

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC141
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Name of Service:	Eden Childcare Early Years Ltd
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Address of Service:	Knockbarry, Buttevant, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P51 CD96
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Name of Registered Provider:	Siobhan O'Connor
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	30/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	58	PM	47
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork.
Inspection undertaken by:	F Collins & N Reidy
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

Eden Childcare Early Years Limited, is a privately run service registered to provide full day care, part time and sessional care for children aged from 1-6 years and is registered to provide school aged care.

The service is based in the rural setting of Knockbarry, Buttevant in North Cork.

The service operates between the hours of 7.30am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a wing of the registered providers home with two additional care and education rooms outside comprising in total of four care rooms. There is a spacious outdoor playground available to the children.

Parents/guardians have access to a car park with a marked path to facilitate the safe drop off and collection of the children.

Staffing

The registered provider along with 13 staff work in the service, 12 of whom provide direct care to the children, with one staff member employed in an ancillary role preparing meals and cleaning the service.

Not all staff were present on the day of the inspection.

The staff working in the service providing care to the pre-school children held a recognised qualification in early childhood care and education.

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 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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 had a designated person in charge and a deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection. In the event the person in charge was not on the premises a named deputy person in charge was available.

(b) The person in charge or a named deputy person in charge were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service as confirmed by the roster.

(c) There was a clear structure in the service that identified the management structure. Each care room had a room leader and childcare staff.

Each person's role and responsibility within the service was identified.

(2)

Fourteen adults work in the service, all 14 staff files were assessed for completeness.

(a) Of the 28 references required 20 validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Of the 28 references required eight validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were on file for all 14 adults who work in the service. The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in respect of each of adults it applied to.

(d) Police vetting was required and available for three staff who work in the service and have access to children.

(4) Twelve adults held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above or a qualification deemed as equivalent by the minister. The remaining two adults did not hold a relevant qualification and were not part of providing care to the children, one adult was employed as the cook/cleaner and the second adult was employed to provide onsite drama classes.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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

(2) All four care rooms were in operation on the day of inspection.

The adult child ratios were correct in the care rooms as observed throughout the day.

- Daisy room accommodating children aged 4-5 years and which facilitated the sessional service in the morning was catering for 20 children in the morning and 12 children in the afternoon. There were two staff working with these children.
- Sunflower room: This room had two qualified staff working with 10 children aged 1-2 years, all attending on a full day care basis.
- Bluebell room: This room was staffed by one adult caring for six children, three aged 1-2 years and three aged 2-3 years. All children attending this care room were attending on a full day care basis.
- The Poppy room: This care room was staffed by two qualified staff and during the morning session they were caring for 22 children aged 2-4 years and in the afternoon were caring for 19 children.

The roster indicated only one staff member available for break cover due to three staff being on leave. The staff took shorter breaks to allow each staff member to have a break at some point of the day, breaks were not as indicated on the roster. The registered provider provided break cover in all care rooms.

(8) The roster provided to the inspector by the registered provider identified that a minimum of two staff were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

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:

- (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;*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (i) The staff roster was available and a copy of same was issued to the inspector. The roster reflected the staff attendance throughout the day of inspection. Staff were aware of their correct working hours.
 - (j) There were four medication forms reviewed (Bluebell & Sunflower). All four occasions where medications were administered were recorded on the services care application. Each episode of medication administration was then acknowledged by the parents/guardians on the care application. The parents/guardians also signed on the administration form in the evenings at collection to acknowledge the administration of the medication when the child was being collected.

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

- Meals and snacks on the day of inspection were served at appropriate times and children were provided with drinks throughout the day. Drinks bottles were accessible to the children at all times. Assistance was given to the children that required same and children were observed to be encouraged to be self-sufficient where possible. Staff were observed to be on hand to support the children to feed them as required with their meals. Appropriate crockery and cutlery were available and used.

