

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015DR148 |
|--------------------------|-------------|

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Name of Service: | Dimples Creche & Montessori |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Address of Service: | 135 Ballyogan Road, Carrickmines, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin |
|----------------------------|---|

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Eircode: | D18 K168 |
|-----------------|----------|

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Name of Registered Provider: | Gillian Doyle and Jason Doyle |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|

| | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Service type: | Full Day Care |
|----------------------|---------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Day 1 of Inspection: | 08/08/2023 |
|-----------------------------|------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Day 2 of Inspection: | 09/08/2023 |
|-----------------------------|------------|

| | | | | |
|---|----|-----|----|-----|
| No of pre-school children Day 1: | AM | 122 | PM | 118 |
| No of pre-school children Day 2 | AM | 117 | PM | 116 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Tusla – Child and Family Agency Trinity Building, IDA Business Park Bray Co Wicklow |
| Inspection undertaken by: | Mary Redmond / Sarah Quigley / Ciara Harte |
| 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 |
|---------------------------------|----------------|

Description of service

This private childcare facility was established in 2011 by the current registered providers. Full day care and sessional care and education is provided for children aged four months to five and a half years of age; a school-aged childcare service also operates from the premises. The hours of operation are between 7.30am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a commercial unit which has been adapted for use as a childcare facility in an urban area of south Dublin. Thirteen care rooms were available and eleven of these were in use for the care of pre-school children on the day of inspection. One cot room was provided and cots were also available in four areas adjacent to care rooms where the youngest children attending the service are accommodated. The Baby Chicks, Penguin Paradise, Bouncing Bunnies and Tiggy Winkles rooms cater for the youngest children attending who were aged from ten to twenty-four months. The Puddleducks, Toddling Turtles, Narnia and Peter Rabbits rooms generally catered for children aged two to three years of age and the remaining rooms accommodated the older children attending. There were a number of enclosed outdoor spaces provided including a large area which had an artificial grass covering. The outdoor spaces were divided into separate areas to cater for the various age groups. A good variety of play equipment and materials was provided in the outdoor areas.

Staffing

There were thirty-seven adults employed to work with pre-school children including the manager and two deputy managers who were not assigned to care rooms but were available to provide assistance when needed; the registered providers were present in the service but do not work with the pre-school children. Adults employed to work with pre-school children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY) to be equivalent.

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

The inspection plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 First aid

The following regulations were not part of the inspection plan so therefore only non-compliance was reported:

Regulation 27 Supervision

Regulation 30 Minimum space requirements

The scope of the inspection included the Puddleducks, Bouncing Bunnies, Tiggy Winkles, Peter Rabbits, Narnia and Neverland 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 reoccurring. 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 co-operation of the designated person in charge, the registered providers and staff members who facilitated the inspection 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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

- (1)
- (a) There was a designated person in charge and named persons to deputise as required.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place which identified the roles and responsibilities of each employee.
- The files for all adults employed in the service who had direct access to children were reviewed, including ancillary staff such as the cook, drivers and office staff.
- (2)
- (a) There were written validated references available from previous employers for adults employed in the service.
 - (b) Suitable references from other sources were available for adults who did not have a previous employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting was available for all adults.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for twenty adults who had resided outside the State for a period longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) There was evidence that thirty-seven adults 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 meet the regulatory requirement.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(d) Police vetting was not available for one adult for whom it was required.

(4) One adult who was working directly with pre-school children did not have a childcare qualification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) Police vetting has been applied for regarding this adult and will be on file for future inspections. A checklist is in place and adults will not be hired until police vetting and all required documentation is in place.

(4) This adult will not cover lunch breaks in rooms caring for pre-school children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of application for police vetting for one adult and a checklist was submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector is satisfied that the regulatory requirement will be met when the police vetting is received.

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

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was satisfied except for the non-compliance details below.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not always ensure that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was not maintained in the service as detailed below:

On arrival of the inspection team at 10.30am on the 8 August 2023 the minimum adult to child ratios were not in place.

1. There were three adults caring for twenty-seven children in the Wonderland room; these children were in the 3-6 year age range and were attending on a full day care basis.

The minimum ratio of adults to children for the 3-6 year age range is 1:8.

2. There were two adults caring for fifteen children in the Neverland room; five of these children were in the 2-3 year age range and ten were in the 3-6 year age range.

The minimum ratio of adults to children for these age ranges is 1:6 and 1:8 respectively.

