

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2023TY007

Name of Service: Ready Steady Go Childcare

Address of Service: Killea NS, Killea, Templemore, Co. Tipperary

Eircode: E41 HW20

Name of Registered Provider: Lorraine Keeshan

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 11/04/2024

No of pre-school children: AM 6 PM -

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

Inspection undertaken by: L McGeeney

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

This service was established in 2023 to provide care and education to children aged 2 – 6 years old. A registered school aged care service is also available.

The service operates Monday – Friday for 43 weeks of the year. The service is registered to open 8am – 6pm with children currently attending between 8.30am and 3pm.

The service is provided from a room in Killea national school, in a rural area near the town of Templemore in north Tipperary. The children have access to their room and sanitary accommodation area as well as use of the schools resources including the outdoor play areas and visits from the mobile library service.

This is a sister service to Ready, Steady, Go Childcare in Corville, Roscrea.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service on a daily basis but is available to call on when required and visits the service each morning and evening. The registered provider was present in the service on the day of inspection. The service manager is the person in charge on a daily basis. There are two staff employed on a daily basis to work directly with the children and there is a relief member of staff who can be called on when required.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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 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.

(5) Paragraph (4) shall apply-

(a) on or after 31 December 2016 in respect of pre-school services registered on or before 30 June 2016, and

(b) on or after the date of registration in respect of all other pre-school services.

(6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who-

(a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and

(b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and

(c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service manager was the person in charge on a daily basis. There was a named person who could deputise in her absence.

(b) The designated person in charge or her deputy were present in the service while it was in operation.

(c) There was a clear management structure within the service with designated roles and responsibilities for each member of staff.

(2)(a) Written, validated past employer references were available in respect of the four members of staff, including the registered provider.

(b) Not applicable as all available references were from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting had been carried out in respect of each member of staff and relevant records were held on file. Garda vetting was reassessed on a three yearly basis in line with best practice.

(d) Not applicable as none of the staff had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or longer.

(3) Vetting procedures, including the acquisition of Garda vetting and assessment of references were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to a child in the service.

(4), (5) and (6) All staff who worked in the service held a recognised qualification in early childhood care and education at level 5, 6 or 8 on the national qualifications framework.

(7) Staff were given access to the policies, procedures and statements of the service and supported to engage in ongoing professional development including first aid training.

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.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-

(a) a sessional pre-school service, and

(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).

(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) There were two staff working directly with six children aged between 2 and 5 years old who were present in the service on the day of inspection. Children attended on a part time or full day care basis. The registered provider was also present on the day of inspection to facilitate the inspection and was not included in the adult to child ratios.

(2) and (4) The adult to child ratio was maintained at greater than the minimum requirements throughout the inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two staff present at all times while the service was in operation.

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.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The children enjoyed freedom of choice and freedom of movement within the activity room and in the outdoor play areas on a daily basis. The service was located in a primary school with an average enrolment of 11 children, many of whom were siblings or cousins of the children in the early years service. The children had the opportunity to play together when outdoors.

Toys, materials and activities were laid out in interest areas which guided the children's play and exploration. The materials available were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children.

Two of the children who were aged two years old regularly slept while attending the service. There were sleep mats, blankets and cushions for the children to use during their sleep time. These were laid out in the cosy area where the children could rest and relax as required during the day.

The staff were responsive to the children, their needs and desires. The favourable adult to child ratios ensured that each child received as much individual time and attention as they needed during the day.

(b) Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day such as before eating, after nappy changing or using the toilet and after outdoor play. There was a hop-up stool in front of the sink in the sanitary accommodation area to enable the smaller children to reach the sink and taps independently. Staff supervised and guided the children in the development of self-care skills such as hand washing and dressing for the outdoors.

Staff sat with the children while they ate, encouraging conversation and helping to open food containers or showing the children how to do it for themselves.

The children's drink bottles were stored on a low-level shelf in the room where the children could access them when they wanted a drink.

(2) The service had a positive behaviour management policy which stated that corporal punishment was never used in the service.

(3) The behaviour management policy stated that the staff ensured that children were treated with respect and that no practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful were carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service. Staff were observed to be kind and caring towards the children and to use tools such as sand timers to support the children with sharing and turn taking.

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) There was a registration form available in respect of each child enrolled in the service. The registration forms contained the required information as detailed under parts (a) – (j) of this regulation.