

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020WW001		
Name of Service:	Early Days Academy		
Address of Service:	Level 3 Bridgewater Shopping Centre, Arlow, Co. Wicklow		
Eircode:	Y14Y744		
Name of Registered Provider:	Joyce Myler		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	09/04/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM 8
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin. A96P3Y6.		
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona Condon		
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

This service is one of two services operated by the registered provider. The childcare service provides a sessional and part time care to pre-school children from two years to six years of age and operates from 09:30am to 14.30 pm daily, catering for a maximum of 44 children at any one time. The service operates in a purpose built facility which is located on the third floor of Bridgewater shopping centre in Arklow town. There is an outdoor area at the side of the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment.

Staffing

There are four staff members employed in the service daily. On the day of inspection, the registered provider was also present.

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 and safety. 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, 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*

(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 has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the Inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) A total of five adults files were reviewed.
- (a)(b) There were ten validated references available.
- (c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for five adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Not required as no adult employed had lived in another state for a period longer than six consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) Five adults employed and working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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*
- (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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the pre-school children.
- (2) The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection. On inspection there were five adults providing direct care to twenty-four pre-school children.
- (8)(a) There were more than two adults present in the premises throughout the inspection and the staff roster confirmed there are at least two adults present at all times.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

- (1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:
- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;
 - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;
 - (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;
 - (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;
 - (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;
 - (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;
 - (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;
 - (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
- (c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)- (i)

Eleven files were examined.

In relation to the files examined, the record required in writing in relation to (a)-(i) above was kept for each child. The children's files were located in a secure place in the service.

(3)(c) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) (a)-(i) was open to inspection on the premises by the inspector.

art 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

(1)(a)

Basic Needs of Children

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service. The food choices provided by parents for their child were nutritious. Children from both rooms enjoyed freedom of movement indoors and outdoors with children observed moving freely in each area. Children's behaviour was managed positively by the staff caring for them and children were praised and encouraged throughout the morning. Children were observed washing their hands before snack, following outdoor play and toilet use.

Supporting Relationships around Children

The atmosphere in the pre-school was happy, relaxed, friendly and child centred. Staff members were respectful and kind towards the children in their care and each child was listened to and given time to chat and express their thoughts and feelings. It was evident by the interactions with the children that the staff knew each child very well. Adults were observed assisting the children when needed. Smooth transitions were observed with notice given by staff regarding a change of activity and children were very settled as a result.

Physical and Material Environment.

The pre-school room was equipped with low level tables and chairs and low-level shelving units with suitable equipment, toys and materials which were easily accessible to the children. The indoor room was laid out with transport toys, construction toys, home corner, art materials and a rest area beside the library. The outdoor area was partly covered and additional equipment including a sand tray, low level climbing frame, transport toys, mud kitchen and art easel were available.

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 entrance door to the service was secure. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues. Written cleaning schedules were on display for the room environment and sanitary area which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. The practices observed during nappy changing were consistent with best practice in relation to infection control

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The staff members were familiar with required safe practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were unobstructed.

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) Three adults present on inspection held current certificates to confirm that they were trained in First Aid Response and were immediately available to the pre-school children.
- (2)
- (a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school room.
 - (b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 10th of March 2024.
 - (b) Records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms both dated February 2024.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27th of March 2025. The insurance provides cover for up to 22 children attending for part time and sessional care. The maximum number of children enrolled to attend presently is 21.