



Newsletter

If you have anything that you would like included in our next newsletter, please contact the Early Years Information Team by email at eyiit@tusla.ie.

A Chara,

Welcome to our second newsletter. As the year ends I would like to wish you and your family a very Happy Christmas and a New Year full of health, happiness and peace. It has been a busy year as we progressed many important areas this year, including the implementation of the 2016 regulations, the development of the registration process, and the quality and regulatory framework.

I thank you for your on-going cooperation and engagement with the Inspectorate as we work together to ensure that the experiences children have in early years' service are positive.

Thank you also for participating in our consultation on the draft quality and regulatory framework, we welcome your feedback and would be delighted to hear from you if you have not already engaged in this process. Further information on the QRF can be accessed at : <http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/consultation-on-the-draft-quality-and-regulatory-framework-qrf>. In addition, I am working with the DCYA to ensure that supports and training will be available regarding the QRF in 2018.

Last week we published a comprehensive annual report for 2016. It outlines the activity of the Inspectorate in 2016 and has information on the analysis of 288 inspection reports of services inspected under the 2016 regulations and outlines key findings from these reports. The Inspectorate carried out 2,008 inspections of Early Years Services in 2016, of which 36 were new services seeking to register under the 2016 Regulations. An analysis of 288 inspection reports shows that 78% of regulations were found to be compliant while 22% were deemed non-compliant, showing a clear improvement from 2015 compliance levels (an increase of 6%). The link to access the annual report is <http://www.tusla.ie/publications>

From this month the Inspectorate's practice of investigating individual complaints will cease. We are changing to the management of unsolicited information which we have expanded on in this newsletter. Children First has commenced and we alert you to the information available on the Tusla website to assist you in your responsibilities. We have included a note on the choking hazard presented by grapes and also information relating to First Aid qualification requirements.

Finally, and most importantly I want acknowledge that your commitment to children and their families is recognised and most valued by the Inspectorate and we look forward to a positive on-going engagement with you in 2018.

Kindest regards,

National Manager, Early Years Inspectorate

Maintaining Warm Environments for Children Attending Childcare Services

As Ireland is currently experiencing very cold wintry weather it is important to ensure that the premises are adequately heated so that the welfare and comfort of both the children and staff working in the service is met.

Regulation 29(c) of the 2016 Regulations requires that the service be adequately heated. The required room temperature in sleep rooms must be maintained between 16°-20° Celsius and all other areas within a range of 18°-22° Celsius. In the event that the service cannot be adequately heated to the required temperatures by the normal heating mechanism the Registered Provider must undertake a risk assessment and put a plan in place. This plan must include the steps to be taken, in the event that the service cannot be adequately heated, so that the well-being of the children is maintained.

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Children First

The Children First Act is fully now commenced. This means that mandatory reporting is now in place in Ireland and there is a legal obligation on certain categories of people (Mandated Persons) to report child protection concerns to Tusla.

Under Schedule 2, the Act specifies certain classes of people as mandated people, including, a child care staff member employed in a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Childcare Act, 1991.

The Children First Act 2015 also requires organisations that are providers of 'relevant services' to prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement, which is circulated to all staff, displayed publicly and made available to parents, guardians, Tusla and members of the public upon request.

Tusla has produced a suite of information to support the full commencement of The Children First Act, and the launch of the revised Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children. This is available at: <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first>.

There is also an eLearning programme for all which is available at: <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme>

The requirements for a safety statement and the guidance on developing a Safety Statement are also available at: <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-2017/>

The Choking Hazards of Grapes: A Plea for Awareness

A recent article in the British Medical Journal from the Emergency Department, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in Scotland has highlighted the risk of choking from grapes to very young children. Grapes are the third most common cause of death among children who die in food-related choking incidents (US and Canada). The size and shape of grapes means that they can completely plug children's airways, with the tight seal produced by fruit's smooth, flexible surface making them difficult to move with first aid manoeuvres. This article presents three case stories of children aged 17 months, two years and five years.

In highlighting and raising awareness of the risks of choking in young children from grapes and similar foodstuffs it is hoped to prevent further episodes from happening. The full text of the article can be viewed at:

<http://adc.bmj.com/content/102/5/473>

The paper is also included on the HSE website : www.hse.ie/childsafety under the following headings: Child Safety - Asphyxia: Choking, strangulation & suffocation

Hot Topics: http://www.hse.ie/eng/health/child/childsafety/hot_topics/ High choking risk foods for children under 5 years which highlights:

- Choking risks
- How to avoid choking risks
- What to do if your child is choking

First Aid

2016 Revised Regulations

The 30th June 2016 saw the commencement of the revised Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. In accordance with Regulation 25 a registered provider is required to ensure that there is a person trained in First Aid for children immediately available at all times to the pre-school children attending the early years service.

