

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC037
Name of Service:	Ballyellis Childcare T/A Quality Childcare
Address of Service:	Valley Walk, College Wood, Mallow, Co. Cork
Eircode:	P51 YK72
Name of Registered Provider:	Sandra Relihan
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
Day 1 of Inspection:	12/02/2024
Day 2 of Inspection:	06/03/2024

No of pre-school children:	AM	55	PM	45
Day 2	AM	56	PM	47

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square, Mallow, Cork. P51 5DDY
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel
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	N/A
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Description of service

Ballyellis Childcare T/A Quality Childcare offers early years care and education to children on a full time, part-time and sessional basis. While registered to accommodate children from 0 to 6 years of age the service currently facilitates children from 12 months to 6 years old. The Early Years Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme operates from 9.30 am until 12.30 pm and while the service is registered to open from 7.30 am until 6.30 current opening times are from 7.30 am until 6.00 pm. A breakfast club is available in the morning from 7.30 am until 9.00 am and the afterschool club is open from 1.00 pm until 6.00 pm. The outdoor play areas are located at the back of the service and are accessible from the ground floor care rooms, car parking is available to the front and side of the building.

The service is located in a residential housing estate on the outskirts of the urban area of Mallow town in County Cork. It operates from a purpose-built childcare facility which consists of six care rooms, three of which are located on the ground floor and three on the upper floor. There is an office, professional kitchen, staff room, adult and children's toilets, two nappy changing rooms and three dedicated sleep rooms. In addition, one of the care room upstairs and also the Toddler care room downstairs were also in use as a sleep areas after lunch.

Staffing

There were twenty-five staff employed during the period of inspection including two Support Workers on the Access and Inclusion Model, one cook and one cleaner. The registered provider does not work in the service and there are currently three students on placement.

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

The inspections were unannounced and focused on the areas of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

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.

Additional Information

Day 2 of the inspection was triggered by information received by the Early Years Inspectorate. A referral was made to the Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, deputy, staff and children who were present on the days of 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.*

(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.

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The registered provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge, deputy and named persons available on the premises. Both the designated person in charge and the deputy were on the premises when the inspector arrived.

(b) The staff roster indicated that either the designated person in charge, deputy and/or named persons were on the premises while the early years children were present in the service.

(2) Recruitment files for all twenty-nine adults were reviewed;

(a) There were thirty-five validated references from previous employers

(b) There were twenty-one validations and twenty-two references from sources other than previous employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all adults for whom they were required. 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) Five adults, for whom international police vetting disclosures were required, as they had lived outside of the State for a period of six consecutive months or more, had international police disclosures on file.

(4) Twenty-one staff members working directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications. One additional staff member had a Letter of Eligibility to Practice from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Five staff members did not require qualifications as one was working in school age care, one was the cook, one was a cleaner and the three other adults were students on placement.

(7)

(a) The registered provider ensured that all employees were appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information and where necessary training.

Team Meetings

- Staff stated that structured meetings with management took place every three months. Documentation was available from management to evidence that the last meeting had taken place on 27 November 2023. Minutes of previous meetings were available with dates noted to include 22 August and 12 May 2023. Examples of topics included; parent feedback questionnaire, use of the childcare management application, cleaning, phone use and importance of outdoor play.

Training

Certificates were available which evidenced all staff had participated in the following training courses;

- Children First E-Learning Programme. In addition, the designated liaison person and the deputy liaison person had both completed The Always Children First Child Safeguarding Awareness Training.
- Manual Handling
- In addition, individual staff members had certificates based on areas of interest identified during supervision, including Supporting Positive Behaviour and Aistear outdoor play.

Staff Induction

- New staff had been inducted in line with the service's induction policy. This was evidenced by a completed induction checklist held on file and through discussion with a staff member.

The inspector observed that all staff and students had signed a document to say that they had received and read the service's policies and procedures, which formed part of each individual staff member's recruitment file.

Management stated that the service had recently completed a period of engagement with Better Start on the Quality Development Programme from June to December 2023.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(a) (b) There were two validations and one reference missing in regard to one adult.

