

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021CC007
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Respond Early Years Service, Carraig Liath
-------------------------	--

Address of Service:	Community Building, Carraig Liath, Midleton, Co. Cork
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	P25 R968
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Lisa O'Rourke
-------------------------------------	---------------

Service type:	Full Day
----------------------	----------

Date of Inspection:	21/08/2023
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	7
-----------------------------------	----	---	----	---

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurranabraher Cork
Inspection undertaken by:	D Prendergast
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	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

Description of service

Respond Early Years Service, Carraig Liath is a full day care facility, that accommodates children aged one to six years. An option of part time and sessional care is also available at the community-based setting. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated from 9.00am to 12.00pm, each Monday to Friday, over 38 weeks of the year, while the service is open 50 weeks of the year. Registered daily hours of operation are from 8.00am to 6.00pm, however, the service is currently open from 8.00am to 5.00pm each Monday to Thursday and until 4.00pm on Fridays.

The early years service is located in a residential area of Midleton, in east Cork and is provided from a detached, two-storey building. On the ground floor of the building, there are two operational care rooms, with adjoining or adjacent sanitary facilities, along with a designated sleep room, an entrance area, a kitchen, a utility room and a storage room. An office, a staff canteen and adult toilet facilities are available on the first floor. There are two outdoor play areas on site; one accessible from the Toddler room and the second accessible from the Pre-school room.

Staffing

A total of nine adults are currently attached to the service. This includes the registered provider, who is not service based, the regional manager and the quality assurance mentor, both of whom occasionally work with the children. One adult who undertakes cleaning and kitchen duties is not involved in the direct care of the 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 the 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 registered provider, regional manager, service 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
- (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) A person in charge of overseeing the day-to-day operation of the service had been assigned. A named deputy was also in place.
 - (b) When the unannounced inspection commenced, the person in charge and the deputy were present at the service and the person in charge remained to facilitate the duration of the inspection process. The registered provider and the regional manager also attended in the afternoon. Review of the staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy were on duty at all times.
- (2) The person in charge confirmed that four adults had commenced working at the service since the previous inspection was undertaken on 3 August 2022. Therefore, recruitment records in relation to these four adults were reviewed, along with those of two additional adults, whose files had not been assessed previously.

- (a) Written past employer references were available in respect of nine adults.
 - (b) Three written and validated references from sources other than previous employers were in place.
 - (c) Six Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available.
 - (d) Police vetting was deemed to be required for one of the adults and copies of the relevant documents were maintained on file.
- (4) Copies of qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications, were available in respect of three of the adults who were involved in the direct care of early years children. A letter of eligibility to practice had been obtained in respect of another adult. A fifth adult did not work directly with the children and the sixth adult worked in the capacity of a mentor.

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.*
- (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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

Compliance Information

- (1) During the onsite inspection, it was observed that a sufficient number of adults were involved in the direct care of the children.
- (2) Adequate adult to child ratios were maintained in both care rooms, which were in operation as follows:

Morning:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Toddler (1 – 2 years)	3	2
Pre-school (2 years – 4 years and 4 months)	4	2

Afternoon:

Room Name and Age Range of Children	Number of Children Present	Number of Adults Present
Toddler (1 – 2 years)	3	1
Pre-school (2 years – 4 years and 4 months)	4	2

- (8)
- (a) There were at least two adults available on the premises throughout the duration of the inspection, and at all times, in accordance with the staff roster.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A total of 14 children were enrolled at the service. All 14 of the children's registration forms were reviewed and deemed satisfactory.

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:

- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

Compliance Information

(1)
(j) Written parental consent was in place for staff to administer specifically prescribed medication to one of the children, as required. Previous administration records in relation to this medication were on file and had been correctly completed.

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:

