Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report
Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK022
Name of Service:	Bernies Pre School
Address of Service:	Hillview House, Bottomstown, Knockainey, Co. Limerick
Eircode:	V35 P860
Name of Registered Provider:	Bernie Cleary
Service type:	Sessional
Date(s) of Inspection:	16/05/2023

No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Street Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan
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

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Description of service

Bernie's Pre-school Naionra is a private sessional pre-school service. It is located in a rural setting in the registered providers home in Knockainey, County Limerick. It is opened from 8.45am to 11.45am Monday to Friday. On the day of the inspection there were 11 pre-school children in attendance.

The service operates from a large well-resourced, purposely designed playroom in the house. There are sanitary facilities adjacent to the Pre-school room. Large outdoor, adventurous garden spaces are provided with a sheltered outdoor play space located next to the preschool room. Outdoor sanitary accommodation is also available.

Staffing

The registered provider is the owner and the designated person in charge of running the service. A second staff is employed at the school each day. Both staff hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. There is documented evidence in the service outlining the continued professional training and education undertaken by both members of staff.

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/unannounced* and focused on the area of *governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities.* The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 19, 25, 28.

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, 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 registered provider was present on the day of the inspection. A person to deputise if needed was also available.

(b) The staff roster indicated that both staff attend the service every day from time of opening to time of closure.

(2)(a) Two written references were available for both staff working at the service.

(b) References were from previous employers or from reputable sources.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the registered provider and for the second person employed to work at the service.

(d) Police vetting was not required for either staff member working at the service.

(4) Both held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education. The registered provider has also completed the LINC programme, a course designed to enhance the inclusion of children with additional needs in the service.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

A detailed policy document was available at the service with a comprehensive list of policies included. This document was available for all parents to read on request. Information on the services policies were outlined in the services parent handbook. All policies were reviewed in August 2022.

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.*
Compliance Information
(1) On the day of the inspection there were 11 pre-school children under the supervision of the registered provider and a second staff member. The adult/child ratio was correct in the facility. (3) The registered providers ensured that at all times the number of children and staff present in the service met the requirements of the regulations.

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) All children's registration forms were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of the children. (a) The name and date of birth of the child. (b) the date on which the child first attended the service. (c) provision to record 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 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 received by the child. (i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

Part IV – Information and Records
Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service
(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service: *(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;* *(b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;* *(c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;* *(d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;* *(e) the facilities available;* *(f) the opening hours and fees;*

(g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) all documents and records relating to references and Garda and police vetting obtained under Regulation 9(2) are retained for a period of 5 years from the date on which the person to whom the document or record relates commences working in the service, and

(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered providers ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service. This information was shared with parents in the services parent handbook.

(a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the persons in charge.

(b) Details of the type of service in operation and the age profile of children for which the facility is registered to provide services.

(c) Details of the adult: child ratios in the service.

(d) The type of care or programme provided in the service. This was clearly displayed on the wall of the school near the entrance for parents to read.

(e) The facilities available.

(f) The opening hours and fees.

(g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10 and were found to be comprehensive and detailed.

(h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child daily.

(i) Rosters were maintained on a daily basis and available for inspection. These correlated with the numbers that were present on the day of inspection.

(j) The service had a medication administration record template available that could be used in the event of a child requiring medication to be administered at the service

(k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(2) The registered provider stated the following:

(a) All documents and records relating to references and Garda vetting obtained under Regulation 9(2) were retained for a period of 5 years from the date on which the person to whom the document or record relates commences working in the service.

(b) A record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) was retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend 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

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

The services objective was to ensure that each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. There was a healthy eating policy in place to encourage and educate the children about the importance of good nutrition. The parents supplied healthy snacks and drinks for the pre-school children. Information was shared with the parents in the parent handbook on how to prepare varied and nutritious snacks. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator if required.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets which were located next to the preschool room and in the outside play area. Hot water, liquid soap and paper handtowels were accessible to ensure hygienic hand washing. Foot pedal operated, lidded bins were used for the safe disposal of used tissues and handtowels.

A change of clothes was available for all children if needed. Protective clothing was available for children when engaging in messy play activities. A large sheltered outdoor area was available to ensure children got opportunity for outdoor play regardless of the weather conditions.

A rest area was accessible next to a reading area if children wished to relax and have quiet time away from the active play areas. Soft furnishings were available in this space to promote a relaxed environment.

Children spend long periods outside every day at the service.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The physical and material environment of the service was carefully planned and organised to ensure each child's learning was facilitated. The indoors had many interest areas well developed, included lots of imaginative play spaces with dress up outfits, home corners, construction play areas and opportunities for art and craft activities all accessible. Children's artwork was displayed on the walls of the service. Posters demonstrating material on the concepts of opposites, literacy, numeracy were displayed around the room. The pre-school follows the principle that exposure to the natural outdoor environment and natural materials such as sand play, water play, clay, gardening/planting are beneficial for the early learning and development of young children. In the lawns and gardens outdoors, children spend long periods running, cycling, planting and gardening. Lots of ride on toys were available to use in a large open driveway. Small fairy gardens were created by the children. A large sand pit provided lots of entertainment. Tables and chairs outside facilitated children dining outdoors and completing lots of table top activities outside during the summer period.

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) Both staff at the service had completed first aid responder training and their certs were displayed on the wall of the service. (2)(a) There was a well-stocked first aid box located on the premises. (b) The first aid box was readily available and easily accessible if required.

Part VI - Safety
Regulation 28 - Insurance
A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.
Compliance Information
The registered provider had a current insurance certificate which outlined that adequate insurance was available for 22 preschool children to attend the sessional service. The insurance cover commenced on the 28th of March 2023 and expired on the 27th of March 2024.