(4)

(d) Two staff members, working directly with the children, did not hold major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications or have letters of eligibility to practice from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

(7) (a)

(1) Contrary to the service's supervision policy which stated that staff supervision would be scheduled every 12 weeks, documentation presented to the inspector indicated that staff supervision had taken place 8 months previously, posing a potential risk of lack of communication between staff and management and a lack of clear direction for staff. In addition, the documentation had not been signed by management and staff as stated in the policy. In conversation, management stated they were new to the role and were unaware of the frequency of the supervision sessions.

(2) The supervision policy referred to staff appraisals, which were stated as being carried out before the end of the probationary period and yearly thereafter. However, this was contrary to current practice as there were no appraisal records available when requested by the inspector. In conversation with staff and management it was stated that appraisals did not take place in the service, posing a potential risk that staff are not supported, motivated or encouraged to develop their practice.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The following statements were received from the registered provider;

- (2)
- (a) (b) All references and validations are now on file for this staff member.
- Management will ensure that all supervision records are signed by both management and the staff member.
- (4)
- (d) One staff member now has a Letter of Qualification Recognition on file and the second staff member is working in school age care until confirmation of qualifications is received.
- (7) (a)
- (1) The supervision policy has been amended to reflect that supervision will take place every six months.
- Management will ensure that all supervision notes are signed by both management and the relevant staff member.
- (2) All staff members will have an appraisal carried out before the end of their probationary period and thereafter annually, in line with the service's supervision policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)
- (a) (b) The missing validations and reference were received in the office of the inspectorate for the employee for whom they were missing.
- (4)
- (d) A copy of a Letter of Qualification Recognition from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth was received to confirm that one staff member has the equivalent of a minimum of Level 5 in Childcare. The statement from the registered provider that the second staff member will not be working with the early years children until qualification recognition is in place has been accepted.
- (7) (a)
- (1) A copy of the supervision policy with the amended timeframe was received in the office of the inspectorate.
- The statement from the registered provider that management will ensure that the supervision notes are signed by both management and the relevant staff member has been accepted.
- (2) The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The corrective actions implemented by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 (2) (a) (b), (4) (d) and (7) (a).

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The service was noted to have the following policies as required, both of which met the requirements:

Day 1

- Complaints
- Outdoor

Non-Compliance Information

On day 2 it was noted that the following four policies required further development:

- (1) The behaviour management policy did not include the following information; that if child abuse or neglect is suspected, it is managed in line with the services child safeguarding statement and associated procedures for the protection and welfare of children. While it did mention that corporal punishment is forbidden it did not mention further practices which are prohibited including practices which are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful.
- (2) The accident and incidents policy, (known as Minor accidents/Mishaps Policy and Accident Prevention), did not include; the measures to be taken in the service to prevent accidents and incidents, how notifiable incidents would be informed to the early years inspectorate, or a risk assessment being carried out following an incident/accident occurring in the service.
- (3) The risk management policy did not set out how long the risk management records should be kept.
- (4) The inspector noted that the supervision policy was a generic policy and was not specific to the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1), (2) and (3) The behaviour management, accidents and incidents and management policies were updated to include the required information. Staff were sent the updated policies which will be reviewed and updated annually and as required.

(4) The supervision policy has been tailored to the service and its practices. It was sent to staff and will be reviewed annually and as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1), (2) and (3) Copies of the updated behaviour management, accidents and incidents and management policies were received in the office of the inspectorate which included the necessary information required. The statement from the registered provider that staff were sent the updated policies and that the policies will be updated annually and as required has been accepted.

(4) A copy of the service specific supervision policy was received in the office of the inspectorate. The statement from the registered provider, that it was circulated to all staff and will be updated annually and as required, has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The corrective actions implemented by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 10.

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 registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working with the children at all times.

(2) The adult/child ratios were met.

