

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020CC004		
Name of Service:	Blossom Tree Pre school		
Address of Service:	O Mahony Avenue, Bandon, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P72AD98		
Name of Registered Provider:	Noelle Harrington		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	25/04/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM 15
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440		
Inspection undertaken by:	V. McCarthy		
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

Blossom Tree Preschool operates as a sessional service that also caters for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE). The service caters for children aged between two and six years. The opening hours for the service are 09.00 to 12.00 hours and 12.30 to 15.30 hours daily. The service operates from one care room positioned in a one storey building that was purposely adapted as a childcare facility. There is an outdoor play area situated to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There were three adults working directly with the children during the inspection. The registered provider was not service based but visits the service periodically.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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) The service had a named person in charge and a deputy that could deputise as required.
 - (b) The named person in charge was on duty when the inspector arrived at the premises and remained on duty for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)
- The person in charge confirmed that one adult had begun working at the service since the previous inspection undertaken on 17 November 2021, therefore recruitment records in relation to this adult were reviewed.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of the adult.
 - (d) Not applicable as the adult had not lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

A copy of a childcare qualification as listed on the National Qualifications Framework was available on file in respect of the adult.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(a)(b) References and required validations were not available on file for assessment in respect of the adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)

(a)(b) The two outstanding references were obtained and validated by the registered provider who has since created a staff file index that will be completed regarding each staff member.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)

(a)(b) Copies of the awaited references and validations were submitted to the inspector for review on 18 May 2023.

Summary Comment

The documentation submitted by the registered provider relating to the non-compliance was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory 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.*
- (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) The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children.
- (3) On the day of the inspection there were three adults working with 20 children. The adult child ratio exceeded the requirement of 1:11.

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:*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (k) There was a designated book attached to the service for the recording of any accidents, injuries and incidents at the premises which was available for review. During the inspection, the inspector assessed that there were 11 records regarding incidents and injuries available on file for the year 2023 so far. The records were complete and detailed the dates when the recorded incidents occurred and the dates when the records were maintained. The records showed accounts of the events, the management of the incidents/injuries that was provided and each of the records was co-signed by the respective child's parent/guardian and signed by the adult that maintained the record.

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

(1)(a) Basic Needs:

- Any child that was thirsty throughout the morning or required additional fluids could easily access a drink of water as their individual water bottles were stored on a tray positioned on a low table in the care room.
- The food eaten by the children for their snack break was appetising and healthy. All food was provided by each child's respective parents or guardians.
- The children's need to use the toilet was promptly and sensitively attended to. The independent use of the toilet by the children was encouraged and supported as appropriate by the adults.
- Hand hygiene by the children was supported and encouraged by the adults who supervised the children when they washed and dried their hands before eating, after outdoor play and after using the toilet.
- The children were provided with opportunities to play outside daily and were assisted by the adults in dressing themselves in their coats and hats prior to going outside.

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 main entrance door leading into the premises was kept secured to prevent the unauthorised access by an adult or the leaving of an unsupervised child.
- The outdoor play area was secured by high fencing and a secured gate.
- The door leading into the kitchen was kept secured and was not accessible to the children.
- The cleaning agents were stored on a shelf in the secured kitchen out of children's reach.
- All leads and flexes were kept out of children's reach.
- All windows were fitted with window restrictors.
- The water at the hot water taps was thermostatically controlled to no higher than 43°C. The water temperature was recorded at 22.3°C during the inspection.
- The first aid box was kept stored on a high shelf out of children's reach.
- Any medications and creams were kept stored in a separate box on a high shelf out of children's reach.
- The radiators were each fitted with a thermostat control to ensure that the surface temperature did not exceed 50°C.
- Visibility strips were fitted to the low glass panels that were positioned on the outdoor storeroom.
- The high slide in the outdoor play area was anchored and the surrounding ground surface was provided with shock absorbing surface.

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 one adult had training in first aid response (FAR) and that a second adult was enrolled for FAR training in the near future. The adult with training in FAR was always on the premises.

(2)
(a) There was a fully equipped first aid box available on the premises and it was stored on a high shelf out of children's reach.

(b) The fully equipped first aid box was always available on the premises.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

(e) There were two toilet cubicles each fitted with mechanical ventilation, and each provided with a wash hand basin for use by the 20 early years children. There was one toilet and wash hand basin available off the outdoor area for adult's use. Each of the wash hand basins was provided with thermostatically warm water and liquid soap. Pedal operated bins, step ups, air driers or paper towels were provided in each toilet cubicle. The water temperature was recorded at 22.3°C during the inspection.