

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY043
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Name of Service:	Feileacan Pre-school
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Address of Service:	St Senan's, Mountcoal, Listowel, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V31 E289
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Name of Registered Provider:	Olivia Hillard
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	17/01/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM	None
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy
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

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Description of service

Feileacan Pre-school is a private early years service that is registered to cater for children aged between 2 years and 6 years on a sessional basis. The service currently caters for children aged between 2 years 8 months and 5 years. The service is open between the hours of 9am and 12mid-day Monday to Friday.

Staffing

There are 4 adults currently employed in the service that includes the registered provider to work with the children on a daily basis. There is 1 adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme and 1 student undertaking work placement at the time of inspection.

The adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 5 to level 8.

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/ premises and facilities.

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.

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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.

Additional Information

The inspector made a referral to the Fire Officer to advise and clarify for the registered provider regarding the requirement for use of 1 of 3 fire exit doors

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*

(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.*

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(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 registered provider is the designated person in charge and there is a named designated person. The registered provider was rostered off duty on the day, she arrived at the service soon after the inspection commenced to facilitate the inspection process.
- (b) At all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the registered provider or the named deputy are on the premise.
- (2) The registered provider confirmed that 5 adults were working in the service and the recruitment records in relation to these 5 adults were inspected.
- (a) 5 written references with records of validation were on file from a past employer.
 - (b) 5 written references with records of validation were on file from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) A Garda Vetting Disclosure was on file for each of the 5 adults.
 - (d) Police Vetting was on file for 1 adult who resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 months.
- (4) The adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 6 and above.

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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.

(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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) Throughout the period of inspection, the registered provider did ensure that there was an adequate number of adults caring for the children present.

(3) The children attending the service on the day of inspection were aged between 2 years 8 months and 4 years. There were 4 adults directly caring for 26 children, 15 children in the Caterpillar room cared for by 2 adults and 11 children in the Féileacán room cared for by 2 adults. The registered provider did assist in the care of the children as well as assisting the inspection process. All children were attending the service on a sessional basis.

The adult child ratio was correct.

(8)(c) Not applicable as the service does not operate single-handedly.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

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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

- The adults caring for the children throughout the inspection were observed to be kind, caring and understanding of individual children's needs.
- The inspector observed children were comforted by the adults as needed during the session, taking their turns sitting with children on the comfortable soft seating area in the Fèileacàn room. Ample time was taken with children until they were ready to play again.
- Siblings were catered for on inspection and the inspector was informed that the children had the option of moving between the 2 playrooms on occasions as they wished.
- The children were observed playing freely in both rooms. They had access to a variety of toys and play materials in both rooms stored on low level open shelving, on the floor and at children's height. The adults informed the inspector that additional toys and play materials in storage are rotated throughout the year in line with the children's emerging interests.
- The parents/guardians of the children attending provide the food consumed on the premise. The food observed included sandwiches, yogurts, and a variety of fruit with water to drink.
- Individual children's dietary requirements were provided by the parents together with accompanying utensils for mealtimes.
- The mealtime was observed to be unhurried, and the children's individual needs were facilitated, for example children who did not wish to eat at the same time as others.
- Bottled water was supplied by the registered provider on the premises for children's use in addition to the drinking water and milk supplied by the parents.
- The children attending had unrestricted access to the toilet facilities located outside of the playrooms: - consisting of 1 room with 1 toilet cubicle and 1 wash hand basin, the 2nd room had 2 toilets and 2 wash hand basins. The adults were observed to accompany the children them to supervise and assist them.
- The children have access to a designated outdoor play area and a spacious indoor hall during the hours of operation.

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- The children went walking in the spacious enclosure surrounding the football pitch. The children were observed to be appropriately dressed for the outdoors and children's individual needs for going there were met.
- The inspector was informed of the links established with agencies supporting children in the service, in partnership with parents of children attending

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:

- The internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas.
- The entrance door was appropriately secured to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access.
- Monthly checks for both first aid boxes were conducted, a written record of the checks was maintained.

Infection Control:

- There was an instantaneous supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels at the sinks in the playrooms and the sanitary accommodation with the exception of the 1 wash hand basin in the children's sanitary accommodation.
- The children were observed washing their hands prior to the mealtime and after tabletop activities.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Popcorn was observed at the morning mealtime posing a choking hazard to children. This was at variance to the Healthy Eating Policy of the service that stated, "popcorn was not permitted".

