

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR053				
Name of Service:	Puddleducks Creche & Montessori				
Address of Service:	Springvale Hall, Ticknock Hill, Sandyford, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin				
Eircode:	D18 X0Y0				
Name of Registered Provider:	Sheila Neill				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time				
Date(s) of Inspection:	23/05/2024				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>58</td> <td>PM</td> <td>57</td> </tr> </table>	AM	58	PM	57
AM	58	PM	57		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8				
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty and S Quigley				
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

Puddleducks Crèche and Montessori is registered to provide full day, part-time and sessional care to children aged 0 to 6 years. The service operates from five rooms in a purpose built crèche facility on the ground floor of an apartment complex. There are four rooms on the ground floor, the Chicks, Waddler, Little Ducks and Big Ducks rooms and one room on the first floor, namely the Montessori room. A separate sleep room and sanitary accommodation is provided together with an outdoor area which is located at the rear of the building. The service opens from 8:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday. A morning Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) session is provided from 9am to 12pm for 38 weeks of the year.

There is a kitchen on the premises where all meals and snacks are prepared. An office, staff room, storage area and staff sanitary accommodation is also available on site.

Staffing

The service employs eighteen staff including the registered provider, cook and a person who works with school age children.

On the day of inspection there were thirteen staff members working directly with the preschool children. The registered provider was not present in the service.

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, information and records, health, welfare and development of child, safety and premises. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 29. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the chicks, big ducks, waddler and little ducks rooms and did not include the Montessori room.

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, 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

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

Following a discussion with the manager it was confirmed that one adult commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 10th October 2023. Documentation was reviewed in respect of this adult and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b) One reference was available from a past employer and one was available from a reputable source.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána was available for the adult. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for seventeen adults.

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

(4) Records were available evidencing that the staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification.

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) 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 fifty eight children attending the service being supervised by thirteen adults in the morning and fifty seven children attending the service being supervised by thirteen adults in the afternoon.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of ten records were reviewed by the inspectors.

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a) to (i) of the above Regulation for all of the records reviewed.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The service had a weekly meal plan which detailed a range of nutritious meals and snacks served to children at regular intervals throughout the day. These were prepared on site and provided by the service. Children in each of the rooms observed were seated in an age appropriate manner at low level tables and chairs or in high chairs to enjoy their meal. Children were encouraged and supported to feed themselves and staff were observed offering help to younger children if required. Older children were included in the setting up of the main meal with one child nominated as a helper to distribute placemats to the other children. Water was provided in individual drinking cups or bottles depending on the child's age and stage of development and milk was offered with the main meal and snacks. There were adequate portions observed to be provided for each child and alternative options available for children with specific dietary requirements.

Older toilet trained children were observed accessing the sanitary accommodation independently and staff provided support when necessary. Nappy changing for younger children in the service occurred on a scheduled basis and more frequently if required. The procedure was carried out in a positive manner with staff engaging children in social conversation throughout the process.

There was evidence of staff members building secure relationships with children in their care. Staff members demonstrated a familiarity with individual children and were heard discussing likes and dislikes of children in the room. Staff also utilised moments of one-to-one care and play as an opportunity to engage children in conversation about their home and family life. Each of the rooms contained photos of each child's family members. Staff discussed each child's day at drop off and collection times. The service also used an interactive messaging service to communicate specific information on each child with parents.

Children were supported to interact positively with one another, and minor behaviour issues were addressed before escalating. Staff were observed getting down to children's level, speaking in soft tones and encouraging

children to interact positively with one another. Child sized furniture and equipment was in use throughout the service. A variety of age-appropriate materials and equipment were available in each of the care rooms that support many areas of development such as fine and gross motor skills, role play, speech and language and sensory development. Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in these rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the older children. There was evidence of the children's artwork on display including seasonal artwork pertaining to the current theme being discussed.

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 premises was appropriately secured, and adults could not enter without permission. The main entrance door to the building remained locked and contained a keypad entry system. The outdoor play area was secured by perimeter walls. The main cleaning products and equipment were securely stored in a locked cleaning store. Cleaning products in regular use during the day were safely maintained out of children's reach. The play equipment and play materials both indoors and outdoors in use on the day of inspection were noted to be in good working order and free from hazards.

