

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier: TU2015OY053

Name of Service: Stepping Stones Early Learning Centre

Address of Service: Clonaderg,
Ballinahown,
Athlone,
Co. Offaly.

Email Address: lorrainecfarrell@yahoo.ie

Date Service Registered: 3 0 0 6 2 0 1 6

Name of Registered Service Provider: Lorraine Farrell

Name of Designated Person in Charge: Michelle Grennan & Louise Preston

Type of Service Registered: Sessional

Date of Inspection: 1 6 0 5 1 8

No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection: AM 17 PM 10

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Services,
Unit 8A, Burlington Business Park,
Srah Avenue,
Tullamore, Co. Offaly.

Inspection undertaken by : D. Molloy
Title: Early Years Inspector

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

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).

Description of Service	<p>Stepping Stones Early Learning Centre is a sessional service operational since 2011. The age range of children attending is from 3 to 5 years. 2 sessional services are operational from 9.15am to 12.15pm and from 1.30pm to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday. The service has an enrolment of 30 children. Stepping Stones Early Learning Centre is a privately owned and operated service in the rural towns land of Clonadarg, Ballinahown, Co. Offaly.</p>
Premises	<p>Stepping Stones Early Learning Centre is located in a purpose built premises on the grounds of the registered provider's domestic dwelling. The premises is used for the sole purpose of operating the service. The service consists of 2 rooms, an office space, 3 toilets and 3 wash hand basins, a lobby area and an additional toilet with disability access. An extensive secure outdoor play area was provided.</p>
Staffing	<p>The registered provider was not part of the staff compliment and was not present during the inspection. All adults employed and working directly with the pre-school children have qualifications ranging from level 6 to level 8 Q.Q.I., National Qualifications Framework in Early Years. The service operated the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) which was provided for the needs of 2 children.</p>
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an unannounced focused inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under two themes; Governance, and the Health, Welfare and Development of the Child.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation and discussion with relevant staff are documented in this inspection report and will be presented to the Registration Panel for consideration in relation to continued registration. The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.</p>
Acknowledgements	<p>The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and acknowledges the presence of the children on the day.</p>

GOVERNANCE

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) There were 17 pre-school children attending the service in the morning and 10 in the afternoon. An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the pre-school service throughout the day.
- (3) At all times the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to.
- (8)(c) Not applicable.

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:

BASIC NEEDS

- Freedom of movement was part of the children's daily experience within the service. Children's free flow was observed through the open plan play rooms.
- Children brought in their own healthy lunches from home in association with the healthy eating policy which was in place in the service.
- Children could avail of rest time and take a period of relaxation as their individual needs dictated.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN

- The service was based within a rural community and the local environment and events influenced the relationships around the children. A visit from a local celebrity, who had been crowned the Rose of Tralee, was facilitated in the service and children were observed to create their own play around this visit.
- Parents were afforded the opportunity to discuss their own child's progress and an open door policy was in place to support this.
- Children were comfortable in the company of the staff who were consistently in the service each day.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The indoor and outdoor areas supported active learning within the structured and unstructured environment throughout the setting.
- A variety of montessori equipment, play based equipment and echo friendly and recycled equipment were provided for the children's use.
- The large extensive outdoor play offered opportunities and challenging experiences for the children.

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Panel

Registration Status:	
Conditions If Applicable	
Date of Registration	