

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022MN001
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Name of Service:	Annalitten Community Childcare
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Address of Service:	Annalitten National School, Annalitten, Castleblaney, Co. Monaghan
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Eircode:	A75 WX46
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Name of Registered Provider:	Andrea O'Connor
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	14/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 Ther Grange, Plantation Walk Monaghan, Co. 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

This community run service commenced in 2022. It provides a full day care and sessional service to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service operates from 08:00 – 18:00 and caters for a maximum of twenty-two children. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme and opens from 09:15 – 12:15 Monday to Friday. This service is located in a rural area outside Castleblayney and operates from a room in the local primary school. There is one care room, sanitary accommodation, and an outdoor play area directly outside the care room.

Staffing

There are 4 staff members 3 of whom work directly with the preschool children and the fourth who works with the school age 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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 20, 22, 25, 26, 28 ; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 23.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 designated person in charge and a deputy both of whom were present during the inspection.

The following was recorded in respect of the 4 staff files reviewed.

(2)(a) and (b) Two written and validated references were available for each member of staff. Of the 8 references available 7 were from a past employer and 1 from a source other than a past employer.

(2)(c) Evidence of the 4 completed Garda vetting disclosures for the new staff members were available for review.

(d) Not applicable, from the documentary evidence available none of the staff members had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) The 3 staff members working directly with the children had an appropriate 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.

(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) An adequate number of adults were observed working directly with the children with the exception of the non-compliance below. The required minimum adult to child ratios were met.

(2) On the day of inspection there was 1 room in operation the Preschool Room.

The following adult to child ratios were observed:

There were 7 preschool children aged between 3 to 4 years and 2 members of staff.

Non-Compliance Information

(8) The registered provider did not ensure that there were 2 members of staff on the premises at all times i.e. between the hours of 08:00 – 08:30 Monday - Friday.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The rota was changed immediately to ensure there are 2 staff members onsite from 8:00-8:30 Monday-Friday. (see image attached).

The registered provider will ensure there is always 2 staff members on the premises at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of staff rota

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the response and the requirement of the regulation has been met.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day

(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

(1)(b) There was a cosy corner in the care room which consisted of floor mats and soft pillows. Two-day beds were also available should a child require to rest or lie down when attending the service.

(2)(a) The preschool children had access to a new outdoor area directly outside the care room. The area consisted of a concrete path and an artificial grass surface area. It was fully fenced and gated. There was a wooden bench with trays for water play, a fence mounted blackboard, balls and ride on tractors, quad and scooters.

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

Lunches and snacks were provided by the parents. The morning snack consisted of a variety of sandwiches/rolls, salad, fruit and yogurts. The children's drinks were freely available to them. Dinners were brought in and reheated for any child staying on a full day care basis.

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

General Safety:

1. The service record for the maintenance of the fire fighting equipment was outside the time frames of recommended yearly service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

An external fire service contractor was contacted on 14.9.23 to carry out inspections on site of the fire extinguishers and fire equipment maintenance. (see files attached)
Ensure all fire equipment is checked and serviced yearly.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Service/ maintenance certificate.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate is satisfied the requirement of the regulation has now been met.

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

(2)(a) and (b) An adequately stocked first aid box was easily accessible and available in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that there was a person trained in First Aid Response for children, on the premises at all times i.e. from 08:00 – 08:30 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Paediatric First Aid training was sourced for the staff member on the premises from 8:00-8:30 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. There are now 2 staff members on the premises from 8:00-8:30 Monday-Friday, that hold First Aid Training- RE:Regulation 11 (8) above. (see certificate attached).

Ensure there are staff that are trained in First Aid on the premises at all times. Ensure all training is up to date.

Supporting documentation submitted

Paediatric First Aid certificate for 1 staff member.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the response of the registered provider. Following a phone call with a staff member on the 8/1/24 it was confirmed that there is now only 1 person who has First Aid Responder (FAR) training in the service and who is rostered from 8 – 6pm Monday to Friday.

A further phone call from the person in charge confirmed that the staff member with FAR training is remaining on the premises for all breaks until more staff obtain FAR training. One staff member is booked for training on the 23/1/24. However, this is insufficient cover to allow for staff illness or leave.

The requirement of the regulation has not been adequately met.

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 was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. Fire drills were carried out monthly the last recorded being 10/22.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated the 26/2/22 and the 24/10/22 respectively.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance cover was in place for a maximum of up to 20 children expiring on 27/3/2024.