The following observations were made:

General Safety:

1. In the Toddler Room there were unprotected sharp corners on some of the shelving units. This is a safety risk.
2. In the smaller Preschool Room, the television was unsecured and accessible to the preschool children. This is a potential impact hazard.

3. In the smaller Preschool Room, the surface temperature of one of the radiators was recorded at 52.6 °C which was above the recommended maximum surface temperature of 50 °C and therefore a potential burns risk.
4. In the smaller Preschool Room, the cupboard under the sink which contained a rodent bait box was not locked and therefore accessible to the children.
5. In the Toddler Room one child was observed playing with the low-level sockets on the wall. It is acknowledged that the person in charge stated that new protective boxes have been purchased to place over the sockets.

Infection Control:

6. There was a tear in the plastic sofa in the smaller Preschool Room which did not allow for effective cleaning.
7. In the Baby/ Waddler Room one bottle of milk was observed stored in the cooler bag in a press at approximately 1pm rather than appropriately in the fridge when the child arrived on the premises at 08:30am.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. All sharp edging on shelving has now been covered with protective foam corners.
Staff have added this to their risk assessment and monitor that the cushioned edging remains in place.
2. The television in the preschool room has now been secured to the wall with a TV bracket.
3. The radiator thermostat was replaced with a new one.
Staff added this to their Risk assessment and will continue to be vigilant regarding the temperature of the radiators.
4. Child-safe locks were fitted to the cupboards under the sinks in the preschool room are now inaccessible to the children.
Staff were made aware of this non-compliance and that cupboards must remain locked and inaccessible to children throughout the day. This precaution has been added to their Daily Risk Assessment checklist.
5. All sockets have been covered with child protector covers and are now inaccessible to children.
Staff are now aware of this action and have added it the Daily Risk Assessment checklist in order to ensure the sockets remain covered and inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

6. The torn piece of the sofa has been removed with a view to it being replaced with a matching piece of material.

Staff have been reminded that equipment must be replaced when defective or broken.

7. This non-compliance was highlighted with the staff in the Baby Room. The staff were reminded of the importance that all bottles are to be refrigerated once a child enters the building. Once each child is welcomed into their rooms, their key workers are now in charge of making sure that their items are refrigerated.

This action was also added to the Daily Risk Assessment in order to create awareness for new and existing staff. The room leader will continue to check that all staff adhere to this. Fridge dividers have been purchased to ensure each child has a specific place for their items.

Supporting Evidence Submitted:

Photographic evidence of locks on cupboard doors, covers on sockets, corner protectors and wall mounted tv were submitted.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate is satisfied that the non-compliances identified in Regulation 23 General Safety and Infection Control have been addressed.

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.

(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 was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. the last recorded on 4/4/2023 and 28/4/23.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated th2 28/11/22 and 20/4/23.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance cover was in place for up to 100 children.