

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR162
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Name of Service:	Once Upon A Time Nursery & Montessori
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Address of Service:	Carrickmines Manor, Glenamuck Road, Carrickmines, Dublin 18, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D18 V802
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Name of Registered Provider:	Annemarie McCormack, David McCormack
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date 1 of Inspection:	24/05/2023
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Date 2 of Inspection:	25 May 2023
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No of pre-school children: Day 1	AM	75	PM	73
Day 2	AM	71	PM	71

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, County Dublin
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Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill and Sarah Quigley
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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).

Conditions if applicable	N/A
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Description of service

Once Upon A Time Nursery & Montessori is a private childcare facility which is one of nine services operated by the registered providers in the Dublin region; this service was established in January 2013. The service is registered to provide a full day care for pre-school children and operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 07:30 -18:30.

The early years service is located at ground floor and operates from a purpose-built premises within an apartment complex in a residential area in Carrickmines South Dublin. There are six care rooms available for the pre-school children; Junior Wobbler (1 year), Wobbler (1year), Toddler room (2 years), Pre-Montessori room (2- 3 years), the Junior Montessori (3 - 4 years), and the Montessori room (4 - 6 years). An outdoor play area is available for the children to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

On the 24 May 2023 sixteen adults were present when the inspectors arrived this included the designated person in charge, the recruitment manager, a student and domestic worker. After the inspection commenced the area Manager and two additional staff who were not rostered to work in the service arrived from the registered providers other childcare facilities in Tallaght and Cherrywood. These staff then worked directly with the children in the Junior Wobbler and Junior Montessori rooms for the remainder of the 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/ safety/ premises and facilities.

This inspection included an assessment of a proposed change of circumstances in the services registration status under the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 - Management and Recruitment, 11 – Staffing Levels, 16 – Record in relation to Pre-school service, 19 – Health, welfare and development of child, 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child and Regulation 30 – Minimum space requirements was included to assess the proposed change in circumstance submitted. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 – Health, welfare and development of child, 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Junior Wobbler, Wobbler, Toddler and PreMontessori rooms and did not include the Junior Montessori and Montessori 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.

Additional Information

A change in circumstances form was submitted by the registered provider on the 21st April 2023. The proposed change submitted by the registered provider included the following:

- Change in number of children that can be accommodated from 75 to 85 children.
- Change of age profile from 0 – 6 years to 1 – 6 years.
- Change in number of staff from 15 –17.

These proposed changes were assessed as part of this inspection and based on the inspection findings can be approved.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, areas Managers, 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,*
- (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)* The service had a named person in charge and a person who could deputise in their absence.
- (b)* The person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived and remained on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2)* The inspection focused on the recruitment records of adults who had commenced working in the service since the previous inspection dated 4 October 2022. From reviewing the records eleven new staff had commenced working in the service since then.
- Four additional staff files were reviewed as part of the inspection this included two files for the staff who arrived from the other childcare centres, a file for the recruitment manager and a file for a student who was present on inspection.
- (a)* Of the fifteen files reviewed. A minimum of two references from a previous employer with a record of verification was available on file for these staff.
- (c)* Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff employed in the service.
- (d)* International police vetting was available for the twelve staff who had lived in another state for more than six consecutive months as an adult.
- (3)* It was evident that the procedures outlined under regulation 9(2)(a),(c) and (d) had been carried out prior to the employment of all staff for whom it was required.
- (4)* A record was available evidencing that twelve staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification. An additional two staff who did not have the required qualification had

obtained letters of eligibility to practice from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY).

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.

(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 seventy-five children attending the service being supervised by fifteen adults.
- On the second day of inspection there were seventy-one children attending the service being supervised by fourteen adults.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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;*

Compliance Information

(1)(h) A software programme was used by the service to record details of attendance of each pre-school child on a daily basis.

*(i)*A staff roster was available.

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 service provided snacks and used an external catering company to provide readymade hot meals which are prepared onsite daily. Food was offered at regular intervals. Morning snack consisted of yogurt, chopped grapes, sliced banana, with a sprinkling of oats and bread sticks. Suitable cutlery was provided. Drinking stations were available within the rooms and all children were offered drinks of water when eating. Younger children were provided with bibs to protect their clothing from spills. Children were assisted to clean their faces and wash their hands at appropriate times. Older children used the toilet independently. Staff members were respectful and kind

towards the children in their care. Children were listened to and given time to chat and express their thoughts and feelings. In the Junior Wobbler room staff responded to children's cues for comfort when they became upset by holding them and talking to them in soft tones.

Highchairs and low-level age-appropriate chairs and a table were available in all care rooms for the younger children to sit comfortably for meals and some tabletop activities. Designated areas of interest within the care rooms included a home corner, construction area, art area and library area. Each area was equipped with suitable props and equipment. The inspectors observed children moving freely, exploring their environment, playing with each other and engaging with staff. Suitable cosy areas were available within the rooms to allow children to rest and relax. Children's need for sleep was facilitated by a sufficient number of standard cots for children under 2 years. Two designated cots rooms were available. Low level sleep beds were available for children aged 2 years and above requiring sleep.

