

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR117
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Name of Service:	Oakmount Creche Ltd
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Address of Service:	UCD Campus, Belfield, Dublin 4.
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Eircode:	D04 EW81
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jennifer Kinsella
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Service type:	Full Day Care
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Date of Inspection:	7 November 2022
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No of pre-school children:	AM	102	PM	102
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency 2 nd Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern & 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

Oakmount Creche provides a full day care service for children aged 4 months to 6 years. The service opens Monday to Friday from 8am to 6:15pm. The premises is a purpose- built facility comprising a single storey building located on the grounds of University College Dublin at Belfield. There are nine preschool rooms and four cot rooms. There is a large outdoor play area at the rear of the building which has been subdivided to accommodate different age-groups of children.

Staffing

There are 35 staff employed to work in the service including the registered provider. There are 2 managers, 28 staff who work directly with the pre-school children, a cook and 4 staff who work with the school aged 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

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(b). The scope of the inspection for this regulation included the Ladybugs, Rainbow, Busy Bee and Starfish rooms.

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 registered provider, 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

The inspection focused on the recruitment records of 14 staff members who had started working in the service since the last inspection dated 26 August 2021.

(2)

(a) Past employer references had been sought and records were available to show these had been verified.

(b) References had been sourced from a person other than a past employer for adults who had only one or no previous employers. Records were available to show these had been verified.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults.

(d) International police vetting was available for all 13 adults who had lived abroad as an adult for more than six consecutive months.

(4) The registered provider ensured that each adult employed to work directly with pre-school children held the required qualification. All of the adults who had been employed since the previous inspection held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(3) It is acknowledged that recruitment procedures under regulation 9(2)(a)(b) & (d) had been carried out prior to employees having access to children. However, through review of documents and discussion with management, it was evident that the procedures specified in regulation 9(2)(c) had not been carried out prior to two employees being allowed access to the children. One adult commenced working in the service on 8 August 2022; their Garda vetting was completed on 16 August 2022. The second adult commenced working on 4 October 2022; their Garda vetting was completed on 7 October 2022.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Staff will not commence work before Garda vetting is received.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The action submitted is accepted as appropriate to prevent further non-compliance. The effectiveness of the registered provider's stated action will be assessed on the next inspection.

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 with the children throughout the inspection.

(2) At all times the minimum ratios of adults to children were maintained. On the day of inspection there were 25 adults allocated to work directly with 102 children.

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-

(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

Staff demonstrated how they work in partnership with parents/guardians to meet the needs of the children attending the service. A key-worker system was in place to support the development of secure attachments. Individualised routines had been devised for babies to mirror their home routine. Records were kept for sharing information with parents/guardians in relation to their child's eating and drinking, nappy changes, activities and sleep during the day. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children through use of soft and gentle tones and hugs. Children were promptly comforted when they became upset.

Inspectors observed children moving freely, exploring their environment, playing and engaging in activities.

They were provided with food and snacks at regular intervals during the day. Children under one year of age brought food and milk bottles from home. The service provided food for children over one year of age. Food was readily available and provided to children who requested more. Bibs were provided for younger children to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet. Staff sat at the tables with the children when they were eating and engaged in conversation. Babies were bottle fed according to their individualised routines; staff held the babies and engaged with them during this time. Drinks of water were offered with meals and snacks and were available to the children within their rooms at all times.

Children were encouraged and supported to manage their personal care. The children were assisted to wash and clean their hands and faces as required. Children were assisted to put on their coats before going outside, appropriate to the weather. Staff changed the children's nappies at scheduled times and in between when needed. Inspectors observed staff using these times as an opportunity for warm one to one interaction.

Inspectors observed babies (aged 0-1 year) being placed to sleep in a separate sleep room according to their individual routines or when they displayed signs of tiredness. Children (aged 1-2 years) were provided with an opportunity to sleep at 12:30 in a separate sleep room; staff stated these children are provided with an opportunity to sleep if they display signs of tiredness outside of the scheduled sleep time. The transitions to sleep were managed appropriately with staff speaking to children in quiet tones, playing gentle music and providing reassurance.

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 kitchen was secured to prevent children accessing the hazards within.
- Heavy furniture was secured to prevent tipping and injury.
- Cords and cables were secured out of reach of children.
- Cleaning products and medicines were stored out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- The premises and equipment were observed to be well maintained and in a clean condition.
- Children's hands were washed after outdoor play, after using the toilet and after nappy changing.
- Inspectors observed adults washing their hands after wiping children's noses and before serving food.
- Infants milk bottles and food brought from home were appropriately labelled and stored in the fridge.
- Procedures were in place for the removal and cleaning of toys which had been mouthed by children.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had a medication administration policy to guide practice should a child require medication while attending the service.
- Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take to ensure medication is given safely if needed, including obtaining written parental/guardian consent.
- A sample of six records were reviewed dating from January 2022. The records included details of the medication given including parent consent, the signatures of the staff who gave the medication and the staff who was present as a witness when it was given.