- Staff supported the children with toileting when required and nappies were changed frequently. Clothing if soiled was changed as required.
- Sleep was facilitated throughout the day for the children attending the Sunflower room and at scheduled times after dinner for the children attending the remaining care rooms.
- The inspector observed the staff member caring for six children who slept on sleep mats in the Poppy room. The blinds provided were pulled down with soft music playing in the background to facilitate a restful environment for the children.
- All children could move about freely and there was no restriction placed on their movement.
- Children were dressed appropriately for outside and each of the staff of the four care rooms were observed to ensure the children wore hoodies and coats when going outside.
- It was observed that bibs were used at mealtime in Bluebell room to protect the clothes of the young children who were self-feeding.

Supporting Relationships

- Each staff member was assigned to a care room. The children were accustomed to the staff and knew their carers. The children were observed to seek the support of their carer when required. Staff were observed to spend time comforting the children as needed.
- The children were observed to play alone and play in small and large groups. The play activities in the rooms caring for the younger children was led by the adults but allowed for an easy structure to allow the children play alone.
- The children were observed to play in groups especially when outside playing on the many activities and when riding the bicycles and tricycles.
- Parents were spoken to at drop off and collection and updates were also posted on the services care application and via a monthly newsletter which was available to all parents.

Physical And Material Environment

- Each of the care rooms had a variety of toys and resources. The resources were specific to encourage the development of each child, i.e. colouring pencils for fine motor development.
- Tabletop activities of jigsaws, bricks and shape sorters allowed for cognitive development and fine motor development.

- Circle time when stories were told, allowed the children to talk and encouraged speech development. Preparation for the end of year graduation was also observed in the Daisy room with the children practicing their graduation songs.
- Dress up clothes were accessible to the children to promote imaginary play.
- All shelving was accessible to the children and they were able to choose their activities as required.

The Outdoor Environment

The outdoor environment was a large well-developed area with soft matting and concrete. Two separate areas were also available to the front of the Bluebell and Sunflower rooms to allow the younger children play in a more confined space with toys suitable for the younger children.

There were climb on toys, a playhouse, access to a large grass area up the side steps and this area as explained by the registered provider could be used for picnics.

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-

(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

- The sleep room for the children attending the Sunflower room had eight cots, four standard cots and four space saver cots where the children under 18 months could be placed to sleep.
- Sleep mats were provided for children to rest/ sleep on for children attending the Poppy room.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The children in the Bluebell room were placed to sleep on sleep mats, three of the six children were under the age of two years and sleep mats are not suitable for this age group where they need to be provided with a cot/floor bed to ensure their safety and comfort.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- Four low level beds have been ordered, these will be used if required for children who no longer sleep in cots and are under 2 years of age. The notice to staff regarding the use of low-level beds indicated the beds would be used where appropriate for children under the age of 2 years and would be cleaned between uses.

Supporting documentation submitted

- A receipt for the low-level beds has been received along with the brochure for the beds which indicates low level beds with a mattress have been purchased. The minutes of the staff meeting indicating when low-level beds would be used has been received.

Summary Comment

Following receipt of the corrective and preventive action for a n the evidence submitted the requirements for this regulation have been met.

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

The registered provider ensured the children were provided with suitable and nutritious food.

Snacks on the day of inspection were provided by the parents and a selection of yogurts, fruit, sandwiches and crackers were observed. Dinner consisted of bacon, mixed vegetables and mashed potatoes and gravy offered to each child.

Snacks and the main meal observed were spaced no more than 2.5 hours apart ensuring the children had food as needed.

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 internal and external doors were secured as required with touch pad exits accessible to the staff. These prevented any child gaining access to unsafe areas such as the front of the building and car parks and prevented unauthorised adults from gaining access to the children.
- The emergency fire exit doors were clearly identified.
- The glass doors in the Sunflower room had a panel though the centre which indicated its presence to the children attending and prevented a child running into the glass.
- The toys and play equipment were in good condition and free from pinch and crush points.
- Heavy equipment and furniture were secured to the walls to prevent them falling should a child climb on same.
- All medication provided to the service for the children was stored in a locked press in the Bluebell room and was inaccessible to the children.
- Where three children were sleeping on a mat before the age of two years a consent form was signed indicating that the parents agreed to this sleep plan for their child.

