

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021CC003				
Name of Service:	Macroom Family Resource Centre, St Josephs Preschool				
Address of Service:	St Josephs Services, St Josephs National School, Chapel Hill, Macroom, Co. Cork				
Eircode:	P12 RW14				
Name of Registered Provider:	Seamus O'Laoire				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	19/06/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>13</td> <td>PM</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </table>	AM	13	PM	n/a
AM	13	PM	n/a		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440				
Inspection undertaken by:	Ms. M O'Reilly				
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

Macroom Family Resource Centre, St Josephs Preschool first opened in 2021 and is a registered community based early years sessional service that caters for children from aged three to six years and attending the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE).

Opening hours are from 9:15am to 12:00pm each day Monday to Friday. There is no afternoon session. Since the last inspection the service is now offering to transport the early years children from this service when the sessional service is over each day to the sister service in the same town where some of the children will attend part time day care or full day care service. The children are accompanied in the bus by the childcare staff working in the service.

Macroom Family Resource Centre, St Josephs Preschool operates from the ground floor of a two-storey building located on the grounds of St Josephs National school. The service consists of, an entrance hall, one playroom, adequate adult and children's toilet facilities. An area in the playroom has been suitably cornered off to provide a kitchenette and space for administration equipment. The children have access to the national school yard for outdoor play.

Staffing

There were two adults employed in the service and responsible for the direct care of the children. The registered provide is office based in the sister service. The two staff have obtained a recognised 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 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) There was a person in charge and a person to deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge was present when the inspector arrived on the premises on the day of the inspection and remained for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

The person in charge on day of inspection confirmed that two new adults had begun working at the service since the previous inspection undertaken on the 31/01/22 and an adult associated with the service therefore recruitment records in relation to these three adults were reviewed.

(a) There were three references with a corresponding written validation on file from past employers in respect of the three adults.

(b) There were three references with a corresponding written validation on file from a source other than a previous employer.

(c) A completed Garda vetting disclosure was received for each of the three adults.

(d) There was one police vetting record for the adult that had worked outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months

(4)

The two adults that worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The remaining adult associated with the service did not require a childcare qualification.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at all times. During the period of inspection, the minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations.

(3) On the day of the inspection: the following adult child ratios were observed

There were 13 children aged three years plus with two staff in attendance.

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

- The service promoted healthy eating and the food provided by the service for the mid-morning snack was observed to be healthy and nutritious. Children were given the choice of putting butter on the bagel provided at the midmorning snack promoting the independent use of cutlery at mealtimes.
- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Independent use of the toilet was encouraged. The staff members were observed to supervise and assist where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying, and the children were supported and encouraged prior to eating and after toileting.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The staff members were observed speaking with the children during snack time and using it as an opportunity to enhance social interaction with the children which promoted a relaxed atmosphere.
- Children's behaviour was managed in a competent and positive way and the adults were observed to support the children and handle any behavioural issues promptly. The adults supported children to be sociable and respectful towards each other and spoke and listened to them in a calm and sensitive manner.
- Staff helped children to recognise and understand sharing and working together as a group as seen on day of inspection when children were involved in helping to cut the fruit for the mid-morning snack, clean the tables before and after food break.
- The children's language was supported at group time when they were observed singing the graduation song and positive interaction observed at storybook time when children were allowed ask questions or give points of view at reading time.

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

- On day of inspection the food provided by the service for the mid-morning snack were observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- The staff were observed wearing gloves as they prepared and sliced the fruit for the children which were then served on plates and placed in the centre of the tables allowing the children to pick and choose the fruit. They had a choice of strawberries, bananas and watermelon with half a seeded bagel and water to drink.
- The perishable foods provided by the service for the mid-morning snack were observed to be refrigerated.
- The children attending had access to their labelled water bottles to counter thirst and had access to potable drinking water throughout the session.
- The children were provided with appropriate cutlery and crockery at snack time

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:

- Access to the main entrance door was adequately secured that prevented unauthorised access by an unauthorised person or exit by a child.
- Emergency fire exit door was unobstructed.

Infection Control:

- Playrooms and communal areas were adequately ventilated with openable windows throughout the service.