Days	Room	am	pm
Day 1	Baby room (12-18 months)	6 children were supervised by 2 staff members. 1 student on placement.	7 children were supervised by 3 staff members, 1 student was on placement.
Day 2	Baby room (12-18 months)	6 children were supervised by 2 staff members.	6 children were supervised by 2 staff members.
Day 1	Toddler room (18 months – 2 years 8 months)	13 children were supervised by 4 staff members	13 children were supervised by 3 staff members.
Day 2	Toddler room (18 months – 2 years 8 months)	12 children were supervised by 3 staff members.	12 children were supervised by 3 staff members.
Day 1	Pre-Montessori Room 1, (3 years - 4 years)	10 children were supervised by 2 staff members	In the afternoon the 3 Montessori rooms came together, there were 19 children supervised by 4 staff members in the Pre-Montessori 1 Room.
Day 2	Pre-Montessori Room 1, (3 years - 4 years)	11 children were supervised by 2 staff members.	In the afternoon the Montessori room and Pre-Montessori 1 came together, there were 12 children supervised by 2 staff members, 1 student was on placement.
Day 1	Pre-Montessori Room 2	12 children were supervised by 2 staff members. 1 student on placement.	

	(2 years 8 months – 4 years)		
Day 2	Pre-Montessori Room 2 (2 years 8 months – 4 years)	14 children were supervised by 3 staff members.	8 children were supervised by 3 staff members.
Day 1	Montessori Room (3 years – 6 years)	14 children were supervised by 2 staff members	
Day 2	Montessori Room (3 years – 6 years)	13 Children supervised by 3 staff members and 1s student.	
Day 1	Montessori Sleep Room		6 Children supervised by 1 staff member.
Day 2	Montessori Sleep Room		9 Children supervised by 1 staff member.

- (8)
- (a) On both days of inspection there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times in accordance with the staff roster.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;

- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the registered provider, designated person in charge, deputy, staff and students were observed to be kept in the staff recruitment files.
 - (b) Details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide were available on the Tusla Registration Certificate displayed in the hallway opposite the kitchen.
 - (c) The details of the adult child ratios were kept in the Parent Handbook.
 - (d) (e) (f) The type of care programme available was in the Parent Handbook along with the facilities available, opening hours and fees.
 - (g) The services policies and procedures, required for Regulation 10, were kept in soft form in the office in the service.
 - (h) The attendance records for each child were available and stored on a software package on the tablets in each care room. A master copy was also available from the deputy manager.
 - (i) The staff rosters were furnished to the inspector and were noted to have been completed daily reflecting the changes that had occurred. Examples included staff absence/sickness/relief staff.
 - (j) A sample of ten Administration of Medication forms were reviewed in the Baby Room, of these, six were fully completed with the staff member, witness and parent/guardian signatures.
 - (k) A sample of ten Accident/Incident forms from the Baby Room were reviewed these were found to contain all of the particulars required.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (j) Four Administration of Medication forms were missing parent/guardian signatures. Parental/Guardian acknowledgement of a notification of medication is necessary to ensure that they are aware that medication was administered in order to avoid any issues should the child require any further medication or intervention.
- (k) While there were accident/incident reports recorded and available for the Toddler care room in the accident/incident report book, there were no accident /incident reports recorded which included the information received in the inspectorate. In conversation, two staff members stated that no reports had been made. Not informing parents/guardians of any accidents or incidents poses a risk as symptoms may arise later which may require treatment or care as a result of the event which took place, and the parent/guardian may not be aware of any treatment previously administered.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The following statements were received from the registered provider;

- (1)
- (j) All four signatures have been input onto the four administration of medication forms. Staff have been reminded that the forms must be signed by parents/guardians.
- (k) Staff have been reminded that all accidents/incidents including minor trips, falls or other injuries must be recorded in the accident/incident report book and parents/guardians informed on the day that the accident/incident takes place.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1)
- (j) Copies of the four administration of medication forms, with the parent's/guardian's signatures attached, were received in the office of the inspectorate.
- (k) Copies of retrospective accident/incident reports, written by management, as both staff members working in the room had left the service, were received in the office of the inspectorate in respect of the information which triggered the second day of inspection.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances identified under Regulation 16 (j) and (k) have been addressed.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

Parents/guardians were provided with the information referred to in subparagraph (a) to (f) of Regulation 16 (1).

