

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO060
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Name of Service:	Teesan Playgroup
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Address of Service:	Teesan, Teesan, Co. Sligo
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Eircode:	F91 AW71
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Name of Registered Provider:	Emer Johnson
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	04/10/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	N/A
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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
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Description of service

Teesan Playgroup is a private sessional early years service. The service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years, operating from 9:30am to 12:30pm five days per week, 38 weeks per year. The service is located in a rural location, a short drive from Sligo town. The service is operating from a stand-alone, purpose-built building to the rear of a residential premises. There is one large playroom divided into three play areas, along with children's sanitary accommodation. A large outdoor play area is available to the side of the building.

Staffing

On the day of inspection there was three adults employed in the service. The registered provider who is the person in charge worked 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 *unannounced* and focused on the area of *governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety*. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29. however, on inspection. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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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*

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(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) (b).

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) (a) (b).

The records of all three adults employed in the service were reviewed.

Four written and verified past employer references and two references from a other source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all three adults employed in the service.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three adults employed in the service. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)

International police vetting was available for two of the adults employed in the service that had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Three adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 6 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

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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.

Compliance Information

(1)

There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service. There were two adults working directly with thirteen children in the morning of the unannounced inspection.

(3) 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 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- There was a wide variety of age and developmentally appropriate equipment for children both indoors and outdoors. This included a home corner resourced with a kitchen, crockery and food, a dress up area and shop. A construction area with cars, trucks, tracks and blocks. Arts and crafts, jigsaws, puzzles and tabletop activities. A library stocked with a variety of books for language development.
- All equipment and resources were stored on low level open shelving easily accessible to the preschool child.
- The preschool children had access to natural materials both indoors and outdoors. A nature table indoors provided a variety of leaves sticks and sycamore seeds.

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- The outdoor area was equipped with playhouses, swings and slides, sand boxes to aid sensory play, tractors, bikes and tyres for balance games.
- Outdoor table and chairs were made of natural materials that were strong and sturdy and connected to the environment.
- Tables and chairs indoors were suitable for the age and stage of the child to complete tabletop activities and appropriate for snack times.
- All equipment and resources were visibly clean and well maintained.

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 main entrance into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.

Infection Control:

- There were adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes and after messy play and snack times in the care room.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean, with cleaning checklists recorded on a tablet application
- Children were observed to wash their hands regularly including before snacks and meals and after using the toilet.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.

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- Fire assembly points were clearly identifiable on the perimeter of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for the three staff members in the service. However, one of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

In a written response the registered provider stated:

1. A Garda Vetting Application has been submitted to the National Vetting Bureau through Early Childhood Ireland. The applicant/employee has been advised that they were to receive an email with a link to complete the application and to check their email so that no delays would be experienced. The pre-school has opted to standardise the date upon which all employees' Garda Vetting will be renewed and this date has been added to the pre-school calendar. This will ensure that all vetting disclosures are maintained appropriately and are dated in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice "EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting". The pre-school will ensure that future reminders are put into the school calendar at the time of renewal to ensure continuous adherence to regulations

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting application submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately addressed the non-compliance.

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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 registered provider supplied evidence of one staff member trained in first aid responder with an expiry date of 3rd of April 2025. The registered provider had informed the inspector that further staff members are booked on training as their FAR had recently expired.

(2) (a) (b)
The registered provider had a first aid box that was replenished on the day with suitable equipment for the preschool child. This first aid box is stored appropriately and accessible in an emergency.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
(c) an authorised person.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

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Compliance Information

(1) (a)

The registered provider used an application for the records of all fire drills taking place in the service the most recent drill occurring in September 2024.

(b)

A fire registerer included all firefighting equipment in the service and a record of its most recent maintenance date of 23rd of August 2024.

(2) (c)

These records were available for review by the authorised officer.

(3)

The registered provider is aware of their responsibility to retain the records for a period of 5 years.

(4)

The fire evacuation procedure is displayed in a conspicuous location in the care room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The service operated out of two rooms with an open doorway to allow free flow between the two rooms for the duration of the session. The staff supervised the children by sight strategically placing themselves at various points to ensure the children were in sight at all stages. Independence was promoted throughout and at toileting, children were supervised from a distance and within earshot if the children required assistance.

On the day the children did not get an opportunity to play outside due to the inclement weather, however the outdoor area is set up to ensure that the children are in sight at all stages.

The communication observed between the two staff members supported effective supervision throughout the session, both staff were aware of where the other staff member was and who they had responsibility for.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider supplied evidence of adequate insurance for 23 preschool children in a sessional service up until the 27th of March 2025.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
((e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

(e)

There were no adult sanitary facilities in the service. However, the registered provider demonstrated that the adults working in the service had access to sanitary accommodation.