

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015DR069 |
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| Name of Service: | Once upon a time |
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| Address of Service: | Wyckham Point, Wyckham way, Dundrum, Dublin 16, Co. Dublin |
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| Name of Registered Providers: | AnneMarie McCormack and David McCormack |
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| Service type: | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional |
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| Date(s) of Inspection: | 24/07/2024 |
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| Date 2 of Inspection: | 25/07/2024 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 74 | PM | 74 |
| Day 2 | AM | 72 | PM | 72 |

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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Tusla – Child & Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Bray, Co Wicklow. |
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| Inspection undertaken by: | Sarah Quigley & Olivia Quill |
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| Title: | Early Years Inspectors |
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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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable |
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Description of service

Once Upon a Time Dundrum is currently registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day care for pre-school children aged 12 months to 6 years of age. Care and education are provided to children weekdays from 07:30hrs and 18:30hrs. The premises are purpose built and located at ground level within a mixed housing development in a residential area of Dundrum, South County Dublin. The facility consists of 7 care rooms, all of which were in operation on the day of inspection. Two outdoor areas are available to the children adjacent to the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 20 staff members including two centre managers and an adult who carries out domestic duties in the service. On both days of inspection, 22 staff members were present. This included the area and the training manager for the centre. The registered provider does not work directly in the service but was present at the close of the 2nd day of inspection.

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/ information and records/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19. As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms named Junior Wobblers, Senior Wobblers, Toddlers, and Pre-Monties.

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

(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

(2) Documentation was assessed in relation to the requirements of regulation 9 for 19 adults employed to work in the service since the last date of inspection on the 13th June 2023. The following records were available for the adults:

(a) (b)

The registered provider demonstrated that they had verified the references obtained from two sources for each of the adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for each of the adults and the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years had been adhered to.

(d) International police vetting was available for 17 of the adults who had lived outside the state for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures outlined under Regulation 9(2) had been carried out prior to the adults commencing employment in the service.

(4) There was evidence that each of the 13 staff members had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent. Five adults who did not have the required qualification was in possession of a letter of eligibility to practice from the Minister of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. One of the adults did not require a 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 pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on both days of inspection. There were 74 children present in the service being supervised by 17 adults on the 1st day of inspection and 72 children being supervised by 15 adults on the 2nd day.

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:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

- (i) A staffing roster was available in the service which appropriately detailed the staffing allocation on each day of inspection.

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

The service had a healthy eating policy in place which staff stated was communicated to parents when a child starts in the service. Staff stated snacks, a hot lunch, and tea are provided daily by the service. Staff were observed sitting with the children engaged in conversation during mealtimes which created a relaxed and sociable atmosphere. Younger children were encouraged to self-feed with staff providing support where required. Drinking water was available to the children at all times during the inspection. Rest areas were available in each room to enable the children to rest or take time away from the group as desired. Children were supported to be independent in their environment including using the toilet independently, cleaning up following play and washing hands before meals. The staff used soft tones and appropriate language during all interactions with children observed by the inspectors.

Designated sleep times were in place in the service for all care rooms. Staff reported that younger children who displayed signs of tiredness were placed to sleep outside these times where required in line with their individual needs.

Two fully enclosed outdoor play areas were available adjacent to the premises with a shock absorbent surfacing. The areas were well resourced with a variety of play equipment and materials. The care rooms were all

adequately resourced and all materials were made accessible to the children at all times on low level shelving units, facilitating the children's choices in play. Pieces of the children's artwork were displayed around the care rooms alongside photographs the children had taken in from home.

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

The inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children. The entrances into the service were appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised access or a child exiting the service unsupervised. The care rooms were observed to be safe and free from hazards.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff and children were observed to carry out consistent hand washing as appropriate. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy. The nappy changing practices observed were in line with the policy in place and adhered to infection control guidelines. Pedal operated bins were in place throughout the service for the disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Safe Sleep:

Staff demonstrated they were familiar with safe sleep guidance. Sleep logs were maintained in the dedicated sleep room and the relevant care rooms, and individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour, and position every ten minutes. Standard cots and low-level beds were available for sleep and were used in accordance with children's ages and developmental needs. The temperature of the rooms where children slept were maintained at the required temperature ranges.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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

Compliance Information

Regulation 29(c) was included as part of this inspection to assess corrective and preventive actions submitted following the last inspection of the service on the 13th June 2023 relating to ventilation in the nappy changing rooms. Any malodours noted in the nappy changing areas were eradicated promptly on both days of inspection indicating the ventilation systems in place were sufficient.