Children had an opportunity for outdoor play. The area was equipped with a see-saw, ride on bikes and balls. Staff were observed to play different games with the children.

Non-Compliance Information

1. In the Wobbler room at approximately 10:15am one of the children had a soiled nappy the inspector observed that the child did not have their needs met in a timely manner. There was a strong malodour in the room. The child's nappy was not changed until the manager came into the room at 11.28am who noticed the smell and prompted staff to change the child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

As the staff were in the room, they had not noted a strong malodour in the room, to ensure this does not happen again, more regular nappy checks are being carried out. Staff check the nappies throughout the day so we have ensured that all staff are making sure to physically check each nappy more often in the room.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence.

Summary Comment

The actions outlined as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance. Care practices will be reviewed on next inspection.

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. An intercom system was in place on the front door and only authorised persons had the pin code to use to access the premises.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The kitchen was inaccessible.

Infection Control:

- The environment was clean and a domestic worker employed by the service was observed washing the floors during the inspection.
- The children washed their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and prior to eating. Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing.
- Staff followed the nappy changing policy.
- Pedal operated bins were provided for waste as required.
- A system was in place for effective sterilisation of soothers.

Administration of Medication:

- A care plan was available for a child who had a specific medical condition and staff were familiar with the plan of care in the event of a medical emergency.
- Medication was safely stored and clearly labelled.

Safe Sleep:

- In discussion with the inspector staff demonstrated they were familiar with safe-sleep guidelines. Sleeping children were checked by staff every 10 minutes and a record of all checks was maintained.
- Standard cots were used for children under two years of age when sleeping.
- An adult remained in the room at all times where children were sleeping on low beds.
- The temperature of the sleep room was maintained between 16 and 20 degrees Celsius.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the Junior Wobbler room, a large air conditioning unit was not secured and was stored on a low-level cupboard posing a potential injury risk.
2. In the PreMontessori sanitary area a bottle of cleaning detergent was accessible to children as the cupboard had not been safely secured posing a potential safety risk.
3. In the outdoor area a rubber tile at the side of the see-saw was missing posing a potential trip hazard.

Infection Control:

4. In the Junior Wobbler room, no system was in place for cleaning toys that were mouthed by children. Plastic toys placed in children's mouths were put back in the box without being cleaned by staff.
5. In the outdoor area the following items were identified that posed an infection control risk:
 - There was an accumulation of used tissues and papers on the ground.
 - The plastic covering on a step cushion was torn and could not be effectively cleaned.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Large air con unit has been moved up out of reach of the children.
2. All the staff are aware to do checks to ensure press latches are secure. Staff are being extra vigilant to ensure they are locked at all times.
3. A maintenance service fixed the floor in our playground area.

Infection Control:

4. Staff are aware that they must use the box for mouthed toys throughout the day to prevent infection control.

5. Tissues were under a wooden slate that was lifted and cleaned thoroughly, opening and closing checks along with the domestic doing extra checks before children entering the garden to ensure this does not happen again. Daily checks are carried out and all safety risks are noted for our maintenance schedule.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Written and photographic evidence submitted.

Infection Control:

Written and photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions outlined as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance.

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

(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

(e) Adequate and suitable sanitary facilities were available for the number of children attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(c) The temperatures of some care rooms recorded in the table below were too high which may provide an uncomfortable environment for the children.

The temperatures on 24 May 2023 were recorded as follows:

Room Name	Air Temperature °C	Recommended Temperature Range
Wobbler Room	23.3 °C at 10.38am	18 °C -22°C

	Pre-Montessori room	22.9°C at 12pm	18 °C -22°C	
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Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Fans have been ordered for all the sleep rooms, fans are put on first thing in the morning and doors ajar windows opened and blinds down to prevent the sun from coming strongly through the sleep rooms. We have linked in with a company to hire equipment so we can avail of their services during warm periods.

Supporting documentation submitted

None.

Summary Comment

The actions outlined as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance. Care practices will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

(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.

the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).

Compliance Information

Regulation 30 minimum space requirements was included in the inspection as a result of a proposed change in circumstance form submitted by the registered providers to the registration office.

(1), (2) Adequate clear floor space has been provided in care rooms for the numbers of children currently attending and the proposed number of extra children attending on a Full Day Care basis as demonstrated by the following:

Room Name	Clear Floor Space available
Junior Wobbler	48 square metres
Wobbler	31 square metres
Toddler	31 square metres
Junior Montessori	37 square metres
Pre-Montessori	42 square metres
Montessori	37 square metres

The above table illustrates that the service has sufficient clear floor space to accommodate the number of proposed additional children. The registered providers propose to accommodate 85 pre-school children attending the service on a Full Day Care basis within the existing space available.