

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR066
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Name of Service:	WeeCare Day Nursery
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Address of Service:	Monkstown Ave, Monkstown, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	A94 H728
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ian Buchanan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	14/05/2024
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Date of Inspection:	15/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	136	PM	117
No of pre-school children:		129		N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, County Dublin
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

WeeCare Day Nursery is one of eight services privately operated by the registered provider in South Dublin and Northern Ireland. The early years service is registered to provide a full day care, part time and sessional service for pre-school children. The age range of children catered for in the service is from 0-6 years. The service operates between the hours of 7.30am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

The early years service is based in a Georgian style house that has been purposely adapted as a childcare facility. Twelve preschool rooms are available and children are placed in the most appropriate care room based on their age. Two designated sleep rooms were provided for younger babies and children.

An outdoor play area is available to the front, side, and rear of the premises. The play areas are divided up to cater for the different age groups. All outdoor play areas had an artificial grass surface and were fully fenced and equipped with a variety of suitable play equipment.

Staffing

The service currently employs thirty-three staff including a manager. The service employs two chefs to prepare meals and snacks for the children. There were twenty-five staff working directly with the children. The manager and deputy manager worked directly with the children only when relieving staff for breaks and when additional support was required in specific care rooms. The registered provider does not work 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, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

9 (1)(a)(b), (2), (3), (4) Management and Recruitment,
11(1), (2), (8)(a) Staffing Levels,
16(h), (i), (j), (k) Record in relation to pre-school service,
19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.
25 (1), (2) (a), (b) First Aid
26 (1), (a), (b) and (4) Fire Safety Measures

However, on inspection additional non-compliance was identified under the following regulations: Regulation 20 Facilities for Rest and Play and 31 Notification of Incidents.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16(h)(j)(k) – Record in relation to pre-school service. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the following rooms: Baby, Preschool 2, Fledglings 2 and Fledglings 3.

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 days 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.
- (2) The files of thirty three staff members were reviewed as part of the inspection. Documentation reviewed in respect of these adults met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a)(b) Of the sixty six references that were required, fifty eight were available from a past employer and eight were available from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the thirty three staff members. These were dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
- (d) Police vetting was required and available for eleven staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.
- (3) The required recruitment procedures were carried out prior to staff being appointed and allowed access with children attending the pre-school service.
- (4) Of the thirty-three staff files reviewed records were available evidencing that twenty-six staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. Three staff did not work directly with the children and did not require a qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

- (4) There was no evidence available to demonstrate two staff members who worked directly with the children held the required qualification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (4) Afterschool staff x 2 will only work in afterschool service going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated will address the non-compliances.

The regulatory requirement is deemed to have 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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore 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. On the first day of inspection there were one hundred and thirty six children attending the service being supervised by twenty five adults. On the second day of inspection there were one hundred and twenty nine adults being supervised by twenty five adults.

(8)(a) The staff roster demonstrated two adults are on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

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 the attendance of each child in the service were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.
 - (i) The staff roster was available and reflected the adults working in the service on the days of inspection.
 - (k) A sample of accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

Non-Compliance Information

- (j) A sample of twenty-three medication administration records were reviewed. Some of these records were incomplete. Four of these records were not signed by a parent, contrary to the service's administration of medicine policy.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(j) A memo was sent out to all staff to remind them how important it is to follow the administration of medication policy that we have in place. We asked all staff to revisit this policy. Management verbally went around to all units to go through this policy again with staff to make sure that they are all aware and understand this policy and how to implement it effectively.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated will address the non-compliances.

The regulatory requirement is deemed to have 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

(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

(1)(a)(b)

The inspectors observed appropriate and suitable care practices within the service. Meals and snacks were offered at regular intervals throughout the day. In the morning children were given a snack of fresh fruit, crackers and cheese. At dinner time younger children were served fish pie while older children were served mashed potatoes, gravy, peas and fishfingers. Drinks of water were available within the rooms and were offered when children were eating. The staff supported the children to manage their personal care.

Younger children were provided with bibs to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating. In the Baby room staff supported and encouraged children to feed themselves and additional support was given as required. Children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Older children used the toilet independently while being closely supervised. Staff interacted warmly with the children in their care throughout the inspection. In the Baby room staff were observed to take time to comfort new babies settling in the room. Staff were observed to hold children who were upset in their arms while reassuring them using soothing words.

Staff explained how they communicate with parents regarding their child's day using an online computer application detailing information on activities, food, nappy changes and sleep. Staff also communicate with parents at arrival and collection times.

