

October 8 2020

Re: Inspections in Early Years Services

Dear Provider,

I hope you are keeping well.

You will be aware we recommenced inspections in services in July and as a transitional measure, we made a number of changes to our inspection process. These changes were introduced to ensure the safety of your staff/children and our inspectorate team and to lessen the burden on you as you reopened your service during the pandemic. The changes included reducing the time spent on-site, increasing the remote component of the inspection and announcing the date of the on-site work. In addition, a significant part of the inspection is focused on the controls you have put in place to comply with infection control obligations.

It has also been necessary, and we will continue to, in a small number of cases, carry out unplanned inspections without a remote component where significant or urgent concerns are raised about a service (e.g. unsolicited information).

We have reviewed the implementation of this revised methodology and in line with public health advice, we will continue to minimise the amount of time spent on-site by conducting a significant portion of the inspection offsite. From October 12, Early Years Inspectors will continue to contact the registered provider or person in charge in advance of the on-site inspection and provide them with an opportunity to submit the required documentation prior to going on-site. However, the registered provider will no longer be informed of the date of the onsite component of the inspection. This is in line with regulatory best practice and other state regulatory agencies.

This change in process is documented in our revised inspection protocol, see attached.

Yours sincerely,



Eibhlin O'Leary

Head of Inspection and Assessment

Children's Service Regulation