- Personal waste including used tissues and all cleaning waste was appropriately disposed of in foot operated pedal bins in the service. The foot operated pedal bin in the children's toilet was found in a poor state of repair. It was brought to the attention of the person in charge and was removed and replaced with another lidded pedal operated bin therefore this issue was rectified at time of inspection.
- The children had access to sufficient toilets and wash hand basins. Children had access to three toilet brushes. Children should have no access to toilet brushes as they have the potential risk of cross infection. Once the issue was brought to the attention of the person in charge the toilet brushes were removed from the children toilets and stored in an area that children have no access to therefore this issue was rectified at time of inspection.
- A supply of liquid soap, paper towels and thermostatically controlled hot water were available beside the wash hand basins in the adult and children's toilets in the service.
- Hand washing occurred regularly and at required times by both the staff and children in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Children were observed to have access to the following hazards that were not adequately and securely stored when not in use and had the potential risk of causing injury to a child.

1. The adult toilet was being used as an open storage area for example cleaning chemicals and detergents and cleaning equipment such as mops and mop buckets.
2. Children had access to containers of cleaning chemicals and detergents not in use that were stored on the edge of the windowsill of the children's toilet.

Infection Control:

3. Play equipment not in use was stored in the adult toilet. There is no safe suitable and secure storage areas provided in the service for seasonal or other play equipment when not in use.

The following issue was rectified at time of inspection:

4. Children had access to three toilet brushes located in the children's toilet area. Children should have no access to toilet brushes as they have the potential risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

In the corrective and preventative reply CAPA received from the person in charge, the early years inspector was informed:

General Safety:

1. A lock has been installed on the outside of the staff toilet door. Staff will be reminded to ensure the staff toilet door is adequately secured at all times while the service is in operation.
2. The windowsill of the children's toilet is no longer being used to store containers of cleaning chemicals and detergents. All cleaning equipment and materials are stored in an area that is adequately secured and out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

3. Play equipment not in use will no longer be stored in the adult toilet. A more suitable storage area is now provided for play equipment not in use.
4. Once the issue of the children having access to the toilet brushes was brought to the attention of the person in charge. The toilet brushes were removed from the children's toilet areas and stored in an area that children had no access to therefore this issue was rectified at time of inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence of the new lock on the door of the adult toilet was forwarded to the early years inspector and deemed satisfactory.
2. The written reply from the person in charge is accepted as evidence.

Infection Control:

3. Photographic evidence of where play equipment not in use is stored was forwarded to the early years inspector and deemed satisfactory.
4. Rectified at time of inspection.

Summary Comment

Point number 4 was adequately addressed at time of inspection and deemed to meet regulatory compliance. Correspondence was received and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation (23) point 1.2.3. of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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) One staff member held a certified, First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificate.

(2) (a) There was a sufficiently stocked first aid box available in the service, which was safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) At all times when the service was in operation, first aid supplies were accessible to the adults if in the event that a child may require treatment.

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)
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced in May 2023 and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced in April 2023.
- (4)
- The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A record of monthly fire drills carried out was available and indicated that fire drills were not taking place once a month. While the fire drill record demonstrated that fire drills were taking place monthly until March 2023, the last fire drill recorded took place on the 13th March 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

In the corrective and preventative reply CAPA received from the person in charge, the early years inspector was informed:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a) A fire drill took place on June 20th after inspection. Documented fire drills will take place once a month going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

The written reply from the person in charge is accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

Correspondence was received and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation (26) (1) (a) of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

- The service had certification to confirm insurance cover for a total of 18 children. Insurance cover expires on the 01/02/2024. The service had certification for the bus drivers driving licence and for the current commercial vehicle insurance for the bus that transports the early years children to and from this service to the sister service in the same town where some of the children will attend part time day care or full day care service.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (3) The registered provider had not informed the Agency in writing that the service was operating outside of the service current registration status. On inspection, it was found.

- that the registered named person in charge of the service was incorrect
- hours that the service was registered to operate was from 9:15 to 12 and from 12:30 to 15:30 each day were incorrect. The service is currently operating from 9am to 12:15pm Monday to Friday and there is no afternoon service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In the corrective and preventative reply CAPA received from the person in charge, the early years inspector was informed:

(1)(3)

In the written reply, the inspectorate was included in the record sent to the early years registration office outlining

- the named person in charge
- the current hours of operation.

Going forward any operational changes to the service, the person in charge will inform the early years department prior to the change taking place.

Supporting documentation submitted

The early years inspector was included in the correspondence sent to the registration office dated the 28/06/23 of the completed change in circumstances record.

Summary Comment

Correspondence was received and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation (8) (1) (3) inclusive of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.