Infection Control:

- The service was cleaned daily and weekly and a person with responsibility for cleaning the premises was employed in the service.
- Staff were observed to clean the tables before and after snack and mealtimes with suitable disinfectant.
- There was hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels available at all children and adult toilets and at the sinks in the care rooms.
- The nappy changing areas were clean and well maintained. Each of the changing mats observed were intact and no tears on the covers was observed. A supply of disposable aprons and gloves were available at all nappy changing areas. Nappies were disposed of in lidded pedal operated bins and did not require touching by hand to dispose of soiled nappies. No odour was evident in the nappy changing rooms.
- Children had named individual shelves for the storage of their nappies and toiletries.
- All coats and bags were stored off the ground minimising contact and cross infection.

- The children sleeping in cots/ on mats were placed greater than 50 cm apart to ensure the minimisation of cross infection.
- Linen was individual and was stored in individual bags. Linen as informed by the staff was laundered twice weekly and if soiled, laundered as required.

Administration of Medication:

- One episode of medication administration was witnessed at inspection. The policy was followed and the appropriate records maintained.

Safe Sleep:

- An air conditioning unit was observed to be used in the sleep room to ensure the sleep room was maintained at a suitable temperature for sleeping children.
- Ten-minute sleep checks were completed on the children who were asleep in all care rooms. This was recorded on the services care application.

Fire Safety:

- The fire extinguishers were safely tethered to the walls.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A child had 'out' recorded after their name on the attendance book however the child was in attendance in the service (Daisy room). Not ensuring all children are signed in correctly may hinder their appropriate evacuation in the event of an emergency.
2. A care plan was not available for a child that may require administration of an emergency medication while attending the service, a medication request form had been signed but no care plan to identify when the child might require same was available to the staff for reference. Not ensuring all staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of an acute illness escalating may delay appropriate treatment being given to a child.
3. In the Poppy room there was an electric cable attached to the security system screen accessible to the children and a cable in an unsecured low-level cupboard accessible to the children posing a risk of injury to a child.
4. There were cans of air freshener, window cleaner and a bottle of antibacterial spray accessible to the children on the worktop area near the low-level sink and in an unsecured cupboard in the sanitary accommodation of the Poppy room posing a risk of injury.

Infection Control:

5. The purple couch in the Daisy room was torn and exposed foam, this was not easily cleanable and therefore poses a risk of cross infection.
6. A staff member was observed to clean a child's nose and not wash their hands or sanitise them after this. A further staff member was observed not to wash their hands between nappy changes, gloves were changed but this does not remove the need to hand wash after changing each child's nappy. Inadequate hand washing by the staff poses a risk of cross infection for children and staff.
7. One child in one of the care rooms and four children another care room did not have their hands washed after having their nappies changed. In another care room children did not have their hands washed before their main meal Not washing the hands of the children after nappy changing poses a risk of contamination and cross infection.
8. The nappy changing unit in one of the care rooms was not observed to be cleaned between uses. This poses a risk of contamination and cross infection between the children.
9. The white shelving unit under the wall mounted first aid supplies in the Sunflower room was chipped and there was evidence of exposed porous wood, this porous wood is not easily cleaned and poses a risk of contamination and cross infection.

Administration of Medication:

10. Medication consent forms were not completed for two episodes of medication administration to two children. The request to administer medication was not signed by a parent/guardian. Not ensuring medication request forms are completed may allow for a medication to be administered at the incorrect time, route or dose. This was not in keeping with the services policy on the administration of medication.

