

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC118
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Name of Service:	Cuddles Creche
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Address of Service:	107 Douglas Street, Cork, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	T12 K22T
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Name of Registered Provider:	Oonagh Cagney
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	07/12/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	39	PM	36
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Admin Building, St Marys Health Campus, Cork, T23x440
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	N/A
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Description of service

Cuddles crèche is a purpose-built full day care facility, which opened in 2009 in this location, (after a relocation from a different premises, where it had operated since 1996). It is registered to cater for children aged 1 to 6 years of age. The service operates from the ground floor of a building on the grounds of Cork College of FET, Douglas Street Campus. It comprised of 4 care rooms, 2 sleep rooms, 4 children’s toilets and wash-hand basins, 3 nappy changing stations, adult sanitary facilities, kitchen, and an outdoor area. Three of the 4 care rooms and 1 of the 2 sleep rooms were in operation on the day of the inspection.

Staffing

The registered provider is largely service based. All adults working directly with the children in the service have a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education (except 1 student). On the day of inspection, there were 8 staff working directly with the preschool children including the registered provider, deputy person in charge, excluding the kitchen staff and a student.

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. The inspection 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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 has a designated person in charge and a named person who can deputise i.e. the registered provider and creche supervisor.
- (b) At all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the deputy person in charge are on the premises.
- (c) There is a clear management structure as the setting and the management team structure and staff was on display on a noticeboard.
- (2) The staff recruitment files were examined as part of this inspection.
- (a) When the recruitment files of all 10 adults was reviewed two written and appropriately validated references were available in respect of 6 past employers
- (b) Two written and appropriately validated references were available in respect of 14 sources other than past employers.
- (c) A completed record of Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau was available for the 10 adults.
- (d) Police vetting was required and available for 1 adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period exceeding 6 months.
- (4) A certificate of a major award in Early Childhood care and education at a minimum of QQI level 5, on the National Qualification framework was on file for 9 adults. The tenth adult was a student, who did not have qualifications.

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.

Compliance Information

1) The registered providers ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children.

(2) The adult-child ratio was met as follows:

Room	Age range	children	adults
Waddling ducks	Aged 1-2 years	5	1
Doodlebugs	Aged 2-3 years.	10	2
Busy Bees	Aged 3-5 years	24 morning 21 afternoon	3 plus 1 student

In addition, 2 members of the management team and 1 kitchen staff were available to cover staff breaks

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:

- Adults were observed to sit with the children and chat to make the snack time a social occasion.
- Nappy changing took place at regularly in the waddling ducks and doodlebugs rooms. The children in the busy bees room were largely independent with using the toilet.
- There was a cosy corner in each room with rugs and cushions. available for relaxation. Stackable beds facilitated sleep/rest after lunch for all children attending the busy bees and doodlebugs room. Children in the waddling ducks room were under 2 years of age and had access to a designated sleep room and individual cots.
- Children's need for mobility was met with both the indoor and outdoor play area being used frequently on the day of inspection. The setting placed emphasis on outdoor play with each room opening directly onto the outdoor area to meet the needs of children in their setting.
- Staff were observed to be very caring and attentive to the needs of children in their care, for example, a staff member was observed to ask a child if he needed a hug to assist him (co-regulate), staff in the baby room were observed to offer hugs from various puppets during an interactive story time. This warmth and care for the children assisted them to participate and feel comfortable within the daily routine and to develop good relationships with the staff team.

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 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) There were adequate and suitable play facilities indoors.

- There were 3 care rooms, in operation on the day of inspection.
- The indoor environment was child friendly, bright, and spacious and laid out in special interest areas with materials accessible to the children.
- There was an emphasis on free choice and child led play and learning with the materials being largely independently accessed. Other activities were adult led, for example on the day of inspection, children in the doodlebug room had sensory play with gloop.
- Interest areas included arts and crafts area, sensory play, (rice/ compost/sand/ water, gloop; play dough); a library area; home corner; construction area, transport and farm animals.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available.
- The outdoor area had interest areas and equipment including ride on toys, kitchen, playhouse, digging (compost tray), and construction blocks.
- The indoor and outdoor environments provided a range of stimulating, and age-appropriate experiences for all children.

(1)(b) There were adequate and suitable facilities for a child to rest. There was 1 sleep room in use with 5 cots. In addition, there were 31 stackable beds in use for the children over 2 years to rest in their rooms after lunch.

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 snacks /lunch observed were suitable, adequate, and varied.
- Water was readily available to the children with snacks and between snack/lunchtime.
- There was a two-week menu plan available on the notice board.
- On the day of inspection, a fruit platter was observed as the morning snack. Vegetarian Thai Curry and Rice was served as the hot meal at lunchtime. For those children who do not eat curry, baked beans in tomato sauce were served with rice. The afternoon snack was cheese, crackers, and apples. Milk and water were observed to be offered at lunchtime.
- Second helpings were not observed to be available to children at mealtimes, but the registered provider advised that rice cakes and brioche were available to children as snacks between meals or as required for a late afternoon snack.
- Cooking is not done on site. While there is a kitchen on the premises, the meals are provided from a local supermarket and reheated on site.

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:

- Internal and external doors were secured on the day of inspection.
- Emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- Storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- No cables were within reach of children on the day of inspection.
- The outdoor area was suitably enclosed and secured without any observed hazards.

Infection Control:

- Adults cleaned down the tables prior to and after snack and mealtimes.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before eating.
- There was a supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, and paper towels available in the children's sanitary area.

Administration of Medication:

- The administration of medication was observed at the time of inspection, where one child required an antibiotic appropriate procedure were described by staff for its storage and administration.

Safe Sleep:

- Ten-minute sleep checks were conducted on sleeping children to ensure children in cots and stackable beds were suitable monitored.

Fire Safety:

- No fire safety issues were observed on the day of inspection, fire doors were unobstructed.

Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection

Non-Compliance Information

Safe Sleep:

On the day of inspection, a high temperature was recorded in the Doodlebugs room. During sleep time when children were sleeping on stackable beds, a temperature of 24.4 degrees Celsius was noted.

The high temperature had been brought to the attention on the registered provider earlier in the day of inspection when it was 24.7 degrees, above the acceptable range of 18 to 22 degrees. It is acknowledged that doors had been opened but the temperature remained high during sleep time. Secondly, the room thermometer was not operating accurately, it was recording a room temperature of 20 degrees Celsius. A high room temperature may be a safety risk to sleeping children. Neither is it comfortable to children when awake and active.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & Evidence Submitted

Safe Sleep:

The registered provider responded to state that the underfloor heating time schedules and temperature were reduced. A new calibrated thermometer replaced the thermometer attached to the wall. Temperatures are now monitored throughout the day and recorded before the children go to bed. Photographic evidence of the newly purchased thermometer was submitted.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence provided by the registered provider was assessed and accepted as addressing the non-compliance as detailed in this regulation.