

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020CN001
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Name of Service:	Claddagh Childcare
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Address of Service:	Bawn Road, Swanlinbar, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	H14 KY84
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Name of Registered Provider:	Samatha McBarron
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18/10/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange Plantation Road Monaghan
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Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Claddagh Childcare has been operating as a privately run childcare service since 2020. The service provides a sessional service to pre-school children aged 3 – 6 years. The service operates from 09:20 -12:20 each weekday and caters for a maximum of 22 pre-school children.

The service is conducted from a prefabricated building on the grounds of the local primary school in Swanlinbar Co. Cavan. The service has 1 care room, sanitary facilities and a kitchenette area. An enclosed outdoor play area is located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There were 2 staff including the registered provider employed in the service, who worked directly with the preschool children.

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 staff member 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,
- (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 a system in place to designate a named deputy person to deputise as required. The person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.

There were 2 staff files presented for inspection.

(2)(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for both members of staff.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for both staff members and the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as following a review of the staff files presented on the day of inspection, international police vetting was not required as none of the staff members had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of greater than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that both members of staff who worked directly with the pre-school children held at least the minimum required Level 5 Childcare Qualification and letters of equivalence.

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 inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the early years' service.

(3) The adult to child ratios were correct.

The following adult to child ratios were observed by the inspector on the day of inspection:

There were 19 children aged between 2 and 9 months 4 years being cared for by 2 staff members.

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 was 1 care room in operation on the day of the inspection: the Preschool Room.

(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 had free movement in the care room and were dressed appropriately to facilitate the children having a change of environment to the outdoor play area.
- Lunches were brought in by the children and stored appropriately in the fridge and the children had access to their drinks.
- All children were toilet trained and were encouraged to be independent with toileting. Discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required and gentle handwashing reminders were given to the children after toileting.
- There was a "Snuffle Station" outside the sanitary accommodation to promote independency with nose blowing.

Supporting relationship around children

- Communication between the parents and staff was informal, at drop off and pick-up.
- The staff members in 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 and staff members.
- Transitions between activities were smooth.

Physical and Material Environment

- A variety of age-appropriate toys and equipment were available in the care room on low level shelving which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children.
- There were resourced defined interest areas i.e. a book area, some Montessori equipment and an indoor wigwam with cushions, a small armchair and a sofa for children to relax on.
- Children who didn't want to go outside or wanted to come back in were facilitated to do so and offered tabletop activities.

Programme Of Activities.

- Evidence of daily, long and short-term planning were on display in the room.
- Evidence of the fire theme was visible in the care room and staff reported that there had also been a visit from the firemen earlier in the week.
- Artwork on display included leaf hedgehogs, autumn trees and paper plate pumpkins.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(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,

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

(2)(a) There was an outdoor area to the rear of the premises which was fully enclosed with fencing and tarmacked. There was a shed with toys, a plastic playhouse, basketball hoop, and artificial grass area with a small plastic climbing frame, seesaw, rockers, large games and large plastic building blocks.

Part of the area was covered and contained a mud kitchen, white board, sand pit, bug hotel and tyres. The children also had access to a number of ride-on balance bikes.

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

Infection Control:

1. The service mop and mop bucket were stored inappropriately in the care room, the mop beside the "snuffle station" and the bucket located beside the kitchenette area. These are a cross contamination and safety risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The registered provider has created a suitable storage area for the mop and bucket and discussed this at our staff meeting and will ensure that it is always put away directly after use in a locked storage area.

This on our agenda for weekly meetings as a reminder to all staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response is accepted, and the non-compliance has been addressed.

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) On review of the documentation and First Aid Responder (FAR) certificates available - there were 2 First Aid Responder (FAR) certificates, and a person trained with FAR available at all times.

(2)(a) and (b) There was a suitably equipped first aid box available in the service which was accessible to the children at all times.

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 fire-fighting 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 and were carried out monthly, the last recorded May 2024. The registered provider for the service stated that the first fire drill for the new year was due the following week.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarm dated 26/09/24 and 20/5/24 respectively.

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