- Mealtimes were organised to ensure that there were no gaps longer than two and a half hours in between; up to five meals and snacks were accommodated for the children each day.
- During the main hot meal in the Toddler room, developmentally appropriate crockery and cutlery were provided for the children's use. Self-feeding was encouraged and the adults promptly responded to the children's personal hygiene, helping to clean the children's hands and faces, as needed. A notably calm and relaxed atmosphere was evident and the children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their meal.
- The inspector was advised that children who required nappy changing were attended to at regular intervals throughout the day and as the need arose. For the older children, supervised access to the designated sanitary facilities was ensured, as said facilities were located adjacent to the Pre-school room.
- As the weather on the day of inspection was warm, the adults applied sunscreen to the children before going outdoors.
- A clearly defined rest area was accessible to the children in each of the care rooms, should they wish to opt out of scheduled activities. In the Toddler room, a leather sofa and a teepee furnished with cushions, were available next to a book shelf and in the Pre-school room, the children also had the use of a leather sofa, along with a vinyl corner sofa, positioned next to a book shelf.
- The adults were observed to manage the children's care requirements in a sensitive manner and responded appropriately to their emotional needs. For example, staff members spoke to the younger children about having their nappies changed, before taking them to the changing area and when one of the children became upset, they were immediately comforted and reassured by one of the adults.
- The layout of the care rooms supported the children's freedom of movement, as they initiated their chosen activities and participated in the daily routine. The children who attended both care rooms were also accommodated to engage in outdoor activities on the day of inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- Both care room settings were bright, inviting and adequately resourced with a range of age and stage appropriate materials, which were stored on low-set shelving or at floor level.
- The range of interest items available in the Toddler room included jigsaws, shape sorters, animal figures, musical instruments, wooden blocks, a stair unit with a slide, a well-stocked play kitchen, dolls and accessories, a sand tray with digging toys and a wall mounted activity centre.
- In the Pre-school room, clearly distinguished play spaces included a home area, furnished with wooden kitchen units, a teepee, dolls and accessories and a block area, with wooden blocks, car garages, hand held vehicles and play tools. Other play resources such as a furnished dolls house, jigsaws, a sand tray and an art easel with painting supplies, were also accessible.
- Child size tables and chairs were in good supply and supported the children to comfortably engage with the various materials, during play and exploration and to sit comfortably at mealtimes.
- Two outdoor play spaces were provided for the children’s use. The outdoor area accessible from the Pre-school room featured a wooden teepee, a mud kitchen and a wooden ship, along with stepping logs, an agility ladder and a digging area. The Toddler room outdoor environment was equipped with a small climbing frame, a wooden balance beam, stepping logs, a mud kitchen and a stationary car, created from wooden pallets, with seats and a steering wheel.

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:

- Low-level electrical sockets were fitted with safety plugs.
- Blind cords were securely anchored through the use of suitable tension devices.
- Fob operated doors across the service reduced the risk of unauthorised access and minimised the risk of a child exiting, while unsupervised.
- In the outdoor play spaces, secure enclosures were created through a combination of walls, fencing and secured gates.
- Glass panelled doors were fitted with visibility markings, which reduced the risk of a collision injury.
- Cleaning agents were maintained out of the children's reach.
- Low-lying cupboards, which contained potentially harmful items, were secured and inaccessible to children.
- The available firefighting equipment was wall mounted.
- Daily indoor and outdoor safety checks were undertaken and recorded by staff members, which minimised the risk of injury to children.
- Landing mats were available for the slide in the Toddler outdoor area.

Infection Control:

- The children in the Toddler room were noted to wash their hands after outdoor play and before the hot lunch meal. Good handwashing practices were supported through the availability of warm running water, liquid soap dispensers and paper towel dispensers, at each of the wash hand basins.
- In the Toddler room sanitary area, individually labelled cubby shelf storage was in place for the children's nappies, wipes and barrier creams.
- During an observed nappy changing procedure, the following practices reduced the risk of cross infection:
 - The adult wore a single use apron and gloves, which were disposed of immediately after the nappy change was complete.
 - Both the adult and child washed their hands following the nappy change.
 - The changing mat was sanitised in between use.

- Suitable wall hook storage was provided for the children's bags and belongings in the Toddler room, while a storage unit was available for this purpose in the Pre-school room.
- Tables were observed to be sanitised after mealtimes and cleaning records were displayed and maintained up to date.
- The care rooms and sanitary facility were supplied with fresh air, through open windows.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection.
- The medication which may be required for one of the children was stored in a high-level cupboard, clearly labelled with the child's name and was noted to be in-date.

Safe Sleep:

- The designated sleep room was furnished with three standard cots and safety mattresses, for use by children aged under two years. Stackable beds were available to meet the sleep requirements of children aged over two years.
- While occupied by sleeping children, the air temperature of the sleep room fell within the recommended range of 16°C to 20°C, for safe sleep practice. An air temperature of 19.3°C was recorded. It was noted that an air conditioning unit had been installed in the sleep room since the previous inspection.
- As the children slept, an adult remained in the sleep room to carry out and document frequent physical checks. Available records indicated that children's breathing, colour and position were checked every ten minutes.

Fire Safety:

- No fire safety concerns were noted.

Outings:

- The inspector was informed that outings were not conducted as part of the programme of activities.

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) Two of the adults who worked at the service held up-to-date certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training.
- (2)
- (a) First aid boxes, which contained sufficient stocks of first aid supplies, were readily accessible by the adults in both care rooms. Three additional first aid boxes were available within the service and there was a surplus supply of materials located in the main office.
 - (b) The first aid supplies were available at all times, when the service was in operation.

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 record of the monthly fire drills carried out at the service was available on file. The most recently documented fire drill was dated 6 July 2023. A fire drill was also observed on the day of inspection.
 - (b) The service had a list of the number and type of the available firefighting equipment and smoke alarms. Maintenance records demonstrated that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 13 February 2023. and the wired smoke alarm was tested on 3 May 2023.
- (4) A notice, which outlined the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, was displayed in the Toddler room and the fire evacuation plan was displayed in the Pre-school room.