

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR032
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Name of Service:	Mounttown Early Years Service
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Address of Service:	Meadowlands, Fitzgerald Park, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	A96 KR65
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Name of Registered Provider:	Laura Baker
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	08/01/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	34
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency
Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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

Mounttown Early Years Service was first established in 1996 and is operated as a community run service. The childcare service is registered to provide full day-care, part-time care and sessional care to pre-school children aged from 0-6 years. The service is open between the hours of 08:30 and 13:45 Monday to Friday. The service operates from Mounttown Community Facility which is located in a residential area of Dun Laoghaire. Three care rooms are provided named the Baby room, the Early years room and the Pre-school room.

A purpose-built outdoor play area is available to the rear of the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment.

Staffing

In total twelve adults are employed. On the 8 January eleven adults were present this included the designated person in charge, cook and nine adults who worked directly with the children.

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

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

Compliance was assessed under Regulations.

9(2), and (4) –Management and Recruitment,

11 – Staffing levels,

16(h), (i), (j), and (k) – Record in relation to pre-school service.

19(1)(a) Health welfare and development of child.

25 First Aid and

26 Fire safety

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 (j) and (k).

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 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

(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

(2) Twelve adults were employed in the service. The inspection focused on the recruitment records for these adults as detailed.

(a)and (b) Twenty-four written validated references were provided.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all adults employed in the service.

(d)Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4) A record was available evidencing that nine adults who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(d) Police vetting available for one adult was not translated and therefore could not be interpreted.
- (4) There was no evidence to demonstrate that two adults who worked directly with the children had a childcare qualification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(d) Vetting results were translated. All future Garda Vetting in a foreign language to be translated.
- (4) One staff member does not have relevant qualification to work directly with children. Staff member has been given notice period and will finish employment in the service. Second staff member has finished and completed all Modules for level 5 Childcare Qualification and is awaiting final certificate to show same.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written records.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted evidence to demonstrate Regulation 9(2)(d) has been addressed. Regulation 9 (4) has not been met as evidence remains outstanding. The Regulatory requirement has not been met.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were thirty-four children attending the service being supervised by nine adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

(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;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Details of attendance of each child was recorded at the time of arrival and departure.
- (j) Documentation was available to demonstrate that signed parental consent was required prior to administering medication to a pre-school child.

Non-Compliance Information

- (i) There was no staff roster available.
- (k) A sample of accident and incident records were reviewed. In the Early years room eleven forms were not completed fully by staff as the forms did not include the date the accident/ incident occurred.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (i) Staff rota to be filled in by Manager or Deputy Manager daily.
- (k) Checked accident book and met with staff and asked them to double check that all accident and incident forms are fully and correctly filled in.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence.

Summary Comment

The corrective actions as stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has been met.

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

(1)(a)

The designated person in charge reported that all meals are provided by the service. At lunchtime a hot meal of vegetarian pasta and garlic bread was served. Mealtime was relaxed children and staff sat together and they were given plenty of time to eat their meal. In the Baby room children were provided with bibs and seated in highchairs. Children who were able to feed themselves were supported to do so by staff. Drinking water was freely available in all care rooms.

Children were encouraged and observed to use the toilet independently. Younger children's nappies were changed as required during this time staff interacted warmly with the children.

In the Baby room children had an opportunity to sleep at a designated sleep time. Standard cots were available in a separate sleep room and three additional cots were available in a designated area within the Baby room.

At all times staff spoke kindly to children. Children were given advanced notice of clean up time for dinner. The transition from playtime to dinner time in the Early Years room was managed with the use of stories.

Care rooms were arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the opportunity to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included home corner, dress up, construction area, musical instruments, art materials and chalkboards. Designated cosy areas were available in all rooms to allow the children to take a rest as required. The care rooms facilitated a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials. The materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. An outdoor play area was available to the rear of the premises. The outdoor area was not used on inspection due icy weather conditions.

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:

- Entry to the service was secure an intercom and bell system was in operation to allow authorised access and to prevent children from leaving the premises unsupervised.
- All toys and play equipment observed on inspection were safe for the age group using them and in good condition.
- All cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Fire exits were unobstructed.

Infection Control:

- The service maintained a cleaning schedule.
- Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. Children in the Early Years and Pre-school rooms were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and before meals.
- A system to ensure the cot sheets were laundered weekly or as required.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff were familiar with the medication policy when questioned. A sample of completed medication forms were reviewed. These forms were signed by two staff and parents as required.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Nappy changing practice observed was inconsistent and the practices observed posed an infection control risk as evidenced by;
 - Staff did not remove used gloves prior to redressing children and cleaning the changing mat. The nappy changing policy did not clearly outline each step of the nappy changing procedure.
 - In the Baby room water wipes were used to wash children's hands this was contrary to the nappy changing policy which stated "children's hands should be washed after nappy changing."
 - In the early years room children's hands were not washed after nappy changing.
2. In the Early Years sanitary area the nappy changing mat was torn at both ends and foam was exposed making it not possible to clean effectively.
3. There was a foul odour in the Early years sanitary area. The ceiling vent at the time was noted to be covered in dust. This may have impeded effective ventilation.
4. In the Pre-School room the paper hand towel was not wall mounted in a dispenser posing a risk of cross contamination.
5. In the Pre-School sanitary area, the bin provided was unsuitable as it was not pedal operated.
6. The walls in the Early years room were heavily stained and marked with crayons and pencils.

Safe Sleep:

7. In the Baby room staff were not maintaining a record of the temperature of the sleep room while children slept.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Nappy changing procedure that is displayed on the wall in changing area was altered to contain all information and procedures to be taken.
 - Staff of both baby room and Early Years Room were reminded of the importance of and instructed to wash children's using soap and water.
 - All staff were informed of correct and updated procedure and instructed to follow procedure correctly. Staff of both rooms were reminded to wash children's hands using soap and water and not baby wipes.
2. Early Years changing mat was replaced by a new one.
3. Vent in Early Years Room was cleaned.
4. The paper towels for hand drying were placed in the wall mounted dispenser in children's bathroom, when these are not available, the blue roll tissue paper is placed on a shelf reachable by the children outside the toilet area.
5. Old bin was replaced with new pedal bin.
6. We have obtained two of three quotes before choosing a professional painter to come in and repaint room.

Safe Sleep:

7. Staff will use a designated template and the temperature in the sleep room will be recorded.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Written and photographic evidence.

Safe Sleep:

Written evidence.

Summary Comment

The corrective actions as stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has 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) A person trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service and available to the children attending the pre-school 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)(b) The number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises was available. The fire fighting equipment was last serviced on the 9 August 2023 and the maintenance record for the smoke alarm was dated the 28 November 2023.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire on the premises was displayed clearly in each of the care rooms and hallway.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a) There was no written record of the monthly fire drills completed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a) Monthly fire drills will be recorded on an ongoing basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence.

Summary Comment

The Corrective actions as stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has been met.