

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019LD001
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Name of Service:	Center Parcs Longford Forest Activity Den
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Address of Service:	Ballymahon, Co. Longford
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Eircode:	N39 RH95
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Name of Registered Provider:	Daragh Feighery
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	31/07/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government buildings, Convent road, Roscommon town Co Roscommon.
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy
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

Description of service

Center Parcs Longford Forest Activity Den Holiday Resort provides inclusive childcare to children on short term breaks. It is registered to provide two preschool sessions from 09.30 to 12.30hrs and from 14.00 to 17.30hrs. It presently offers one mini adventure session per day on Wednesday with two sessions per day on Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sunday catering for the 3-6yrs age group The service is located in a large sports complex with an extensive and varied range of activities provided for families. A separate entrance lobby is provided as the entrance to the childcare facility with two staff employed at the reception area to sign each child in and ensure no unauthorised persons gains access to the Activity Den. It comprises a large activity room for preschool aged children. A second room is also registered to cater for 8 children however this is presently not in use. There is an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the premises directly accessible from the preschool room. Parents are required to prebook their child/children for the sessions.

Staffing

The registered provider has employed a manager and two named duty managers as the persons in charge and six adults are employed throughout the working week and subject to demand for the different sessions provided. All of the staff are employed work directly with the children and hold 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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, the activity den manager, the leisure line manager and the head of department manager, 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 activity den manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The registered provider was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the part of the inspection. The activity den manager remained on site for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputies were available on the premises, at all times when pre-school children were present.

The staff files of 9 staff members were reviewed on this inspection.

(2)(a) &(b)

18 of the 18 validated references on file in respect of the 9 staff were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for nine staff.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Documentary evidence indicated that 3 of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years and had the required police vetting.

(4) The 9 staff working directly with the children, had evidence of a childcare qualification to at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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) On the day of the inspection there were three adults working directly with nineteen children in the morning session. The children were aged between three to six years old.

(3) The appropriate adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection. Adequate supervision is provided at all times with relief persons to assist if required.

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

- The snacks were supplied by the service and consisted of a plain biscuit, rice cakes, raisins and water to drink.
- The children were given sufficient time to eat in an unhurried manner. The foods provided complied with the service's healthy eating policy. Healthy eating was promoted within the service.
- The children chatted freely about what foods they liked.
- Drinking water was available for the children in the room and was accessible by the children throughout the session.
- On the day of the inspection, the children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their level of independence. The staff guided and supported children who needed additional help.
- The staff supervised children's hand washing before and after snack time, after toileting, after blowing their noses, after messy play and at drop off and collection times.
- The children had plenty of opportunities to move about freely, exploring their environment, and improving their emerging skills such as coordination and balance.
- On speaking with the staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provide parents with information on their child's experiences in the session including the child's likes, interests, and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection time.
- The staff were observed to be interested in the children, spoke in low tones, listened to them, and responded to their requests. They interacted in a positive way with the children e.g., sat at children's level, maintained good eye contact, showed empathy towards each child, and were observed to be caring and supportive in their interactions.
- The staff provided significant opportunities for each child to decide their play activities and experiences. They were observed helping children to find solutions, by supporting them and talking to the children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, commentating, extending a child's activities and

initiating games and activities The staff acknowledged a child's achievements, 'well done', 'that's great' and the children were observed laughing and having fun.

- Children were given positive alternatives, rather than just being told 'no'. Children were supported in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict.
- The staff supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships by - showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust, listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures, and body language, using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact, providing opportunities for individual and small group activities and play, leading to increased social awareness, co-operation, collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of belonging, providing opportunities for children to learn from each other and with each other, to work together, join in and contribute to projects and tasks.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets and did not have to wait to use the toilets.
- The staff used the correct language surrounding toileting.
- On the day of inspection, the person in charge advised one child wore a nappy/pull up and was changed in the designated nappy changing area, in a sensitive and timely manner.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax in a designated cosy area in the playroom.
- The indoor environment was spacious, comfortable, pleasant and well laid out to meet the needs of the children attending.
- It was advised to the inspectorate that different sessions are provided for the preschool children, and these were titled Pirates and Princess, Chocolate Chefs and A Wizard Academy Session.
- The children were provided with a variety of art materials to enable them to make and decorate "a wizards stone with glitter", a tie and wand and headbands and a "a spell sheet".
- The adults and children were also dressed up as wizards and it was observed at the end of the session the children preformed a chant and dance session when the parents arrived to collect them.
- The materials provided were appropriate, diverse, challenging and supported all areas of development.
- The materials were freely available, accessible and organised to enable the children to find and retrieve.
- The environment was flexible and responsive to the emerging changing needs, preferences, and interests of the children.
- Play equipment with a variety of colours, textures, shapes, and sizes to experiment with and explore, were freely accessible and available.

- The environment was visually pleasing allowing children to think for themselves and extend their learning.

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 inspector was requested to provide details of attendance in the service in a visitor's logbook on arrival by the designated person in charge.
- Cleaning products were securely stored out of child reach.
- Toys and play equipment and materials were developmentally appropriate, kept in good repair and did not pose an injury risk to children.
- The designated emergency exit doors were observed to be clear and unobstructed.
- The main door into the preschool room was secured during the session.
- Two adults were present in the reception area to sign in the children upon arrival and ensure no unauthorised person could enter the premises.
- The glass panels in the room were fitted with visibility stickers.
- The kitchen door was secured with a high-level lock to prevent children accessing potential danger.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water was available for use by the children to facilitate safe and hygienic hand washing with a temperature reading of 35°C. The water in the sanitary areas was thermostatically controlled to ensure effective hand washing.
- The blind cords were secured to prevent risk of injury.
- Accurate records of attendance of children and adults in the service were kept by the adults on the day.
- Waste disposal facilities were inaccessible to the preschool children.
- There were no trailing flexes in the service.
- The service had a risk assessment system for checking that toys and equipment were not broken, in a clean condition and maintained in a good state of repair.
- The activity den manager clearly identified to the early years' inspector, the drop off and collection procedures for children.

INFECTION CONTROL:

- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- A refrigerator was provided in the kitchen for the storage of perishable foods.
- Foot pedal operated lidded bins were provided in the service for the disposal of waste.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

- There were no medications administered to children on the day of the inspection. The adult's demonstrated knowledge of safe practices with regards to administration of medication.

FIRE SAFETY:

- Records on file demonstrated that fire drills were carried out frequently which helped to ensure that adults and children were familiar with the procedures in the event of an actual fire.
- All exit routes from the service were free from obstruction during the inspection.

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 provided evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Three staff members had current training in first aid for children.

(2)

(a) There was a first aid box with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.

(b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school.

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 written record was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was dated 27th of July 2024.

(b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and the smoke and fire detection alarm system with the annual service dated March 2024 and 11th of July 2024.

(4) A notice was displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire on the wall in the pre-school room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service's insurance with an expiry date 30th of June 2025 was for 30 children and included the following -

- public liability insurance
- insurance against fire and theft

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The service was maintained in an appropriate and adequate state of repair.
- (b) The entrance into the service and the outdoor play areas were adequately secured to prevent a child exiting and an unauthorised person entering the premises.
- (c) The playrooms were adequately lit, ventilated, and heated.
- (d) The premises was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- (e) The sanitary facilities were adequate for the needs and requirements of the children attending the service.