Care rooms were arranged to include a range of play materials and areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Play equipment and toys were easily accessible to children from low level shelving provided. Each area was adequately resourced with a variety of materials. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms for meals and tabletop activities.

Children were observed to spend time in the outdoor area at a designated time. Staff ensured all children were wearing sun hats suitable for the weather conditions on the day. The outdoor area was divided into four separate play spaces to cater for the different age groups and was well resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate equipment.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

In Fledglings 3 room there was no adequate or suitable facilities provided to allow children to rest or take a break from activities during the day as required.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A quiet and cosy corner was introduced into the fledgling's rooms. Unit heads in rooms and management to make sure that there is always a quiet corner available for the children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated will address the non-compliances.
The regulatory requirement is deemed to have been met.

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 entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.
- The kitchen was not accessible to children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing.
- Individual bed linen was provided for the children. Staff stated that bed linen was laundered weekly and appropriate stored in individual numbered storage boxes.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.

Safe Sleep

- Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were documented every ten minutes.
- Discussion with staff demonstrated that staff were familiar with safe sleep guidelines.
- The sleep room temperatures were maintained at the correct temperature for sleep.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clearly labelled and unobstructed.
- Signage was available in the outdoor area to mark the fire assembly points.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

- In the Baby room the inspector observed some practices and equipment that posed a potential infection control risk to the children as detailed.
1. Prior to children eating their lunch, staff used a communal basin of water to wash all children's hands.
 2. The inspector observed a few children mouthing toys. These toys were not removed at the time.
 3. The plastic covering on the ball pool was torn and had masking tape on it. As a result, it could not be cleaned effectively.
 4. In Fledglings 3 room children's hands were not washed prior to eating their dinner posing an infection control risk.
 5. In the sanitary area used by Montessori green and in Fledglings 3 room the bins provided were unsuitable for infection control purposes as they were not pedal operated.

6. In the outdoor area to the front of the premises there was a wooden unit that was noted to have stagnant water posing a risk of harbouring harmful bacteria and creating an infection control risk to the children. It is acknowledged when the inspector reported it to staff it was immediately removed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. A memo was sent out to all staff to remind them how important it is to follow the handwashing policy. We asked all staff to revisit this policy. Continuous observation and support from management to the baby room to make sure this policy is implemented daily.
2. A memo was sent out to all staff to remind them how important it is to follow the mouthing toy policy. We asked all staff to revisit this policy. Continuous observation and support from management to the baby room to make sure this policy is implemented daily.
3. A new ball pool was purchased, and the old one was disposed of. Management and staff to continue their risk assessment of any damaged toys /equipment and to be aware that torn equipment can pose a potential infection risk to the children as it cannot be cleaned properly.
4. A memo was sent out to all staff to remind them how important it is to follow the handwashing policy. We asked all staff to revisit this policy. Continuous observation and support from management to the fledglings 3 room to make sure this policy is implemented daily.
5. The bins were disposed of, and new pedal operated bins bought. Any future bins bought for the creche will be pedal operated bins.
6. Box immediately removed from outdoor area and disinfected that afternoon. All rooms that use that outdoor area was told about the box and area it was. It was highlighted to all staff how important it is that they do their daily risk assessment checklist and to act on anything they may find. All staff are to continue to use the outdoor risk assessment checklist. Management to continue to monitor and sign off on these checklists.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Written records and copies of receipts as proof of purchase.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated will address the non-compliances.

The regulatory requirement is deemed to 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) A person trained in first aid for children was, immediately available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. In total twenty-six staff had completed paediatric First Aid. Certificates were available to confirm seven staff had up to date First aid responder training.

(2)(a) The first aid box was suitably equipped and easily accessible on the premises.

(b) The first aid box was available at all times for the children attending the service.

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) A written record was available detailing all fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place on the 9 April 2024.
 - (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced in October 2023 and that fire detection and alarm system had been serviced in March 2024.
- (4)
- The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations within the service.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

- A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:
- (d) a serious injury to a pre-school child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner whether in a hospital or otherwise;

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) The registered provider did not notify the Agency within 3 working days as required of an injury which occurred to a pre-school child on the 30 April 2024.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(d) Notified the agency on the 15 May 2024 about the incident that happened on the 30 April 2024. Management will adhere to this regulation ongoing.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written records.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated will address the non-compliances.

The regulatory requirement is deemed to have been met.