Infection Control:

The pre-school rooms and adjoining sanitary facilities were in a clean condition. Up to date cleaning schedules outlining appropriate cleaning methods and the various areas to be cleaned within the playrooms and sanitary accommodation were available. Staff members were observed sweeping the floors and cleaning the tables after meals and messy play. The wash hand basins were equipped with liquid soap and paper towels to support effective handwashing.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was stored appropriately in the original packaging out of reach of children. Parent/guardian consent had been obtained for medications which had been given to children attending the service. A sample of administration of medication forms were reviewed and documented all the required information as per the service policy.

Safe Sleep:

The service had a designated sleep room to facilitate the sleep needs of young children. Direct sleep checks were carried out at ten-minute intervals as evidenced by the records maintained. Staff demonstrated knowledge on safe sleep practices for children and appropriate sleep facilities to the children's age and stage of development were provided for the children in attendance.

Fire Safety:

Regular fire drills took place and all emergency exits were kept clear.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A ground floor low level openable window in the Little Ducks room did not have a restrictor in place. There was a sofa beside the window which children could climb on and exit their care room.

Infection Control:

2. The nappy bins throughout the service were inadequate for infection control. They contained a lid which required staff to push a soiled nappy into the bin using their hands.
3. The bins in the Waddler room toilet was not pedal operated.
4. The pedal of one of the bins in the Big Duck sanitary accommodation was broken.
5. Children attending the Little Ducks room did not have their hands washed prior to snack time.
6. The sofa in the Little Ducks room contained a sticky residue and was torn in parts. It could not be effectively cleaned.

Safe Sleep:

7. There was no thermometer available to the staff in the Waddler room to monitor the sleep room temperature where children aged one slept. There was a paper thermometer on the wall, however this was not displaying any temperature when the inspector observed it. A device which could accurately display the temperature of the room is required. The room temperature should not exceed 22°Celsius where children aged one sleep.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Restrictors have been fitted to low level windows.

Infection Control:

2. All lids have been removed from Nappy Bins to allow free access for pedal operation.
3. All broken pedal bins in the Waddler Room have been replaced.
4. All broken pedal bins in the Big Ducks Room have been replaced.
5. Hygiene protocols have been reviewed with all staff.
6. The “sticky” sofa has been removed and replaced.

Safe Sleep:

7. Room temperatures in the Waddler Room will continue to be monitored.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photo of window restrictor.

Infection Control:

- 2, 3 and 4. One photo of a working pedal bin.
6. Photo of new sofa.

Safe Sleep:

7. Photo of grow egg thermometer.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted together with the supporting documentations were reviewed and are deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 23.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

A person trained in FAR 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.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) A record in writing was available for fire drills completed in the service. The last fire drill took place on the 5th April 2024.

(b) A record of the servicing of the smoke alarms was available. The last service took place on the 20th March 2023.

Non-Compliance Information

(b)

There was no record of the maintenance of the fire fighting equipment in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(b)

Fire-fighting equipment has been serviced and logged by SAS Fire & Security as per the attached file.

An annual contract is in place for regular servicing of fire-fighting equipment.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the service record of the firefighting equipment.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted together with the supporting documentations were reviewed and are deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 26.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(c)

In the previous inspection report dated 10th October 2023 the inspectors noted a stale odour was present in the Little Ducks and Chicks rooms with evidence of damp patches and mould spores on the ceilings and walls. While it is acknowledged that the registered provider has treated areas in the Little Ducks room there was evidence of mould growth in the Chicks room on the rear and side walls. This poses a health risk to children in attendance in this room.

This was found non-compliant on the last inspection dated 10th October 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c)

Increased ventilation has been installed in the Chicks Room and treatment and repainting has been arranged. Management will monitor the room on an ongoing basis to ensure there is no recurrence.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photo of treated walls.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documentation are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 29.

This will be reviewed on the next inspection.