

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023SO001
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Sandcastles Quigabar
-------------------------	----------------------

Address of Service:	Parke, Enniscrone, Sligo, Co. Sligo
----------------------------	-------------------------------------

Eircode:	F26 D710
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Justina Reape
-------------------------------------	---------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date(s) of Inspection:	30/11/2023
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	N/a
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello
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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

The preschool service is a sessional service registered for a maximum of 22 children aged 3-6 years. The premises is located outside the town of Ennistrone in county Sligo. The service operates from a newly built community GAA hall. The pre-school is located on the first floor of the community GAA hall and consists of one large playroom, a kitchen and sanitary accommodation for the children and staff. Full access to the football pitch and Astro turf is available during times of operation.

Staffing

On the day of inspection three staff including the person in charge were working directly with 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 announced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 Management and recruitment, 11 Staffing levels and Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of the child. 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 wish 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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).

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) (a) (b).

The records of all six adults employed in the service were reviewed.

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all six adults employed in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for all six adults in the service.

(d)

International police vetting was available for one adult employed in the service that had not lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Six adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.*
- (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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service. There were three adults working directly with eighteen children on the morning of the announced inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children ratio were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.
- (3) On review of the rosters available for the service the registered provider has ensured that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children was in place.

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The preschool service is located on the first floor of a community building and the children have a large open space to move around and direct their own play. The open plan space is designed with various interest areas to stimulate the child's imagination. A home corner consists of a kitchen, table chairs and utensils to create opportunities for role play. The construction area provides opportunity for fine motor skill development with building blocks and tracks for cars and trucks. The arts and crafts area, provide opportunity for development of skills such as cutting, colouring, gluing, and creating, while developing dexterity and fine motor skills. The library area provides opportunity for language development and provides a chill out area where children can rest or take time out. The stage provides opportunities for the preschool children to participate in dancing, singing and music playing, improving confidence, and developing the imagination. Tabletop activities with puzzles, beads and jigsaws and tables with water and sand give the children opportunities for sensorial play.

The outdoor space creates an alternative environment for the children. The large football pitch allows for development of gross motor skills with running, climbing and game playing. The service is equipped with balance bikes, cars and trikes, skipping ropes, footballs and parachutes to create various games for children in the outdoor space. The children also have use of the indoor astro turf while in the service.

The service operated a healthy eating policy and lunches were provided from home. The service operated a rolling snack time from 10am to 11:30am. A photo story displayed on the wall outlined the process for children of what the rolling snack involved. This story outlined that children could avail of their snack as they wished, prior to snack hands needed to be washed and a clean place mat to be placed on the table. This photo story was the process observed on the day of inspection, where children choose when to avail of their snack at a time that suited them as and when they were hungry. Children were observed to wash their hands prior to snack time and tidied up after their snack. At various intervals through the rolling snack, staff members sat with the children engaging in conversation and discussing various topics including Christmas and the types of food they were eating.

Staff members took this time as an opportunity to allow the children to describe the tastes of various food and equip the children with the language to describes these tastes such as bitter, sweet and salty.

Most of the children were toilet trained in the sessional service and children were encouraged to be independent in toileting. For those children who required nappy changing the service had a policy on nappy changing which was implemented on the day.

On the day of inspection, the children were observed to be happy and content in their environment. Laughter and smiles were observed throughout. The staff members were observed to be kind in their interactions, supporting the children in their tasks as needed while optimising the child's independence. The staff were observed to be respectful of the children, using first names and giving affection as required throughout the day. Positive methods were used by staff to manage children's behaviour with praise and encouragement provided by the staff in response to positive behaviour. The staff were aware of the importance of communicating the various transitions and the impact of transitions on some of the children present. Sufficient notice and time were given through transitions to allow the children to adjust to the new activity. There was excellent communication between the staff members, and staff were always mindful of informing other staff of where they were and what they were doing.

The service took measures to promote important relationships for the children and this was evident on the family wall, where pictures of the children's families were displayed. Communication with the families was instant through an application where parents could receive up to date information about their child this included observations recorded and what type of day the child had. Verbal handovers were also observed to take place on the day.

The service provided evidence of the curriculum planning in the preschool and the plan for the term including long term and shorter goals. On review of observations completed by keyworkers it was evident that the children are involved in various activities in line with the themes of the aistear model. This included nature, planning for Christmas, making decorations, independent life skills and language development through songs, poems and storytelling.