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider failed to ensure that parents/guardians were provided with copies of the service’s policies, procedures and statements on enrolment, the information referred to in subparagraph (g) of Regulation 16 (1). This poses the risk that parents/guardians are unaware of the of what procedures must be carried out in particular to issues or practice. In conversation, the deputy manager stated that parents/guardians are not given the service’s policies, procedures and statements on enrolment.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The following statement was received from the registered provider;

(1) The policies and procedures will be uploaded to a software package which all parents/guardians can easily access.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance identified under Regulation 17 has been addressed. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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, and

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

- Snacks and hot meals are provided by the service with children attending full day care being offered at least two meals and two snacks.
- A four-week menu plan was presented to the inspector which evidenced that there was a wide variety of healthy and nutritious food being served throughout the month. Parents/guardians provide additional food based on their child's preferences. All food served on day on inspection was observed to be age and stage appropriate.
- Morning breakfast, available from 7.30 am until 9.30 am, consisted of wheat and oat-based cereal along with toast for the older children and buttered bread observed being served to the children in the Baby room.
- Mid-morning snack was available from 10.30 am and children in the Montessori 3 room were observed being offered a selection of mixed cut fruit along with rice cakes and cream cheese.
- Lunch of creamy Mac'n'cheese with pancetta was observed being served in the Toddler Room at 11.30 am where some children were assisted by the adults to eat while others were encouraged to feed themselves. Afternoon tea, served at 2.30 pm, consisted of a selection of cold wraps with snacks also available as the afternoon progressed. Alternative food was available, if required.
- All children had access to age and stage appropriate cutlery and crockery with the children in the baby room having access to bowls and spoons while older children had access to plates and cutlery.
- Children in the Toddler care room were able to access water from two handled beakers with lids and beakers with no handles and the older children in Montessori 3 were observed accessing water from a jug and each had their own cup.
- Babies and toddlers were both observed wearing bibs at feeding time to protect their clothing.

- Nappy changes in the Baby and Toddler care rooms were observed being carried out on a regular basis and as and when required. Each child's dignity and privacy were observed to be respected with only one child being changed at a time.
- Staff carrying out nappy changing were observed chatting and singing, availing of the time for one-to-one interactions, giving each child their full attention.
- Children in the Montessori room were observed accessing the sanitary area independently, an adult was nearby to supervise, if required.
- In each of the care rooms children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of couches, vinyl shapes, bean bags, cushions and soft matting. Six children staying on for full day care from the Montessori 1 & 2 care rooms were observed going for a sleep/rest after lunch while the others went to play outdoors.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS:

- Staff stated they carry out observations, examples of which were presented to the inspector in both the Baby and Toddler care rooms, of the children. The observations documented the children's interests, milestones and needs, which staff stated are shared with their key parents/guardians.
- Staff members in the Baby care room were observed to be warm and caring in their interactions with the children. For example, staff were observed comforting children who were upset by picking them up and cuddling them and speaking to them gently while offering reassurance.
- The atmosphere during mealtimes was noted to be relaxed with staff engaging in social interactions while feeding the babies sitting in highchairs, sitting directly opposite them in the Baby care room, or staff sitting at the table in the Toddler care room encouraging children to feed themselves independently.
- The staff members in the Baby and Toddler care rooms were observed to work well as a team and were heard on a number of occasions discussing the children's needs frequently throughout the day.
- Partnership with parents was observed by the inspector with the parents able to come into the building to drop off their children and speak with the staff members in their child's care room. In conversation with management, it was stated that a parent questionnaire had been distributed in September 2023 inviting feedback from the parents/guardians and their children in order to improve the quality of the service. A copy of the questionnaire was presented to the inspector.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The layout of the rooms allowed staff to easily supervise the children as they moved from area to area.
- Each care room was laid out in clearly defined areas with materials and resources which enhanced the learning needs of all children across all developmental areas. Examples included soft mats on the floor in the Baby care room, where the children spent a large part of their day, and an age and stage appropriate wooden gym in the Toddler care room where children had opportunities to climb helping to develop their early gross motor skills.
- Throughout each care room toys and resources were positioned to allow children choice and encourage independence. There was room for the children to move freely and explore each area.
- The furniture in each room was suitable for the age and stage and personal needs of each child. The younger children were observed in high chairs and mats on the floor and older children were seated at tables with their feet on the ground when carrying out table top activities and eating food.
- The walls were decorated with the children's artwork, family photographs, birthday photographs, and themed related activities including a rainbow made by the children's hands.
- The outdoor play areas offered a range of developmentally appropriate equipment. Opportunities for children to take risks were provided with equipment including climbing walls, frames and slides. The children had access to balance bikes, ride-ons and rockers promoting gross motor skills and a mud kitchen, play house, and wooden shop were available for imaginary play. A covered area was available where the children could access the outdoor play in all weathers.

