

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC308
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Name of Service:	Nurture Childcare and Early Learning Centre
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Address of Service:	Bessboro Road, Blackrock, Cork, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	T12 CS83
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ciara Gallagher
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	10/04/2024
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Date 2 of Inspection:	11/04/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	89	PM	74
Day 2	AM	94	PM	84

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork
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Inspection undertaken by:	C Stokes
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Nurture Childcare & Early Learning Centre is a purpose-built full day care facility, which opened in 2009 with 6 care rooms (baby, wobbler, toddler and 3 upstairs Montessori rooms). It is registered to cater for children aged 0 to 6 years of age. The service is a play-based setting operating Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm.

Staffing

The registered provider is not service based but was present on day 1 and 2 of the inspection, the service has 2 persons in charge and all adults working directly with the children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. In addition, there was a chef based in the kitchen and 1 student on work experience.

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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued on site in respect of one adult without the required Garda vetting disclosure available for inspection. The registered provider responded on 11 April 2024 and this response was adequate.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, persons 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were two named designated persons in charge of operating the service.

(b) In addition to the registered provider, there were three deputy persons in charge. The inspection was facilitated by the two persons in charge.

(2) (a) The staff recruitment files for all 25 adults were examined as part of this inspection. When this recruitment file was reviewed two written and appropriately validated references were available from 37 past employers.

(b) Two written and appropriately validated references were available from 13 sources other than past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 24 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for the 24 staff vetting disclosures.

(d) Police vetting was available for 9 adults had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period exceeding 6 months.

(4) A certificate of qualification in Early Childhood care and education at a minimum of QQI level 5 on the National Qualification framework was on file for 23 adults working directly with children, the chef had an award appropriate to their role and the student was in the process of studying for their qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (c) An Immediate Action Notice was issued on day 2 of inspection, 11 April 2024, in respect of one adult who did not have a Garda vetting disclosure available for inspection. This was responded to on the day of issue by the registered provider and the response was deemed adequate. The registered outlined that this vetting disclosure had been on file but was not available on the days of inspection as it had been misfiled. The registered provider showed proof of application, (July 2023) and proof of the service's own audit in February 2024 with the date of the disclosure on inspection, however, vetting was reapplied for in respect of this adult on 11 April 2024

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider responded on 26 April 2024 to state that an immediate Garda vetting request was made when it was noted that the vetting was missing from the file and the staff member was taken out of the room until the new vetting was provided.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of the vetting disclosure was submitted dated 24 April 2024 in respect of the staff member in question.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted by the registered provider meets the regulatory requirement 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.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children.
- (2) The following rooms which were in operation met the adult/child ratio:

Day 1

Room	Age Range	No of Adults (morning)	No of Children morning	No of Adults afternoon	No of children afternoon
Baby	0-12 months 1-2 years	3	9 4 under 12 months, 5 over 12 months	3	9 4 under 12 months, 5 over 12 months
Wobbler	1-2 years	3	13	3	13
Toddler	2-3 years	3	17	3	16
Montessori 1	3-5 years	2	18	2	13
Montessori 2	3-5 years	3	15	2	12
Montessori 3	3-5 years	2	17	2 plus student	11

Day 2

Room	Age Range	No of Adults (morning)	No of Children morning	No of Adults afternoon	No of children afternoon
Baby	0-12 months 1-2 years	2	8 4 under 12 months, 5 over 12 months	2 plus PIC	9 4 under 12 months, 5 over 12 months
Wobbler	1-2 years	3	14	3	13
Toddler	2-3 years	3	17	3	17
Montessori 1	3-5 years	2	22	2	16
Montessori 2	3-5 years	3	14	2	16
Montessori 3	3-5 years	2	19	2	13

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 interact and encourage/assist the children to make the meal times a social occasion, with the use of tablecloths and placemats and some rooms had battery-operated candles and centrepieces for the tables. Dinner time was observed in the baby room on day 1, where children were offered second helpings and were observed to enjoy their pasta bolognaise meal. On day 2, dinner was observed in the Montessori 2 room, where children were observed to enjoy chicken, potatoes, peas and carrots with gravy. Tumblers of water were provided with meals and children were observed to assist with setting the table and clearing up after meals to encourage independence.
- In the baby, toddler and wobbler rooms children were observed to be changed regularly. In the 3 Montessori rooms upstairs, the children were largely trained using the toilet and were supported appropriately by the adults to use the toilet.
- There was a cosy corner in the home area to provide for the children's need for rest and relaxation in each room. In addition, there was a designated sleep room for the wobblers with 9 cots and two designated sleep rooms for the babies with 8 cots. Children from the toddler room were observed to sleep on stackable beds after dinnertime in their own care room.
- The children had their need for mobility met in this setting as a period of outdoor play was facilitated twice daily where the children had access to specified outdoor spaces for outdoor play.
- The adults were observed to support the children to interact positively with each other, for example, with turn taking/sharing for example during board game time in Montessori 2 where children were given choices about what they would like to do next and sharing/turn taking was facilitated where many opted for the same activity.
- There was a warm and engaging atmosphere observed throughout the service with adults modelling low tones and supportive engagement.

Supporting Relationships

- Adults spoke about the use of an online application to share and communicate with parents and noted its benefits in improved parental engagement and real time information of sleep and meals for parents. In addition, adults stated that they provide an account of the child's day to parents/guardians at handover times, particularly for children attending the baby room.
- Sibling interaction was facilitated, especially during outdoor time.
- Staff meetings were held monthly according to the adults.

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 service had a menu plan for the week which detailed breakfast, morning snack, hot lunch, mid-afternoon snack and evening snack. The menu plan was observed to be varied, nutritious and adequate.
- Children were observed to enjoy their hot lunch on both days of inspection. In the baby room, children over 12 months were offered the hot lunch and for those under 12 months, the meal provided by parents/guardians was reheated and served.
- The meals/snacks were appropriately spaced during the day.
- Second helpings were observed to be offered of the hot meals and some snacks. The hot meal on day 1 of inspection comprised of Spaghetti Bolognese and the afternoon snack was bagels with cream cheese. On day 2 the hot meal was roast chicken, gravy, potatoes, carrot and broccoli and the afternoon snack was ham and chicken salad with soda bread. The morning and evening snacks were a selection of fruit.
- Milk and water were served with the hot lunch and water was observed to be available to the children throughout the day.

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:

- Blind cords were observed to be secured or inaccessible on the day of inspection.
- External doors and internal doors were secured.
- Storage of stackable beds was in the lobby to the toddler room.
- Cleaning agents and equipment were inaccessible, and the kitchen was inaccessible.

Infection Control:

- A supply of thermostatically controlled hot water was available for hand washing at the sinks. Soap, paper towels/electric dryers were in place. Lidded, foot operated pedal bins were available in the toilets for the disposal of nappies/paper towels.
- Hand washing was observed prior to mealtimes and after outdoor play as well as after children's use of the toilet or nappy changing.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned down before and after meals.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff were competent in describing the medicine administration procedure and no medications were observed to be administered on day 1 or 2 of the inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Adults performed physical checks on sleeping children every 10 minutes and were observed to record these in writing and on the online application.

Fire Safety:

- No issues with fire safety were observed. Emergency exit routes were clear

Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

(c) On the days of inspection, the premises was kept adequately heated, lit and ventilated. Care rooms were heated within the range of 18 to 22°C and sleep rooms between 16 to 20 °C.

(d) The premises was observed to be adequately cleaned, maintained and in a suitable state of repair.