

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK144					
Name of Service:	Puddleducks Pre-School					
Address of Service:	Kilgarriff, Ballylanders Co Limerick					
Email Address:	puddleduckspreschool@eircom.net					
Name of Registered Service Provider:	Ms Felicity Elliot					
Type of Service Registered:	Sessional	☒				
Date of Inspection:	1	3	1	0	2	1
No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:	AM	18		PM		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Office, South East Wing, Saint Joseph's Health Campus, Mulgrave Street, Limerick.					
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne					
Title:	Early Years Inspector					

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health Welfare and Development of Child	Safety

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	This preschool service first notified in 2008. The service is registered to provide a sessional service for children aged 2.8 – 5 years, Monday – Friday 09:00 – 12:30 for 38 weeks of the year, including the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme for eligible children.
Premises	The service is operated from 2 designated rooms in the registered providers own dwelling house, located in the rural setting of Kilgarriff, Ballylanders, Co Limerick. The pre-school children have access to 2 rooms, sanitary accommodation area and enclosed outdoor play areas to the back of the service.
Staffing	There are 3 adults who work directly with the children on a daily basis, and this includes the registered provider. The 3 adults who work in the service, all hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 6 and 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.
Methodology	Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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. 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 areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required. 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	Not applicable
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

GOVERNANCE

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.
- (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
- (6A is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of "paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)" for "paragraphs (5) and (6)", and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): "
- (6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

Compliance Information:

- (1)(a) The registered provider has ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise if required.
- (b) The person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)(a) Past employer references were available in respect of the 3 adults working in the service, with recorded validations where required.
- (b) References from reputable sources were available for the 3 adults where required.

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

- (c) Completed Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the adults working in the service.
- (d) Police vetting was not required for the adults working in the service.
- (4) The adults working in the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 and 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (6) Not applicable as the qualification exemption for staff retiring by September 2021 was not required.
- (6A) There was no adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model.

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 risk management policy was in place which identified any potential risks and the controls required to reduce or eliminate the risk. The policy had been reviewed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy on infection control had been updated to include infection control measures for COVID-19.
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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) thereof 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) The registered provider has ensured that the adult child ratio was correct. (3) On the day of the inspection there were 2 staff working directly with 18 pre-school children present. (8)(c) Not applicable as there were 2 staff present on the day of the inspection.
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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

Compliance Information:

BASIC NEEDS:

- Health eating was promoted, and children were encouraged to bring healthy and appetising snacks and drinks for breaks.
- The adults responded to the children's individual personalities, sensitivities and needs in relation to toileting, toilet training and nappy changing.
- Children had unrestricted access to the toilet, and don't have to wait to use the toilet. The privacy and dignity of each child was respected at all times.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their level of independence such as putting on their outdoor clothing, wiping their nose and toileting.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop good personal hygiene skills and were shown how to wash hand properly. The children were supervised to ensure they were hand washing before and after snacks, after toileting, after blowing their nose, after messy and outdoor play.
- A designated rest area was provided for the children to relax and to have some quiet time.
- The children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level in the choice of play activities.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service comprised of 2 playrooms which were comfortable, inviting and laid out to accommodate the needs of the children and adults in the setting.

The outdoor areas were safe, secure, and located directly off the main preschool room.

- Adequate and varied play equipment suited to the age and stage of development of the child was available in the 2 play rooms and in the outdoor play areas.
- The rooms were designed with clearly defined interest areas to encourage children to spread out into smaller groups for play activities. The areas were resourced with easily cleanable and washable materials. Open low-level shelving was used to store and display all equipment. Defined interest areas included reading/library areas, construction play areas, home corner, messy area, puzzles, manipulative play areas and small world areas.
- Items of interest were displayed at the child's eye level. The children's learning journals that contained a collection of their photos and art work were displayed at the child's eye level to view at any time on their own or with a friend.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

- The children had daily access to enclosed areas for outdoor play which were safe and secure environments. There was a cement yard for the children to ride their bikes and trucks. To extend the children's play and learning a zebra crossing was painted onto the yard. Also, traffic lights made by the children and adults from recycled card board was in place. Children had access to building blocks, a farm set and a large sand pit with shovels and buckets in the outdoor spaces. Paper and crayons were available on the picnic tables. The children were observed enjoying the many activities available on day. Many moments of fun and laughter was observed. To maximise the outdoor space the service plans to provide a sheltered space and additional natural materials for the children's play and learning.
- The equipment and materials in the outdoor area supported children's play, movement and exploration and provided opportunities for fresh air, exercise, and learning.

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:

- On arrival to the service, the entrance gate into the pre-school facility was secured. There was a hand sanitising station set up with instructions that all that enter the service were required to sanitize their hands.
- Throughout all areas in the service cleaning agents and hand sanitizers were stored in safe areas, well out of reach of children.

INFECTION CONTROL:

- The parents were required to confirm to the person in charge that the children attending each day were in good health and did not have any COVID-19 related symptoms.
- The service ensured that complete and accurate daily records of attendance were kept for all children, adults, and visitors.
- The adults were aware of the required actions to be taken if a child became symptomatic of Covid 19 while in the service.
- The adults demonstrated and encouraged children of the correct measures for coughing and sneezing.
- A written cleaning record was available where high contact areas were regularly cleaned throughout the day.
- All toys/play materials/equipment available to the children were cleaned each evening.
- Play rooms and the sanitary areas were adequately ventilated by natural ventilation and the windows remained open throughout the morning.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

- Personal waste including used tissues and all cleaning waste were appropriately disposed of in foot operated pedal bins.
- A supply of warm water, liquid soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer and bins for disposal of paper towels were available throughout the service.
- Hand washing occurred regularly and at required times by both the adults and children in the service throughout the morning.

FIRE SAFETY:

- Fire drills were practised monthly up to when the service closed at the end of June 2021. The service plans to do the first fire drill with the children for the new year the week beginning the week 13th October 2021.

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 2 adults working in the service were trained in First Aid response and on the premises. (2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box safely stored and easily accessible in the service. (b) The first aid box was available at all times if required for a child.
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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 firefighting 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)(a) The last recorded fire drill took place in June 2021 before the service closed for the summer. The fire drill will be practised the week of 13th October with all the children in the service. (b) The firefighting equipment will be upgraded this November 2021 and a record was maintained of the number, type, and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment in the premises. The fire alarm system was serviced regularly throughout the year with the last maintenance recorded in August 2021. (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.
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