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Infection Control:

2. An instantaneous supply of warm water was not available at 1 wash hand basin in the children's sanitary accommodation (with the 2 toilets and 2 wash hand basins) and at the adult sanitary accommodation to enable effective handwashing to reduce the risk of the spread of infection.
3. The children's perishable food items were not stored in the spacious fridges (1 fridge in each room) to prevent food spoilage.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated that: -

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety: 1. The parents were contacted through the What's App group to remind them of adhering to popcorn not allowed as per the Healthy Eating Policy of the service. The Healthy Eating Policy of the service was discussed. The staff will be more vigilant and will feel more confident in noting any breaches to parents.

Infection Control:

2. The plumber has installed an extra tap in the children's sanitary accommodation where the 2 toilets and the 2 wash hand basins are located. The water valve has been adjusted in the adult sanitary accommodation for instantaneous warm water. There was a staff meeting held on 22/01/'24, all staff were given the responsibility of checking the warm water system and the contact details of the plumber should there be no hot water available. The manager will check the water in sinks every morning before the children arrive to ensure there is adequate hot water. In addition, the plumber is to check the system every term to ensure the water system is working correctly. The staff will use the daily checklist to ensure there is adequate heating and warm water supply each morning. There will be more regular meetings with the club committee in keeping with the maintenance of the building. It is a challenge within the preschool, as the room, hallways, toilets are used for extra activities by other parties which does add a lot of extra work: cleaning and vigilance.
3. The perishable items are now stored in the fridge. At the staff meeting it was planned to use a "colour themed game" with the children after the rollcall to place the food in the fridge.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. A screen shot of the message sent to the parents as outlined above was submitted.

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Infection Control:

2. A letter from the Plumber dated 22.2.'24 was submitted stating that a new tap for warm water was installed in the children's sanitary accommodation in question, on servicing the water system the valve adjustment was rectified and that an agreement is in place to check the warm water system in the service each term. A photo of the wash hand basin with the new tap in place.
3. A screen shot of the message sent to parents with a request to label any perishable items for refrigeration in the service.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has 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

- (1) The Inspector was informed that 3 adults working with the children had current First Aid Responder (FAR) training with the certifications in respect of these on file.
- (2)
 - (a) Each playroom had a first aid box stored on a high-level shelf.
 - (b) The first aid boxes were accessible to the adults and out of the reach of the children.

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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 fire fighting 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) The service had maintained in writing a record of the following: -
- (a) A template to record each fire drill that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place prior on 09 .01.2024.
 - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance checks of the firefighting equipment. The record on file demonstrated the last check for the firefighting equipment was May 2023 and the smoke alarms was 10.11.2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the playroom

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated
 - (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

- (c)The playrooms were adequately lit, heated and ventilated on the day of the inspection. The air temperature of both playrooms was maintained within the appropriate limits that is between the range of 18-22 degrees Celsius.
- (d) The playrooms were observed to be clean; both had been painted since the last inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

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(c) The air temperature recorded in both the sanitary rooms and the adult sanitary accommodation/nappy changing room was recorded below the recommended range, it was recorded at 15 to 15.1 degrees Celsius. The registered provider informed the inspector the heaters in place in the sanitary accommodation and the hall area are not in working order since December 11th, 2023. The registered provider presented a text message to the inspector on the day of the inspection from the Chairperson of the building stating the heaters will be set by the electrician the following week. This was also founded at the last 2 inspections in respect of the children's sanitary accommodation, that is the accommodation with the 1 toilet. The registered provider submitted a corrective and preventive action at that time stating that a new heater was installed.

(d) An area of the ceiling surrounding 1 light fitting in the single toilet sanitary accommodation was cracked and the painting was peeling away.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated that: -

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) The Electrician has installed a fuse board for adequate plug facility in the storeroom, providing a source of power for the heaters to be safely plugged in. The heaters are in working order.

(d) The club are plastering and repainting ceiling in the single toilet. A timeframe of 6 weeks has been given for this to be completed. As the proprietor of the service, she will ensure that any repair to the preschool building will be noted straight away to the club chairperson.

Supporting documentation submitted

(c) The registered provider submitted photographs of wall thermometers in place in the sanitary accommodation stating that they are used to gauge the temperature. The statement is accepted as evidence.

(d) An email received from the registered provider on 22.3.'24 stated the club have commenced the works and aim to complete it over the Easter recess. A photograph of the repair work to the ceiling area around the light fitting was submitted.

Summary Comment

The requirement has been met.