

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WH027							
Name of Service:	Sarsfield Pre-school							
Address of Service:	Sarsfield Community Centre, Sarsfield Square, Athlone, Co. Westmeath							
Email Address:	clonbruskmanager@acsc.ie							
Name of Registered Service Provider:	Sean Quilty							
Type of Service Registered:	Part Time	☒						
Date of Inspection:	3	1	0	5	2	0	2	2
No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:	AM	11	PM	NA				
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Unit, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.							
Inspection undertaken by:	C. O' Connor Hughes							
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 community service is registered as a part time service to operate between the hours of 09:00 to 13:00 on a Monday to Friday basis. This service is part of a multiple operated by Athlone Community Services Council, CLG. The service is currently operating from 09:30 to 12:30 delivering the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme. The age range of the children enrolled in the service is from 2 to 6 years of age.
Premises	The service is based in Sarsfield's Community Centre consisting of a playroom and kitchen located in the town of Athlone, Co. Westmeath. The service has access to the local outdoor play area adjacent to the service which was recently redeveloped by the local community.
Staffing	There were three adults present on the 31 May 2022 working directly with the children including the designated person in charge. The registered provider does not work with children.
Methodology	Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (Inspectorate) is the independent statutory regulator of early year's 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 year's 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 inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service. 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.
Acknowledgements	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the designated 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.
- (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.
- (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 service had a designated person in charge and deputy designated person in charge as required.
- (b)
The designated person in charge was present during the inspection.

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

The designated person in charge stated that one new staff member was employed since the last inspection on the 3 December 2020. The file of the new staff member was reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)

Two written validated references were available from past employers in respect of the new staff member.

(b)

Not applicable, as references were available from past employers in respect of the new staff member.

(c)

A completed Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the new staff member.

(d)

Not applicable, as no new staff member had lived outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3)

The procedures in respect (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) were carried out by the registered provider prior to the employment of the new staff member in the service.

(4)

The new staff member held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(6)(a)(b)

Not applicable, no new staff member had signed a declaration on or before the 30th of June 2016 to the effect that they intended to retire from employment in a pre-school service.

(6A)

Not applicable, as no staff member was working directly with children under the Access and Inclusion Model.

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*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times

Compliance Information:	(1) The minimum ratio of adults to children was exceeded during the inspection. (2) There were eleven children attending the service being supervised by three adults. (8)(a) Documentation reviewed indicated that two adults are on the premises at all times.
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HEALTH WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

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:

(1)(a)

BASIC NEEDS:

The service provides a breakfast to children on a daily basis. Parents provided a healthy snack for children in line with the service's healthy eating policy. Children were given plenty of time to enjoy their snack sitting at tables enjoying conversations and interactions. Snacks consisted of sandwiches, crackers, fruit and yoghurt. Children were offered a choice of milk or water to drink. Staff sat and ate their lunch with children at the morning break.

The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development including feeding themselves, hand washing, toileting and caring for their belongings. Children were observed happily engaged in tabletop activities, singing and enjoying a birthday celebration during the morning session.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:

There was a happy atmosphere in the service. A key person system was in operation in the service which helped to promote the emotional security of children attending. Staff present spoke to all children in a positive way, maintained eye contact and used individual children's names during activities. Staff were familiar with children in their care and their personalities. Children requiring extra assistance were supported by staff. Small work groups were observed where staff supported children during fine motor skill work.

A verbal handover was given to parents on collection. The designated person in charge stated parents are communicated with via a short messaging system (SMS) and one to one telephone calls as required. The children's learning journal depicting their work and activities are shared with parents at the end of the pre-school term. The service had invited the local national school to speak to the children to ensure smooth transitions for children moving to the national school in September 2022.

PHYSICAL & MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

A full range of developmentally appropriate, creative and enriching experiences was available for all children. Areas of interest included a home area, construction area, Sarsfield café, arts and crafts and a rest area with library.

Low level tables and chairs were noted with materials accessible to children on low level shelving. Materials available included paint, books, dolls, puzzles, blocks,

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

trucks, animals and fine motor skill toys including pegboards, jigsaws and shape sorters.

Children's artwork was displayed in the pre-school room. Photographic evidence was available of children's play activities in the children's individual learning journals.

In the outdoor play area, toys and equipment included a large climbing frame with two slides and a climbing wall, two large swings, a small slide and an adult bench.

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 entry to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents and hand sanitiser. Risk assessments were available for the outdoor play area.

INFECTION CONTROL:

The indoor environment was visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable and cleaning schedules were available and reviewed

Adequate supplies of warm water, hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. Hand sanitiser was available in the pre-school room. Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after toileting.

The pre-school rooms and sanitary accommodation were ventilated with openable windows and mechanical ventilation.

Foot operated pedal bins were noted in the pre-school room and sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

No medicine was administered at the time of the inspection. A temperature reducing medication was available for children if they presented with a high temperature.

SAFE SLEEP:

A comfortable rest area was available for children to rest and relax as required.

FIRE SAFETY:

Emergency exits were unobstructed. A designated fire assembly point was located to the front of the premises.

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)

An adult qualified in First Aid Response (FAR) was available on the premises.

(2)(a)

A first aid box was available in accessible and conspicuous location in the pre-school room.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school service.

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)

A written record for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 27 May 2022.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises.

The firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were serviced on the 1 December 2021 and 8 October 2021 respectively.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.