

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC084
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Name of Service:	Care-A-Lot Childcare Ltd
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Address of Service:	Lissaniskey, Upton, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	T12 HC64
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Name of Registered Provider:	Averil Sheehan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18 January 2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	37	PM	27
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork.
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Stokes
Title:	Early Years Inspector(s)

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 private full day care service was established in 2008 to the rear of the registered provider's own home in a purpose built, two-storey building with two separate buildings- 'the Lodge' and 'the Clubhouse'. The service accommodates children from 0-6 years of age from 7.30-6pm Monday to Friday. The service also offers part time, and sessional care. The service consists of 4 playrooms, downstairs accommodates a baby/wobbler room, a nappy changing area, sleep room and staff toilet, upstairs comprises of a playroom (preschool 2) and children's toilet facility. An adjoining building called the 'Lodge' comprises of a playroom called preschool 1 with a separate kitchenette and children's toilet facility. A separate building houses 'the Clubhouse' which accommodates toddlers. An enclosed outdoor area to the side of the service is available to the children.

Staffing

The registered provider is service-based and while not present on the day of inspection, generally covers staff breaks working directly with the children. Each of the 8 adults who work with the children hold a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education. This includes the registered provider and manager. The service also had a student on placement not present the day of inspection.

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

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 20, 22, 23, 28, 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation(s) within this report.

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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the deputy *person in charge*, staff and children who were present on the day of the 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, 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.*

(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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had a named person in charge and a named deputy person in charge.
 - (2) In the period since the previous inspection was undertaken on 30/06/2021, 5 adults had begun working at the service (including 1 student). Therefore, the relevant files in relation to these adults were reviewed.
 - (a) There were 8 written and validated references on file from past employers.
 - (b) There were 2 written reference available from sources other than previous employers, with a satisfactory record of validation.
 - (c) A Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau was in place for the 5 adults.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no adults had lived outside the jurisdiction

(4) A recognised award in Early Childhood Care and Education had been attained by 4 adults.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (b) While the deputy person in charge was available at the service when the unannounced inspection commenced, the roster evidenced that there were times when the named person in charge or the deputy were not in the service during the hours of operation according to the roster presented on the day of inspection. There was no person in charge or deputy rostered from 7.30 to 8.00 am from Monday to Friday or from 5.30 to 6pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday or from 3pm to closing on Friday.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider advised on the 30/01/23 that the staff roster was reviewed immediately to ensure there is a person in charge or deputy roster to cover the full opening hours of the centre.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted an updated roster on the 24/01/2023 as evidence.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was accepted as meeting the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

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) At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises.

(2) The ratio of adults to children was adequate in all playrooms as follows

Morning:

Room/ age range	Adults	Children
Baby/wobbler (10mths-2 years of age)	2	8 (2 under 12 months)
Preschool 1- lodge (aged 3 years+)	2	12
Preschool 2 (aged 4 years +) (upstairs)	1	11
Clubhouse (aged 2-3 years)	1	6

Afternoon:

Room/ age range	Adults	Children
Baby/wobbler (10mths-2 years of age)	2 (including deputy)	8 (2 under 12 months)
Preschool 1- lodge (aged 3 years+)	1	7
Preschool 2 (aged 4 years +) (upstairs)	1	5
Clubhouse (aged 2-3 years)	1	6

(8) (a) The service was operated with a minimum of two adults present at all times, as was noted at the time of inspection and through review of the staff roster.

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

- Snack was observed at 9.30/10am, lunch at 11.30/12. An afternoon snack was offered at 3pm. The gaps between meals were acceptable and the service had a Healthy Eating Policy. Water was served as a drink at snack time. The service provided morning and afternoon snack. The parents provided the main hot meal of the day which was reheated in the microwaves in each playroom. The adults were observed to promote self-feeding and to develop independence in the older children in the baby/wobbler room. Children in the lodge were encouraged and supported in having their hot lunch by the adult in the room.
- All children attending the baby/wobbler room were in nappies and the adults attended to changing nappies regularly and sensitively. In respect of the children attending preschool 1 and 2, these children were toilet trained and were supported to develop independence, with gentle reminders to flush and hand wash afterwards. Children in the Clubhouse were largely in nappies, and some were toilet training where they were supported by the adult in the room.
- Each room was presented with an area where children could relax on soft seating.
- Younger children's sleep needs were accommodated in the sleep room off the baby/wobbler room where children were observed to sleep in cots and a stackable bed (children over 2 years), at intervals during the day as per their home sleep routine. The children in the Clubhouse room were observed to sleep at a designated time on stackable beds after their hot lunch. One child who had outgrown their daytime nap was observed to be supported by the adult in the room.
- Children's need for mobility was facilitated with the observed use of the outdoor area by children attending all rooms except the baby room on the day of inspection.
- The adults in each room competently managed the children's expectations, and behaviour with an emphasis on sharing and kind words in an age-appropriate manner. There was a calm and positive approach to managing behaviour.

