

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC164
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Name of Service:	Giggles Childcare Services
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Address of Service:	41 Avondale Mews, Church Hill, Passage West, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	T12 H9TA
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Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Kerr , Bernice Lynch
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	15/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	45	PM	41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher Cork, T23X440
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Stokes and V. McCarthy
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

Giggles Childcare is a purpose-built full day care facility, which opened in 2006 with 5 care rooms registered to cater for preschool children aged 0 to 6 years of age. It currently caters for children from 12 months of age. It offers the ECCE scheme, full day care and a registered school aged care service. The service is a play-based setting. It is registered to operate from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The service operates from a single storey building in a residential area of Passage West. It comprised of a baby room, toddler rooms (A & B), Early Montessori room and Montessori room. There was an adjoining sleep room off the baby room used by the babies exclusively. Toddlers (A & B), Early Montessori, and Montessori children used their playrooms for sleep. There was a kitchen facility onsite and a large rear outdoor area which was enclosed and fully secure.

Staffing

One of the registered providers was present on the day of inspection assisted by the two deputy persons in charge. Staff working directly with children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education between levels 5-8 on the National Framework of Qualifications, except for 2 students (absent) and the chef.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 20, 23, 25 and 29; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 8. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, deputy persons in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection, the service was found to be operating outside its registered hours of 8am to 6pm. The staff roster, children's attendance records and discussion with staff evidenced that the service operated from 7.30am. The records showed that three children and 1 staff arrived at 7.30am on the day of inspection. This change in the hours of operation was not notified to the registration office of Tusla.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) The registered providers responded on 7 June 2024 to state that the service has reverted to its registered hours of operation.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered providers submitted a letter for parents/guardians noting the hours of operation have reverted to 8am to 6pm as per their registration status as evidence.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted by the registered providers was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

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 2 registered providers that were the named persons in charge and 2 managers who were the named deputies.
- (b) The 2 managers were on duty when the inspectors arrived at the premises and remained on duty for the duration of the inspection. One of the registered providers arrived on the premises at 10.40am and remained on duty for the remainder of the inspection.
- (2) The staff files of 17 adults working in the service were reviewed.
- (a) There were 25 references and required validations available on file from past employers in respect of the 17 adults attached to the service.
- (b) There were 9 references and required validations from sources other than past employers.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of each of the 17 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years in respect of each adult.
- (d) Police vetting was available on file in respect of 6 adults that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more.
- (4)
- A copy of a childcare qualification as listed on the National Qualifications Framework or letter from the Minister was available on file in respect of 14 of the 17 adults. The remaining 3 adults were the 2 students who were attached to training colleges and the services' chef who was assigned to kitchen duties.

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 managers ensured that there were an adequate number of adults always working directly with the children between the hours of 8am and 6pm.
- (2) On the day of the inspection there were 10 adults working directly with 45 early years children. A manager and 1 of the registered providers were available to work in different care rooms as required when key adults assigned to care rooms took their breaks.

Room/ Age	Adults	Children
Baby (aged 1-2 years)	Morning 1	Morning 5
	Afternoon 1	Afternoon 5
Toddler A (aged 1-2 years) And (aged 2-2.5 years)	Morning 2	Morning 4 under 2 years, 5 over 2 years
	Afternoon 2	Afternoon 5 under 2 years and 5 over 2 years
Toddler B (aged 2.5 years)	Morning 1	Morning 6
	Afternoon 1	Afternoon 6
Early Montessori (Aged 2.5-3 years) (Aged 3-3.5 years)	Morning 2	Morning 6 over 3 years, 3 under 3 years
	Afternoon 2	Afternoon 6 over 3 years, 3 under 3 years
Montessori (aged 3-5 years)	Morning 2	Morning 16
	Afternoon 2	Afternoon 11

Non-Compliance Information

(8)(a) The inspectors noted that on the day of inspection there was only 1 adult on the premises between 7.30am and 8am. The roster for the week commencing 13 May 2024 was assessed and demonstrated that there was 1 adult rostered to be on duty single handedly for the time between 7.30am and 8am daily which did not meet the requirement of at least 2 adults being on the premises at all times.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered providers responded on 7 June 2024 to state that the service has reverted to its registered hours of operation, from 8am to 6pm with 2 adults on the premises at all times during these hours of operation.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered providers submitted a letter for parents/guardians noting the hours of operation have reverted to 8am to 6pm as per their registration status as evidence.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted by the registered providers was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

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:

- Breakfast, snacks, and meals were observed to be served throughout the day with appropriate gaps between meals/snacks. Adults were observed to sit with the children and interact to make the mealtime a social occasion. The crockery, cutlery and drinking utensils used for the main meal and snacks were suitable for the children's age and stage of development. Appropriate levels of independence were encouraged by the adults at snack and mealtimes.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop independence regarding personal care, particularly, with hand washing prior to meals.
- Nappy changing was observed to occur regularly throughout the day. For those children who were toilet trained they were supported to be independent by the adults.
- Quiet/sleep time was facilitated in all rooms. There were cosy corners in the playrooms to provide for the children's need for rest and relaxation during the day. The sleep room facilitated sleep for children under 2 years (with 4 cots) attending the baby room. Portable cots were used in the Toddler A room which converted to sleep rooms after lunch for the children to sleep. In addition, stackable beds were in place for children over 2 years attending the Toddler A room to facilitate sleep. Children in the following rooms slept on stackable beds or sleep mats, Toddler room B, Early Montessori room and Montessori room after lunch at a designated time.
- Adults were observed to support the children in their interactions with their peers and were noted to be caring and warm in their support of assisting the children to integrate into the daily life of the setting, for example, particularly in the baby room where the adult was observed to assist a child who was new to the service to settle.

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

(1) (b)

- A designated sleep room with 4 cots was in place accessed directly from the baby room, for the sole use of children in the baby room to facilitate sleep on demand for the 5 children in attendance on the day of inspection aged 1-2 years.
- Individual bed linen was provided to each child.
- The cots were observed to be in good condition and the cot mattresses were easy to clean with a waterproof, wipeable surface.
- A supply of foldable cots was in place in the Toddler A room to facilitate the sleep needs of the 5 children under 2 years, stackable beds were in place for the 5 children over 2 years attending on the day of inspection. The deputy person in charge advised that children under 2 years attending this room sleep in the cots and that the stackable beds were for the sole use of children over 2 years.
- Children over 2 years in the Toddler B, Early Montessori and Montessori rooms were provided with floor mats or stackable beds for rest.

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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the preschool.
- The outdoor area was secured.
- Blind cords were secured, and no electrical cables or leads were observed to be accessible to the children.
- Cleaning chemical/products were inaccessible to the preschool children, stored in lidded storage boxes in the staff toilet which was locked and inaccessible to the children.
- Visibility strips/stickers were in place on low level glass doors/windows.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, paper towels/electric hand dryers were in place for hand washing/drying.
- Waste in the playrooms was disposed of in appropriate lidded pedal bins.
- Handwashing prior to dinner was observed in the Toddler room.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned down prior to and after snack/meals.

Administration of Medication:

- No medicine was observed to be administered on the day of inspection. Staff spoke competently about the medicine administration process and storage and individualised care plans were in place for a child requiring an auto-injector pen.

Safe Sleep:

- There were 4 cots in the baby sleep room, all were standard cots in good condition with appropriately fitted sheets.
- There was sufficient space between the cots in the baby sleep room (50cm).
- Records were available of the ten-minute checks conducted on the children in the sleep room.

Fire Safety:

- No serious fire safety concerns were noted as escape exits were unobstructed.

Outing:

- No outings were observed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. On the day of inspection two sleep mats in the Montessori room were torn and the foam layer visible. Therefore, these mats were not readily cleanable, and this may lead to the spread of infection. The deputy person in charge advised they were aware of this, and new mats were on order, awaiting delivery.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. The registered providers responded on 7 June 2024 to state that the two torn sleep mats were removed and did not require replacing as sufficient sleep mats were available for the numbers of children in attendance. Documentary evidence was not submitted/required.

Summary Comment

The response submitted by the registered providers was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

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 service provided evidence that 4 adults had up to date training in first aid response (FAR) and that 1 of these adults was always on the premises between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

(2)

(a) There were 4 equipped first aid boxes and 1 equipped first aid cabinet available on the premises. Each of the 4 first aid boxes were stored on a high shelf out of children's reach in 4 of the 5 care rooms. The first aid cabinet was wall mounted high out of children's reach on the corridor wall outside the kitchen.

(b) The first aid boxes and cabinet were always available on the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
On the day of inspection, an adult with up-to-date training in first aid response (FAR) was not available on the premises between the time of 7.30am and 8am when the service was operational. On assessment of the records, it was evident to the inspectors that no adult with training in FAR was on the premises between 7.30am and 8am on the morning of 13 May 2024. The records also demonstrated that the named adult proposed to be on duty between 7.30am and 8am on the 16 May 2024 would not have training in FAR.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered providers responded on 7 June 2024 to state that the service has reverted to its registered hours of operation and that FAR trained staff are present during the hours of operation from 8am to 6pm.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered providers submitted a letter for parents/guardians noting the hours of operation have reverted to 8am to 6pm as per their registration status as evidence.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted by the registered providers was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of this regulation.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

- (e)
- On the day of inspection there were 2 nappy changing stations with 2 sinks in the baby/toddler unit and 3 children's toilets and sinks in the hall and off the early Montessori room. This was sufficient for the numbers of children registered to attend and present on the day of inspection, based on the 1:11 ratio for children.
 - In addition, there were 2 staff toilets and sinks designated for adults. This was sufficient for the 11 adults present on the day of inspection, as the ratio is 1:8 for adults.