Non-Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

- (1) In conflict with the service's outdoor policy children in the Baby care room were not brought outside for outdoor play on a daily basis. On the day of inspection children from the Baby care room were not observed accessing the outdoor play area. On review of the recorded documentation children had not been in the outdoor play area since 21 November 2023. This may pose a risk for children's fine and gross motor skills, access to fresh air, exploration and a change of environment.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The Baby room staff have been reminded of the importance of outdoor play. Measures have been put in place, including bringing in extra staff, to facilitate the transferring of the babies to the outdoor play area. This will be monitored by management to ensure that the children are able to access outdoor play regularly.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance identified under Regulation 19 has been addressed. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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 entrance door into the service was secured to prevent unauthorised access by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- All windows were fitted with window restrictors.
- Blinds in the sleep rooms were secured with hooks and were placed out of reach of the children.
- The stairs were fitted with handrails to assist the children to walk safely and independently on the stairs.
- Both natural and artificial light were in place to ensure the staircase was well lit.
- The staircase was fitted with linoleum which was in good condition.
- All seven highchairs in use in the Baby room were fitted with safety harnesses.
- Toys and play equipment in the indoor and outdoor areas were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Heavy equipment and shelving were anchored to prevent them falling or tipping.
- Flexes and cables were stored out of reach of the children in all care and sleep rooms.
- Cleaning agents in the Baby room were stored on a shelf out of reach of the children.

- Waste in the care rooms was observed to be stored in pedal operated bins.
- Both the staff and professional kitchens areas were inaccessible to the children.
- The outdoor play areas were secured by concrete block walls, fencing and gates ensuring that unauthorised persons could not access or enter the area or that the children could not exit the areas unsupervised.

Infection Control:

- Staff in both the Baby and Toddler nappy changing rooms were observed wearing disposable gloves and aprons for each nappy change. Nappies were placed in nappy sacks and disposed of in sealed, lidded and pedal operated bins.
- Children's personal belongings for nappy changing in the Baby and Toddler changing areas were available nearby in individually labelled designated containers.
- Children in the Montessori sanitary area and Toddler changing area were observed washing their hands after food and toileting. They had access to thermostatically controlled hot water, recorded under 43°C, dispensing soap, paper roll from a dispenser and a pedal operated bin to dispose of the paper waste. Adults were nearby to provide assistance if required.
- Soothers in the Baby room were stored in a sterilising solution when not in use.
- Staff in the Montessori care room were observed sanitising the tables before and after food with disinfectant spray and disposable paper roll.
- All children's coats were stored on individual hooks, off the floor area in each designated area.
- Adults and children were observed sweeping the floors in the Montessori 3 room, ensuring the area was kept safe and hygienic.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had anti-febrile medication available which was stored in its own container and was available in the main office and in the care rooms, should it be required.

Safe Sleep:

- In total there were five sleep areas in use on both days of inspection. These were located off the Baby sleep room, Toddler main care room and two dedicated sleep rooms off the care room; and in a care room upstairs which is used for the various children in the Montessori care rooms who require a sleep/rest after lunch.

