

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DR171
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Absorbent Minds Ballintyre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	1 Ballintyre Walk, Ballinteer Avenue, Ballinteer, Dublin 16, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D16 EF88
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Annmarie Hendrick
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	06/11/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	31	PM	22
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	The Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Loughlinstown Health Centre Loughlinstown County Dublin
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Olivia Quill
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Absorbent Minds Ballintyre was established in 2015 and is one of two services owned and privately operated by the registered provider. The early years service is registered to provide full day care, part-time including sessional care and offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for children ranging in age from 2 years to 6 years. Opening hours are 8am-6pm Monday to Friday.

### Staffing

In total nine staff are employed in the service including a cook. On the 6 November 2023 seven staff were present including the cook. The designated person in charge worked directly with the children. An additional adult from the other childcare service owned by the registered provider arrived during the inspection to relieve the designated person in charge.

### 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.

This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 16(h),(i),(j) and (k) Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of child

Regulation 20 Facilities for rest and play

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 First Aid

Regulation 26 Fire safety measures.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the little and big 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

An Immediate Action Notice was issued on the 6 November 2023 under Regulation 25 as there was no one on the premises with in date First Aid Responder training. The registered provider submitted a response on the 7 November 2023 outlining plans to have six staff members complete First Aid Responder training on the 7 December 2023. Two other staff members will complete paediatric first aid on the 15 November 2023.

## Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day 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.*

*(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) All staff files were reviewed as part of the inspection and included a file for the staff member who arrived to provide relief cover. In total ten staff files were inspected as detailed below.

(a), (b) There were nine written verified references available from two sources for staff.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána for all staff working the in the service.

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

(4) There was evidence that nine of the adults had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a), (b) The registered provider did not complete all required recruitment procedures to confirm the suitability of employees. Eleven written references provided for staff members had not been verified by the registered provider.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a),(b) All references provided by staff have been verified. Each staff member has 2 verified references in their staff file. We have purchased a Telephone Reference Validation book to ensure that no references are submitted to the staff files without the validation record sheet attached.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has 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.*

*(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. There were thirty-one children attending the service being supervised by six adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) The staff roster confirmed two adults are present 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

(h) Details of the attendance of each child were recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

(i) The staff roster was available on the day of inspection and accurately reflected the adults working in the service.

(j) A sample of medication administration records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

(k) A sample of accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

### 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 designated person in charge reported that all snacks and a hot lunch are prepared daily in the service by the cook. An external catering company is used to supply the hot meal. The service had a healthy eating policy. A morning snack of crackers with butter, grated cheese and slices of orange and apple was offered to the children. Suitable cutlery was provided. Lunch provided was sweet potato and pineapple curry served with rice. Drinking water was freely available. The atmosphere was calmed and relaxed at snack time children sat together and were given plenty of time to enjoy their snack. Transitions within the service were managed appropriately children were given plenty of notice to prepare for the next activity.

Staff warmly engaged with the children in their care throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Younger children's nappies were changed as required. During this time staff helped children feel at ease by talking to them about things of interest. Older children went to the toilet independently.

Care rooms were arranged into defined areas of interest including home corners, construction areas, a sensory table, library areas, arts and crafts. Each area was resourced well with suitable play materials and equipment providing children with the freedom to play and explore. The materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Suitable child size furniture including tables and chairs were available for eating and tabletop activities. A family wall with photos was displayed in the care rooms at children's level helping children to feel safe with familiar things around them.

The outdoor area was safely secured with a high wall and gate. An artificial grass surface was provided. A variety of play equipment was available including a slide, playhouse, ride on bikes, balls a basketball net and chalk board.

A picnic style table and bench was available for children to rest and eat. All children were observed to spent time in the outdoor play area at a designated time.

## 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

(1)(b)

In the Little room adequate and suitable facilities were not provided for children over 2 years to rest and sleep. At 12.50 pm five children were observed lying on two large, shared mats and a sixth child was lying on the child size sofa. Each child was not provided with an individual sleep mat or bed to rest and sleep as required.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

Each child now has their own sleep mat in the Little Room for rest time.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has 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:

- Entry to the service was safely secured. An intercom system was in place on the front gate allowing authorised access only and children could not leave the area unsupervised.
- The fire exits were unobstructed.
- Storage facilities for cleaning agents and medication were out of the reach of children.

##### Infection Control:

- The environment was clean and the service maintained a record of cleaning.
- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. Children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including following outdoor play, using the toilet and before meals.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Staff were familiar with the medication policy when questioned. A suitable medication record form was available. Medication given was recorded correctly and signed by two staff members and the child's parents.

##### Safe Sleep:

- In the Little room children were physically monitored while sleeping. The staff member remained in the room with the children. The environment was made conducive for sleeping the room was quiet.
- The sleep room was maintained at the required temperature for sleep.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Infection Control:

1. Nappy changing practices observed on the day of inspection in the service were inadequate for infection control purposes. Staff were observed redressing the children while wearing the same soiled gloves used for nappy changing and the nappy changing mat was not cleaned between children.

2. In the sanitary area used by the Little room the nappy changing bin provided was unsuitable as it was lidded bin rather than a pedal operated and posed an infection control risk.
3. In the Big and Little room the pedal operated bins were broken.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Infection Control:

1. A staff meeting was held to address the mistakes with the nappy changing procedure. All staff were asked to re-read the procedure on the wall before changing a nappy.
2. The nappy bin was replaced with a pedal operated bin in the nappy changing area of the Little Room. This will be checked regularly to ensure it is maintained and replaced if necessary.
3. The bins in the Big and Little Room have been replaced. This will be checked regularly to ensure it is maintained and replaced if necessary.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Infection Control:

Written and photographic evidence.

#### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has 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

(2)(a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was observed to be immediately accessible to the children within the service and was stored in a conspicuous location on the day of inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1) An Immediate Action Notice was issued on 06 November 2023 as a person trained in first aid was not immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection. The registered provider submitted a response on 07 November 2023.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

Six staff members have begun their FAR training and are due to complete the course on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Two other staff members have completed Paediatric First Aid on 15/11/2023. A 3 month reminder will be put in place to ensure the First Aid certs don't go out of date again

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Booking receipt.

#### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. The Regulatory requirement has been met.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had been recorded as undertaken on the 19 October 2023.
  - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the fire equipment were dated 01 February 2022 and the 28 July 2023 for the smoke alarms.