The inspectors noted that between the hours of 12.50pm and 3.50pm on the 8 August the adult to child ratios were not maintained:

3. At 12.50pm there was one adult responsible for the care of eleven children. This included ten children sleeping in the cot room and one child awake on a low bed. These children were all in the 1-2 year age range; the minimum ratio of adults to children for this age is 1:5.

4. At 1.10pm there were two adults caring for fourteen children in the Neverland room. Five of these children were in the 2-3 year age range and nine of them were in the 3-6 year age range. Between 3pm and 3.50pm two adults were caring for fifteen children; another adult was required to satisfy the minimum adult to child ratio.

5. At 1.40pm there was one adult responsible for the care of five children in the Baby Chicks room. Three of these children were in the 0-1 year age range and two of them were in the 1-2 year age range; another adult was required to be available to satisfy the minimum adult to child ratio.

At these times there was no adult available to provide relief as the management team were maintaining the minimum adult to child ratios in other rooms where adults had left to go on their breaks.

6. On the second day of inspection 9 August 2023 three adults were responsible for the care of thirty pre-school children in the Wonderland room; these children were in the 3-6 year age range and were attending on a full day care basis.

The minimum ratio of adults to children for this age range is 1:8.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Children in the 3-6 year age range who have not yet attended primary school will be cared for according to the pre-school regulations until after they have attended their first day of primary school and then the school-aged childcare regulations will be followed.

An extra adult has been assigned to the Neverland room.

There will always be an adult available to provide cover for breaks. If none of the management team are available then extra cover will be provided. The person in charge will ensure that appropriate cover is in place each morning as demonstrated by a lunch roster.

The (registered providers) will ensure that there is always cover for lunch and another member of the management team has returned from leave so extra cover is available.

Supporting documentation submitted

Lunch roster

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-

(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) (b)

Nutritious and varied food was offered to children at regular intervals and extra portions were available. Food choices were appropriate to children's individual dietary and cultural needs. Mealtimes were relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience for children as adults engaged with them helping when required. Young children were encouraged to feed themselves appropriate to their age and stage of development and were helped when needed.

Drinking water was available to children and was brought to the outdoor area.

Children who wore nappies had them changed regularly throughout the day and at other times when required and adults were observed to engage attentively with children during the procedure. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently and were encouraged to wash their hands afterwards.

Detailed plans were in place to guide practice for children with additional care requirements, including allergies. Older children's hands were washed after outdoor play and before eating. Care was given to children's appearance as bibs were put on younger children before eating and their hands and faces were cleaned afterwards.

All children had regular access to outdoor play and wore appropriate clothing when outside.

Adults used effective information sharing processes, such as a mobile messaging application, which promoted consistency and continuity of care for children attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

1. The sleep needs of one child attending the Puddleducks room and two children attending the Bouncing Bunnies room were not met in a timely manner. These children who were showing obvious signs of tiredness such as irritability, eye rubbing and food refusal were not facilitated to rest until the prescribed service-led sleep time.
2. Children who were still sleeping after the service-led designated sleep time in the Toddling Turtles and Peter Rabbits rooms were actively woken from sleep by having blankets removed and being tapped on the shoulder and back and called by adults.

Needs led sleep is essential for children's development and well-being.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Staff have been retrained in the sleep policy for the service to ensure that children are put down to sleep when showing signs of tiredness and will be allowed to sleep until they wake naturally. Details of the sleep policy have been given to parents again.

A member of the management team will monitor this practice on a daily basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Safe Sleep Policy

Staff training checklist

Summary Comment

The actions as stated will address the non-compliances noted on inspection.

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:

External doors were secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service. Toys and play equipment observed in use by children on both days of inspection were safe and in good working order.

Infection Control:

Good hand hygiene practices for older children were observed such as washing their hands after outdoor play and before eating; children were encouraged to wash their hands after going to the toilet. The nappy changing procedure observed in the Bouncing Bunnies room was effective for infection prevention and control. Cleaning schedules were in place and adults were observed to clean down tables with appropriate cleaning agents before and after meals.

Administration of Medication:

An individualised care plan and emergency medication was available for one child with an identified additional need and adults knew where the medication was stored and how to administer it if required.