Baby room (Separate room off the main care room)

Day 1: There were eight cots available, each cot was fitted with a waterproof mattress and a cellular blanket. The names of the children were displayed beside the cots.

Day 2: There were eight cots available, one child was observed sleeping at 1.45 pm.

Toddler Room (Main care room, Sleep room 1 and Sleep room 2)

Day 1: There were eight cots in total in use in both dedicated sleep rooms (Six in sleep room 1 and two in the sleep room 2) and a child on a floor bed in the sleep room 2. In addition, there were children sleeping in the main care room on a floor bed and on a stackable bed. Three staff members were monitoring the sleep rooms, one each in sleep rooms 1 & 2 and one in the main care room. The cots were fitted with cellular blankets.

Day 2: There were eight cots in total in use in both dedicated sleep rooms (Six in sleep room 1 and two in sleep room 2) and a child on a floor bed in sleep room 2. In addition, there were three children, over two years of age, on floor beds in the main care room. There were three staff members supervising the children, one in each area. Provision was available for children who did not wish to sleep with a large area available in the main care room for quiet activities.

Montessori Sleep area Upstairs

Day 1: There were six children resting/sleeping on stackable beds. All of the beds had appropriate bedding and one staff member was observed monitoring the children.

All sleep room temperatures were recorded between 16°C -20°C. Sleep records were presented to the inspector which were being recorded on a software package on a tablet in each room to evidence physical sleep checks were carried out every ten minutes. The sleep checks included details of each child's breathing, colour and position. Each of the rooms had ambient lighting ensuring that the staff could easily see each child.

Fire Safety:

- All emergency fire exit doors were unobstructed.
- The fire assembly area was located in the rear outdoor play area.
- Firefighting equipment was secured on the walls and in storage units.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- (1) Garda vetting was available for all twenty-nine adults. However, three of the adults vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI- RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
- (2) The inspector observed seven chairs stacked on top of each other in the Montessori Room and five chairs stacked high in the Toddler room, posing a safety risk should they tip or fall.
- (3) Safety precautions were not taken on the fire door in the sleep room 1 of the Toddler room, posing a safety risk should a child access the push bar mechanism and gain access to the concrete walkway leading to the front of the service.
- (4) Safety precautions were not taken on the fire door leading from the stairwell opposite the baby room, and within walking distance of the Montessori sanitary area, posing a safety risk should a child open the door unsupervised to the descending stairs.
- (5) A child, asleep on a stackable bed, in the main Toddler care room, aged over two years of age, was wearing a sleep suit, posing a safety risk from tripping or falling should the child try to get up from the bed on their own.
- (6) The inspector observed that cleaning agents placed on a shelf in the Toddler changing area were accessible to the children. In conversation, a staff member from the Toddler room stated that the cleaning agents are normally placed on this shelf, posing a safety hazard should a child inadvertently access the chemical spray which has the potential to result in chemical burns or allergic reactions.

Infection Control:

- (7) Two air vents in the Baby room changing area and five air vents in the Montessori sanitary area had dust hanging from them impeding the circulation of fresh air.
- (8) In conflict with best practice cotton cloths were observed to be used and reused in the Baby and Toddler nappy changing areas posing a risk of cross infection and contamination. All cloths in use must be for single use only and disposable.
- (9) Underneath the nappy changing mat, in the Toddler changing area, there were particles of dirt on a cellular blanket in use under the mat and on the wooden base of the unit, posing a risk of infection.
- (10) Four vinyl rest mats in the Toddler rest/quiet area had exposed corners, making them difficult to clean effectively.
- (11) One cot in the sleep room 1 of the Toddler care room did not have a fully enclosed waterproof cover and the foam was exposed, making it difficult to clean effectively.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The following statements were received from the registered provider;

General Safety:

- (1) Renewed Garda vetting disclosures are now on file for all three staff members for whom new vetting was required. All files will be monitored by management in the future to ensure compliance.
- (2) Staff in both care rooms have been reminded not to stack the chairs more than three chairs high in order to prevent them from tipping or falling on the children.
- (3) (4) Non-contact alarms have been ordered for the fire doors in sleep room 1 of the Toddler room and the fire door leading from the stairwell opposite the baby room to ensure the safety of the children.
- (5) Staff have been advised sleep suits are not recommended for children on floor beds in order to prevent the child from slipping or falling. The sleep policy has been revised to include same.
- (6) Accessible cleaning agents in the Toddler changing area were removed and stored in an area which is inaccessible to the children. Staff have been reminded to store all cleaning agents out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- (7) Air vents in the Baby room changing area and in the Montessori sanitary area have been cleaned and staff have been reminded to monitor the vents weekly to ensure that they are free from dust.
- (8) Cotton cloths are no longer use and have been replaced with disposable roll and anti-bacterial spray.
- (9) The cellular blanket was removed, and the area was deep cleaned. Staff have been reminded that the mats and areas are sprayed with antibacterial spray after each use to prevent cross infection.
- (10) The four vinyl mats in the Toddler rest/quiet area have been replaced and the soft furnishings will be checked regularly for wear and tear by staff
- (11) New waterproofs mattress covers have been ordered for sleep room 1 of the Toddler care room.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- (1) Copies of Garda vetting disclosures were received in the office of the inspectorate for the three adults.
- (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6) The statements from the registered provider have been accepted.

Infection Control:

- (7) The inspector observed on the second day of inspection that the air vents in both sanitary areas of the Baby

changing room and Montessori sanitary areas had been cleaned and were free of dust.

(8) Single use paper roll and anti-bacterial spray were observed in use on the second day of inspection in the Baby and Toddler changing areas.

(9), (10) The statements from the registered provider have been accepted.

(11) A copy of the receipt for the order for two new waterproof mattress covers was received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The corrective actions implemented by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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) Certificates were available to evidence that three adults had First Aid Responder (FAR) training completed and the staff roster indicated that at least one of the adults was available while the early years children were present on both days of inspection. In addition, certificates were on file which indicated that at least eight adults, present in the service on the days of inspection, had basic first aid training completed.

(2) (a) The first aid box was available in the main office and was easily accessible to the adults.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(b)

(1) The first aid box was not fully stocked to ensure supplies of first aid equipment and materials. Both sterile water and a pocket face mask were missing.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) The items had been ordered and the first aid box is now fully stocked.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) A copy of a receipt for items purchased for the first aid box was received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance identified under Regulation 15 (2) (b) has been addressed.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(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) Written records were available of the monthly fire drills which took place in the service. The date recorded of the most recent fire drill was 12 January 2024.
- (b) Written records were available detailing number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service and the smoke alarms. The firefighting equipment certificate was dated 16 October 2023 and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 21 April 2023.
- (2)
- (c) Both the firefighting equipment certificate and the smoke alarm certificates were open to review on the morning of inspection.
- (4) The notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were located on the wall of the care rooms

and in the main corridors.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A certificate of insurance was available, with an expiry date of 27 March 2024, to evidence that the registered provider had insurance cover for 90 Full day care children.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The building appeared of sound and stable structure.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) Three ceiling tiles in the Toddler sanitary area were water stained and looked unsightly. In conversation the deputy manager stated that there had previously been a leak and the tiles had not been replaced.
- (e) One nappy changing unit was provided for thirteen children in the Toddler sanitary area. The ratio of nappy changing units and wash hand basins is 1:11.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The following statements were received from the registered provider;

- (d) New tiles have been ordered and the damaged tiles will be replaced. Staff will check the tiles regularly to ensure that they are in good condition.
- (e) An additional nappy changing unit has been installed in the Toddler sanitary are to accommodate all of the children requiring nappy changes.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (d) A Photograph of the new tiles was received in the office of the inspectorate on 3 April 2024.
- (e) A photograph of a second changing table was received in the office of the inspectorate on 3 April 2024.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances identified under Regulation (29) ((d) (e) have been addressed.