First Aid Response (FAR)

The Early Years Inspectorate recognise the first aid training course: First Aid Response (FAR) developed by the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) and delivered by a training provider approved by PHECC as meeting the required standard for compliance with the revised regulation in early years registered services.

PHECC is responsible for approving organisations to become PHECC recognised institutions to quality assure the delivery of the FAR training standard. It is important when accessing FAR training that the PHECC certified FAR Instructor is recognised by PHECC.

The FAR offers appropriate training for individuals who require a first aid skill set for both adults and children. The FAR standard includes the full Cardiac First Response Community programme covering the skills of adult, child and infant CPR and relief of choking.

All successful course participants are given joint PHECC/Recognised Institution FAR certificates. The certificate expires after two years at which time candidates may recertify.

From the 1st September 2017:

Early year's staff availing of First Aid Training for the first time must undertake FAR training.

Early year's staff seeking to renew their qualification must undertake FAR training.

Early Years staff seeking a refresher course must undertake the FAR training.

Transition Arrangement

The Early Years Inspectorate will recognise training and education and assessment relating to certified First Aid courses, the QQI's level (5N1207) and the refresher certification that took place up to the 31st August 2017. This will be accepted until January 2019.

(Please note that it is possible that the QQI component certificate could be dated post 31 August 2017, e.g. October or December 2017 - in such instances where the course has been undertaken prior to 31st August 2017 this certification will be accepted).

Documentary evidence of in date certification is required in all instances.

Additional Information:

The Early Years Inspectorate Q & A document Q. 229 to Q. 230 set out the position regarding the requirement on commencement of the revised regulations on the 30th June 2016. The Q & A document can be accessed at:

<http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-pre-school-inspection-services/questions-asked-to-the-hse-from-the-early-years-sector>

Further Information regarding the FAR standard can be found at:

<https://www.phecit.ie/>

QRF Consultation – Reminder

The online consultation on the draft Quality and Regulatory framework will close on 15th January 2018. To submit your views on the draft please click on the

following link: [QRF Consultation](#)



An Introduction to the Registration Office of the Early Years Inspectorate

The registration office is based in Limerick. The Registration Manager, Ms. Denise Collins, Regulatory Officers and Registration Support Office for Unsolicited Information are based in the office. The staff interact with the registered providers, voluntary organisations, Early Years Inspectorate, different Government departments and the public. The functions of the office include: the management of: new applications for registration; Early Years Registration Panel, Oversight of Unsolicited Information; Change of Circumstances; Cessation of Services and Notified Incidents. Over the coming months, the registration office will input into the newsletter to explore for you each area of the office with helpful information to assist with each individual process. The documents and further information are available on www.tusla.ie under the Early Years Inspectorate tab. The office can be contacted via email at ey.registration@tusla.ie.

Changes to Management of Complaints by the Inspectorate

The 2016 regulations brought a number of new requirements to the early year's sector. Regulation 32 now places onus upon registered providers to have a comprehensive complaints management process in place and to address all complaints received from the public, parents or their staff.

The Early Year's Inspectorate receives, on a continuous basis, unsolicited information regarding early years' services. Unsolicited information is any piece of information that relates to the operation of an early years service that has been brought to the attention of the inspectorate which has not been sought, requested or invited. Such information can include complaints relating to registered services.

From December 18th the Inspectorate's practice of investigating individual complaints will cease. The inspectorate will now be commencing operating the management of unsolicited information policy where:

- All the information received is screened : accepted, not accepted or referred to another agency as appropriate;
- Accepted information is risk assessed to determine the management plan;
- The registered provider is advised of all unsolicited information received, which falls within the remit of the regulations in the form of a summary sheet;
- The risk to children is assessed as low, the registered provider will investigate according to the services complaints policy, which Tusla will give oversight;
- In all other instances, it will inform the next scheduled inspection or trigger a more immediate inspection;
- In all cases the registered provider is given an opportunity to respond to the unsolicited information and to the inspection report through the CAPA and factual accuracy processes.

This revised process for the management of unsolicited information will be piloted until March 2018. Following this pilot phase those services who have been involved and the consultative group and the inspectorate will be requested to give feedback to inform any improvements of the process. Information for any person who has a concern about an early years' service has been updated on the website at: <http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/concerned-about-the-operation-of-a-eyes>