Safe Sleep:

The temperature of the areas where children were sleeping was maintained within the recommended range of 16 -20 degrees Celsius and sleeping children were physically monitored every ten minutes.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Under sink cupboards with cleaning products and refrigerators with medication in the Busy Bees, Peter Rabbits, Neverland and Narnia rooms were not secured and posed a potential risk of injury to children.
2. A wooden panel of the fencing surrounding the outdoor play area was broken with splinters and nails protruding posing a potential risk of injury.
3. There were two holes in the impact absorbing covering in the outdoor area which posed a trip hazard for children using this area.
4. The radiator cover in the Narnia room was broken posing a risk of injury to a child.
5. Trailing cables from a portable fan and a lamp were accessible to children in the Narnia room.

Infection Control:

6. The hands of young children attending the Tiggy Winkles room were not washed before eating posing a risk of infection.
7. The nappy changing procedure observed in the Neverland room was inconsistent and not effective for infection prevention and control. Gloves used for nappy changing were not removed before redressing children, children's hands were not routinely washed after nappy changing and the adult did not wash their hands between changes.
8. Foot pedal operated bins were not used appropriately. Adults and children were observed to use their hands to open bins to dispose of waste posing a risk of cross infection.
9. Two children's chairs in the nappy changing area adjacent to the Puddleducks room were heavily stained and not appropriate for a sanitary area as they could not be effectively cleaned. This posed a risk of cross contamination between children.
10. Two couches in the Puddleducks room and one couch in the Neverland room had foam exposed and could not be effectively cleaned posing a risk of cross infection between children.
11. The lid was missing from a bin in the outdoor play area exposing waste which posed a potential risk of cross contamination.

Administration of Medication:

12. A sample of twelve administration of medication forms were reviewed. There were two different forms in use and one of the forms did not record that a parent had been informed when their child received medication and there was no signature on other forms to indicate that the administration of medication had been witnessed. Failure to witness medication administration and demonstrate that this information has been communicated to parents is a potential risk to children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Staff have been retrained in the importance of always using fridge and press locks provided. A member of the management team will do daily checks to ensure that all fridges and presses are locked.
2. The fence has been repaired.
3. This area has been blocked off until repairs can take place in mid-October. A daily risk assessment will be carried out on the garden area and issues identified will be addressed immediately when possible.
4. The radiator cover has been replaced.

5. The cables have been secured and are not accessible to children. Management will do an inspection each morning to ensure that nothing is broken.

Infection Control:

6. Staff have been retrained regarding the correct hand hygiene procedures and their importance.
 7. Staff have been retrained on the nappy changing procedure.
 8. Staff have been retrained regarding the correct way for adults and children to use the foot pedal operated bins. Management will do checks and have regular staff meetings to ensure that the correct practices are maintained.
 9. The two chairs have been removed from the sanitary accommodation.
 10. The couches have been removed from this room and new equipment has been ordered.
 11. The outdoor bin has been replaced with a new weatherproof bin.
- All equipment and materials will be checked regularly by management and replaced when needed.

Administration of Medication:

12. Staff have been retrained on how to correctly complete the medication administration forms. All the old forms have been removed and replaced with the newer updated forms.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs
Staff training checklist

Summary Comment

The actions as stated will address the non-compliances noted on inspection.
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) Adults working in the service had valid qualifications in First Aid Responder (FAR) training and were always available to children.

(2) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available.

(a) They were stored safely in conspicuous positions in the service.

(b) The first aid boxes were available to children at all times.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

Children were not appropriately supervised in the nappy changing areas adjacent to the Puddleducks and Toddling Turtles rooms. One adult was observed to bring three children at a time for nappy changing. Children who were waiting to have their nappies changed were observed to climb on a small ledge, turn on the water taps, lie on the floor and play with the nappy disposal bins unobserved by the adult who had their back turned while attending to the child whose nappy was being changed.

The lack of supervision observed on inspection posed a safety and cross infection risk to children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Only two children at a time will be brought to have their nappy changed. Facilities will be available to entertain children to avoid issues around supervision and cross contamination. This will be monitored by the management team.

Summary Comment

A determination of compliance cannot be made until the practice is reviewed on inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)
The registered providers did not ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified was available for children attending the Wonderland room.
There were twenty-seven pre-school children present in this room on the 8 August 2023 and thirty pre-school children present on the 9 August 2023.
This room measures 46.42sqm and the maximum number of pre-school children in the 3-6 year age range that can be accommodated in this room is twenty.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The Wonderland room will operate as a pre-school room for the summer months and will adhere to the minimum space requirements for pre-school children. Management team are aware of these requirements.

Summary Comment

The inspector is satisfied that the non-compliance has been addressed.
The regulatory requirement has been met.