Safe Sleep:

- Inspectors observed staff checking sleeping children at 10-minute intervals and maintaining a record of the checks.

- Appropriate bedding was used to prevent overheating.

Outing:

- The person in charge told the inspectors that the service does not undertake outings from the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A large ground floor window was open wide directly between the Busy Bee room and the college campus grounds. This posed a risk of unauthorised entry or a child leaving unsupervised if they used the beanbag situated under the window as a foothold.
2. The temperature of the water in the sink used by the children from the Starfish and Busy Bees room was not thermostatically controlled to remain below 43°C. The temperature was recorded at 54°C posing a risk of scalding.

Infection Control:

3. Inspectors observed that staff and children's hands were not consistently washed at the required times, posing a risk of cross infection. A staff member was observed changing two children's nappies without handwashing afterwards. The babies attending the Starfish room did not have their hands washed before eating.
4. Inspectors observed paper towels for drying hands in the Rainbow nappy changing room stored next to the changing mat posing a risk of cross contamination. Although a paper towel dispenser was available, this was empty.
5. Items for use within the pre-school rooms were stored inappropriately in the Ladybug nappy changing room posing a risk of cross contamination. Inspectors observed children's coats hanging within the room and children's toys on the draining board next to the sink.

Safe Sleep:

6. The floor space in the Ladybug sleep room was not kept clear to enable staff to easily access all children in the event of an emergency. Two children were placed to sleep on low beds restricting the pathway to four children who were sleeping in cots.

7. The temperature of the sleep room used by the Busy Bees was not maintained between 16-20°C. The temperature was recorded at 21°C when children were sleeping.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The window restrictor has been put back on the Busy Bee window. Staff have been directed not to remove the restrictor from the window.
2. All taps are thermostatically controlled and monitored by an external company. The company will add an additional control to the tap by fixing a control valve. Water temperature will continue to be checked by this company on a regular basis.

Infection Control:

3. Staff were re-trained in nappy changing and hand washing procedures at the staff meeting on 22 and 23 November 2022. Centre supervisors will regularly spot-check and oversee procedures on a daily basis.
4. All paper towels are in the hand towel dispenser. At the staff meeting, all staff were informed of the importance of immediately re-filling the dispenser once empty. A centre floater has been assigned to ensure all dispensers are continually full throughout the day.
5. Toys and pre-school items will not be stored or disinfected in this sink. The coats will be stored in another area away from the changing area. Staff were informed at the staff meeting that the changing room is solely for nappy changing & hand washing only. Centre Supervisors will regularly spot-check and oversee procedures.

Safe Sleep:

6. The children on low beds will now sleep in the Ladybug room. Management and the centre supervisors will regularly spot-check and oversee safe-sleep procedures during sleep time.
7. The team will regularly check, adjust and control the temperature in this room before and during sleep time. Management and the centre supervisors will regularly spot-check and oversee safe-sleep procedures.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographs of stated actions including temperature control taps.

Infection Control:

- Copy of staff training document relating to nappy changing and handwashing procedures
- Photograph of hand towel dispenser and sink with no play items visible

Safe Sleep:

- No supporting documents submitted

Summary Comment

The non-compliances under General Safety and Infection Control have been deemed to be adequately addressed. The effectiveness of the actions submitted by the registered provider in relation to Safe Sleep will be assessed on the next inspection.

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 with current first aid training was available to the children throughout the inspection. Eight staff held an in-date recognised first-aid certificate. The staff roster provided for a trained person to be present in the service at all times of opening.

(2)

(a) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and stored in conspicuous positions throughout the service.

(b) The first aid boxes were available for use 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)
- (a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last drill recorded was dated 20 October 2022.
 - (b) Records were available detailing the firefighting equipment and fire detection system in the service. The records stated the firefighting equipment was serviced in April 2022 and the fire detection system was serviced in September 2022.
 - (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations throughout the service.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

The inspection focused on the provision of sanitary facilities for children attending the Rainbow room as there was no suitable nappy-changing area on the previous inspection dated 26 August 2021. The registered provider had adapted an existing room for use as an appropriate nappy-changing area. The room was equipped with a changing unit, a sink with warm running water, liquid soap, a paper towel dispenser and a pedal operated bin. A mechanical ventilation system was in operation.