Physical and material environment

- The indoor environment of all four playroom was child-friendly, bright, and inviting. The rooms were laid out with defined interest areas. For example, in the baby/wobbler room there was a ball pool, soft matting, bouncer, slide, child-sized sofa, kitchen, mirror, family tree, open shelving with accessible play materials, dolls, buggies, chairs and tables all appropriate to the children’s age and stage of development. The materials were readily accessible and the baby/wobbler room opened directly onto a decked outdoor area particularly for the use of the children in this room. The children in the 2 ECCE rooms and the Clubhouse room had access to similar defined areas including library, soft matting/cushioned relaxation area, dress up, arts and crafts, dolls, prams/buggies, kitchen and special interest areas for example ‘space’ materials.
- The children’s birthdays and families were on display in the care rooms, with children’s art clearly visible at an appropriate height.
- Low level shelving units were in place to ensure that children could independently select and access play materials. Playrooms were appropriately furnished with child sized tables and chairs, which supported children to participate in table-top activities.
- A foldable/portable adult sized chair was accessible in the baby/wobbler room, which assisted staff to comfort, feed and engage in playful interaction with children.
- The deputy person in charge advised the inspector that the outdoor area was used daily. It was observed to be in use by different groups at various intervals in the day. It was safe and secured and was equipped with a playhouse, slide, ride on toys etc. Water play in the outdoors was observed to be enjoyed by children on the day of inspection. Children had appropriate outdoor, warm clothing for the use of the outdoors. The area was fully enclosed and had impact absorbing soft fall matting, for the all-year round use of this space.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1) (a)

In the four care rooms, the space and facilities allowed for individual, small and large group play. The space facilitated play accessible to all children and allowed for the freedom of movement through the well organised and uncluttered play and learning environment.

(1)(b)

There was one sleep room on the premises. This room had 3 cots in place to facilitate sleep for the children under 2 years. One supply of stackable beds was in place for the children over 2 years who attending the baby/wobbler room. The sleep room measured 18 degrees Celsius. The children had their own supply of individual linen, which was stored appropriately in plastic lidded boxes and stacked on a shelf in the sleep room. The children in the 'clubhouse' were provided with stackable beds for their sleep at a designated time after lunch. This room was observed to be 16 degrees Celsius during the sleep time. The children were physically monitored every 10 minutes and this check was recorded on an online application.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- A Healthy eating policy was in place and the meals and snacks observed were suitable, adequate, and varied. Snacks for full day care/part time care children were prepared in the playrooms by staff in the morning and afternoon. The main meal of the day was supplied by parents/guardians and reheated in the microwaves in each playroom by staff. Children attending on a sessional basis brought their own snacks from home which were refrigerated.
- A menu plan was in place which changed weekly included morning and afternoon snacks together with the breakfast cereals offered.
- Water was served at the snack/mealtimes and was available throughout the day in each care room.
- Children were supported to feed themselves, and the textures of the snacks/meals were observed to be reflective of the age/stage of development of the children observed in the care rooms on the day of the inspection.
- On the day of inspection, the meals and snacks observed included a fruit and rice cakes break in the morning, varied main meal from home, bagels, hoops, and yoghurt for the afternoon snack. The service offered a rice cereal to children who required a breakfast.

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 main door to the premises was secured to prevent the unauthorised access of a person or the leaving of an unsupervised child.
- There were openable windows in the occupied rooms which were opened safely to ventilate the rooms.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelves out of children's reach or in the locked storage container.
- The outdoor play areas were surrounded by fencing and a secured gate.
- Lighting was appropriate and safe on the day of inspection.

Infection Control:

- Children were observed to wash their hands or in the case of the babies/wobblers to have their face and hands cleaned prior to snack/mealtimes.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes by the adults.
- A supply of soap, paper towels and foot operated pedal bins were observed for the disposal of paper towels in the toilet facilities.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection and the deputy person in charge confirmed that no child required medication to be administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were checked every 10 minutes and these records were maintained on an online application.

Fire Safety:

- No fire safety concerns were identified.

Outing:

- No outings were undertaken on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

A water temperature in excess of the safe maximum temperature of 43 degrees Celsius was recorded in the Clubhouse sanitary area where the water temperature was 47.1 degrees Celsius. This may be a burn/scald hazard to the children using this toilet area.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider advised on the 30/01/23 that the temperature of the water was reduced in the clubhouse immediately and is being monitored to ensure its safety.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted the temperature check record for the water in Clubhouse room on the 30/01/23.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was accepted as meeting the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Insurance cover was in place for up to 36 children to attend full day care. The policy was valid until 27 March 2023

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,
- (b) safe and secure,
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

- (a) From visual inspection the premises appeared of sound and stable structure.
- (b) From visual inspection the premises appeared safe and secure.
- (c) The service was kept adequately lit, heated, and ventilated on the day of inspection. Windows were observed to be opened for fresh air and natural ventilation. Most playrooms were heated to an appropriate temperature within the required range of 18-22 degrees Celsius.
- (d) The service was presented in a clean and well-maintained condition and in a good state of repair.
- (e) There was a sufficient sanitary provision within the service, within the ratio of 1/11 toilets of nappy changing facilities. This is detailed as follows:

Room	Toilets/changing units	location
Baby/Wobbler	1 changing unit/ 1 sink	Individual nappy changing area off baby/wobbler room
Upstairs ECCE 2 room	1 toilets & 1 sink	Upstairs off playroom
Lodge room	1 toilet and 1 sink for children	Beside their room
Clubhouse room	1 toilet, 1 sink & nappy changing x1	Off playroom
Adult	1 toilet & sink	Off main hall

Non-Compliance Information

(c) The lodge room temperature was recorded at 14.4 degrees Celsius during the lunch period on the day of inspection. This was below the required range of 18-22 degrees Celsius.

(e) On the day of inspection, the tap on the sink in the upstairs sanitary area required an adult to turn it as it had seized making it impossible for a child to access hand washing independently.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(c)The registered provider submitted the temperature check record for the Lodge room on the 30/01/23.

(e) The registered provider advised that the toilet facility is undergoing a planned retrofit and the taps will be addressed as part of this process.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was accepted as meeting the regulatory requirements of this regulation.