Fire Safety:

11. The fire exit route at the rear of the Poppy room was blocked with old toys, this poses a risk of hindering the safe and quick exit of children and staff from this room in the event of a fire and if this exit was required.
12. Monthly fire drills were not completed with the fire drill for April 2024 not completed. Not ensuring fire drills are completed monthly may hinder the safe and fast evacuation for the children and staff in the event of a fire.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A meeting was held with all staff and the need to ensure all children are recorded as in attendance was discussed. The registered provider has stated that the sign in books will be assessed by the management on an ongoing basis to achieve compliance.
2. The care plan has been developed in conjunction with the parents and is available to the staff in the care room. A care plan will be developed on all new children's first day of attendance where required and the admission policy has been updated to reflect this.
3. The electric cable attached to the security system has been secured and the low-level cupboard has been secured, staff have been reminded at a staff meeting to ensure the security of the electric cables.
4. The cleaning and air freshener products are now stored out of reach of children in the Poppy room in the toilets and staff working in all rooms have been informed at a staff meeting about access to these products.

Infection Control:

5. The purple couch and been repaired and the registered provider has indicated that should this repair not be sufficient the couch will be replaced.
6. The registered provider has advised that handwashing has been addressed with the staff in detail to include all ages of children to minimise cross infection. The registered provider addressed this at a staff meeting and training was completed with the staff indicating all times when hand washing is required.
7. Hand washing with the children has been addressed at a staff meeting and the registered provider has committed to ensuring this is completed at key times.
8. The registered provider addressed the need to clean nappy changing mats after each use at a staff meeting, with the registered provider committing on the corrective and preventive action form to assess this.
9. The registered provider has committed on the corrective and preventive action form that the chipped shelving has been addressed.

Administration of Medication:

10. The registered provider has reviewed the process of medication administration and addressed this at the staff meeting, that all consent forms must be completed.

Fire Safety:

11. The fire exit route from the rear of the Poppy room has been cleared. The registered provider has committed that this will be kept clear.

12. The registered provider has submitted evidence to state the drills had been completed but the record had not been completed and submitted additional records with the fire drills that took place on a monthly basis were recorded.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. The minutes of the staff meeting has been received.
2. The newly developed asthma care plan, parent consultation form and office review form for care plans has been received.
3. A photograph of the secured cable has been received along with the minutes of the staff meeting informing staff about the security of electric cables.
4. Photographs of the presses in the toilet no longer containing cleaning products were received along with photographs of the products stored in baskets out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

5. A photograph of the repaired couch has been received.
6. Photographic evidence of the staff completing hand washing training have been received. The minutes of the staff meeting with hand washing addressed has been received.
7. The minutes of the staff meeting have been received and photographs of the children washing hands.
8. Photographs of the nappy changing spaces have been received and the minutes of the staff meeting.
9. Photographs of the painted shelving has been received.

Administration of Medication:

10. The assurance received on the corrective and preventive action form is accepted as proof.

Fire Safety:

11. Photographic evidence of the route from the Poppy room has been cleared has been received.
12. Photographic evidence of three records of where fire drill were recorded have been received each indicating that the monthly fire drills were completed.

Summary Comment

Following the corrective and preventive action process and following review of the evidence received the requirements for this regulation have been met.

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) The registered provider insured that staff trained in first aid for children were at all times immediately available to the children. Four staff held up to date training in FAR first aid.

(2) (a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box available to the children and additional supplies were available.

(b) The first aid equipment was available to the children at all times.

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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(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) The person in charge ensured a record was retained of all fire drills that took place on the premises, the last fire drill took place in May 2024.

(b) The record of maintenance for the firefighting equipment was available and was completed in August 2023. The record of the type and maintenance of the smoke alarms was available and this was last completed on 28.05.2024.

(4) There was a procedure notice displayed in the hall on what to do in the event of a fire breaking out.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was insured to cater for 62 children at any one time.

The insurance is in date until 27.03.2025 and is for a full day care service.