

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024LM001		
Name of Service:	Eivers Lane Childcare CLG Eslin Community Centre		
Address of Service:	Eslin Bridge, Tulcon, Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim		
Eircode:	M41 VY57		
Name of Registered Provider:	Padraic McWeeney		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	20/09/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM 8
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 consists of a large care room situated in a community centre in the rural village of Eslin Bridge near Mohill Co-Leitrim. The service has its own enclosed play area. The service will operate from 08:30 until 17:30 for 50 weeks of the year. The service consists of a kitchen area and sanitary facilities. There is car park to the front which is adequate for drop of and collection. Entry point is through the outdoor area at the back of the community centre.

Staffing

There is four adults employed in the service governance is provided by a manager of their sister service in nearby Dromod. The registered provider does not work directly with the preschool 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 and 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, 11 and 19. 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*
- (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) The service has a designated person in charge and a person available to deputise as required.
 - (b) A review of the records of attendance evidenced that at all times the person in charge or deputy is available on the premises.
 - (c) There is a clear structure of management in place in the service including person in charge and service manager.
- (2)
- A review of all five adults working in the service took place.
- (a) (b)
- Ten written and verified references from a past employer or another source was available for the five adults working in the service.
- (c)
- Garda vetting was available for all five adults employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)

International police vetting was available for the one adult who had lived outside of the state for six consecutive months.

(3)

These procedures were completed prior to an adult having access to our working in the service.

(4)

Five 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.

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 eleven children in the morning of the inspection and two adults working directly with eight children in the afternoon.

(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.

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

(1) (a)

The large preschool room is laid out with various interest areas to stimulate the imagination of the preschool child. Water and sand tables providing opportunities for sensory play. A construction area equipped with tractors, diggers and cars allowed for imaginative and role play. Arts and crafts supported the children's creativity while tabletop activities and jigsaws facilitated fine motor skill development. A rest area and library supported language development while a home corner with kitchen, dress up area and dolls gave opportunities for role play.

The care room was large with sufficient space to move freely from one area to another. The children were observed participating in song and dance moving throughout the care room playing action songs which allowed for physical movement while also promoting the language development of the preschool child.

The outdoor area was laid out in specific areas to support the gross motor skill development of the preschool children with balance beams, tunnels and climbing frames. Bikes and trikes were also provided. The children were observed to direct their own sense of play in this area, playing in groups and individually. A large tarmacadam surface also provided an opportunity for group activities and games such as football, hula hoops etc.

There was evidence of the children's learning and curriculum displayed on the walls of the service. Children's artwork decorated the walls. An observation chart included the adults' weekly observations of the children's learning. These observations would later be included in the children's journal to demonstrate the learning journey of the preschool child. The adults in the service had a clear plan of the learning goals for the months ahead and recorded short- and long-term goals on the notice board. These goals in line with the Aistear model would give structure to the children's learning over the months ahead.

The service used visual aids to inform and guide the children on the service, this included a visual aid for what to bring to school, which included change of clothes, wellingtons and suncream. A visual aid of the healthy eating policy, with pictures of what to include in lunches for example sandwich, chopped fruit and cheese.

Other visual aids included guides on how to wash hands and use the toilet. All aimed at promoting the independence of the preschool child.

(1) (b)

The children were observed to be content in the company of their peers in the service and the adults working directly with them. The adults were observed to laugh, joke and dance with the children evidencing a fun relaxed environment for the preschool child to learn and develop. Mealtimes were observed to be a social experience where children and adults sat together enjoying their food and talking about the day's activities. On the day the morning snack was provided from home in line with the service healthy eating policy. Lunches included sandwiches with a variety of fillings, yoghurts, mixed fruits, cheese and crackers. The main meal provided on the day and delivered to the service was Roast turkey, potato and vegetables.

Independence was promoted throughout, and the children were observed washing hands prior to mealtimes and after coming in from outdoor play or using the bathroom using the various visual aids as instructions and guides.

A rest area in the corner of the care room allowed children to rest or opt out of an activity. While all the children in the service did not require sleep, floor beds were available if required for children who presented tired and needing rest.

Communication between parents and staff members took place at morning and afternoon collections and drop offs. The staff took this time as an opportunity to share important information of how the child's day had gone. The staff members were observed to be kind and respectful throughout the day. The staff members encouraged and praised the children throughout tasks, stating 'well done' and 'try again' if not successful the first time. The staff members were observed to work well together with clear communication between all staff members working together to support the preschool child. As it was the start of the year some children were finding it difficult to transition into the service. The service took measures to support these transitions by facilitating shorter days and less children to make these transitions as smooth as possible for the preschool child.