

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS001		
Name of Service:	Ronanstown Community Childcare Centre		
Address of Service:	Neilstown Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D22 V2C6		
Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Daly		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	24/04/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	39	PM 27
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8		
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien & O. Quill		
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	N/A		

Description of service

Ronanstown Community Childcare Centre is a not-for-profit early years service. The service provides full day, part time and sessional care and caters for children from 1 to 6 years. The service operates from 07:45 to 18:15, Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a purpose-built childcare facility which is shared with another early years service at the Neilstown shopping centre in Clondalkin, South Dublin. There are 4 care rooms, the Wobbler room caters for children aged 1. The Toddler room caters for children aged 2. The Early Start Preschool and ECCE Preschool rooms cater for children from 3 to 5 years of age. There are three sleep rooms and a sensory room in the service. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area at the rear of the premises which is accessed directly from each care room.

Staffing

The service currently employs 18 staff including a manager. There were 13 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection including the designated person in charge who attended the service following the inspector's arrival. There were an additional 2 adults who are on community employment and other work schemes present. The service also employs two cooks. The registered provider does not work directly with the children and was not present on the 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/ safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following 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.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16(h)(j)(k), regulation 19(1)(a)(b) and regulation 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection for these regulations included the Wobbler and Toddler 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 person in charge, deputy 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

(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

- (1)
- (a)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required. The designated person in charge attended the service following the inspector's arrival.

(2)(3)(4)

The requirements for regulation 9(2)(3)(4) were met during the last inspection of the service on 15 December 2021 in respect of the adults currently employed. Therefore, regulation 9(2)(3)(4) was not assessed during this inspection as no new adults had commenced employment in the service since the last date of 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.

(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-nine children attending the service being supervised by thirteen adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There more than 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;
- (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

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

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

Non-Compliance Information

(h) A child from the Early Start Preschool room was present in the Toddler room at 10:15. This child returned to the Early Start Preschool room at 11:45 and was not recorded on the Toddler room register during this period. This posed a risk to the safe evacuation of children in the event of a fire.

(j) A sample of medication administration records were reviewed. Some of these records were incomplete. Two records were not signed by the parent, contrary to the service's administration of medicine policy. Failure to ensure that parents have been informed of the administration of medication poses a risk to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(h) The child was moved because of ratios. Staff have been reminded that all children should be signed in to whatever room they are in at that time.

(j) Staff reminded about the importance of completing medication forms properly and ensuring they are signed by parents and guardians.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these non-compliances. These actions will be assessed on the next 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*
- (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

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that all meals are provided by the service. Children are offered breakfast at 09:30 and a fruit snack is provided during the morning. Dinner was served at 11:30 in the Wobbler room and 12:00 in the Toddler room. Children were encouraged to feed themselves. Staff stated that additional servings of dinner were available if requested and inspectors observed more food being offered and given to children in the Toddler room who had finished their meal.

Staff were observed cleaning children's noses in the Wobbler room as required and children's faces and hands were washed after dinner. Children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. There was a designated sleep time in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms. The sleep needs of the younger children in the Wobbler room who were attending for the full day were met with children placed to sleep when they displayed signs of tiredness.

Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection. Staff were observed to use distraction and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour management policy.

Staff described how they communicate with parents regarding their child's day using an online application detailing information on food, sleep and nappy changes. Staff also communicate with parents at arrival and collection times.

Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was located to the rear of the premises and had shock absorbent surfacing. The area was divided into two separate play spaces and part of one of these areas had a canopy. The outdoor area was well resourced with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment. Children from the Wobbler and Toddler rooms accessed the outdoor area on the day of inspection and were observed engaging in energetic and gross motor play.

Non-Compliance Information

1. Drinking water was not readily available to the children in the Wobbler or Toddler rooms throughout the day. It is acknowledged that children in the Wobbler room were given water with their dinner. However, not all children in the Toddler room were offered a drink at dinner time, only children who asked for a drink were given water with their meal.
2. On the day of inspection, a child in the Wobbler room, who was attending on a part time basis, was not provided with a dinner when they awoke from their sleep at 11:55. The child was asleep when the fruit snack was served in the morning. Staff stated that the child had toast at 09:30 and that the child never eats dinner in the service. When the inspector queried whether the child would be given anything to eat, staff stated they would give the child a rice cake which was given to the child at 12:15. It is acknowledged that the child regularly refuses food but no dinner was offered to the child and there was no documented plan of care as to how the child's nutritional needs were being met while attending the service.
3. During the inspection, some children in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms were observed to have a soother in their mouth for prolonged periods of time contrary to the service's policy on soother use. Staff stated that children can have their soother when they are upset, however the children were not observed to be upset. Prolonged use of soothers may inhibit language and oral motor development and prevent children from interacting with their peers.

4. A tablet was left playing in the Wobbler room for 15 minutes during the inspection. Three children who had been engaged in play in the outdoor area came back into the room to watch the tablet. Exposing young children to screens does not support their learning and development. This non-compliance was present on the last inspection on 15 December 2021. The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider did not prevent reoccurrence of this non-compliance.
5. The environments in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms were not appropriately resourced to promote all areas of development and to provide enriching play experiences for the number of children in attendance as follows;
 - a. The rooms were poorly laid out with no designated areas of interest and with limited toys and materials available to the children.
 - b. There were no books available to the children in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms.
 - c. Children in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms did not have the opportunity to engage in sensory play with sand, water or different textures.

The children in these rooms were attending on either a part time or full day care basis and were observed to be wandering aimlessly at times. Some children were observed climbing on chairs, low level tables and shelving units and running around the room.

6. Transitions from one activity to another required more planning and management by staff to anticipate the needs of the children and to support children to move from one activity to the next smoothly as evidenced by the following;
 - a. Children were not consistently given notice of the end of an activity before transitioning to the next activity. Children in the Toddler room were engaging in a dancing activity when staff stated it was time to go outdoors. While staff were helping children to put their coats on, children were observed climbing on low level tables and chairs, sitting on a bed where another child was trying to sleep and turning the lights on and off in the care room.
 - b. Children in the Toddler room who were ready to go to the outdoor area had to wait while the older group finished their play. During this period, some children were observed hitting each other.
 - c. Three children in the Toddler room who were ready for bed had to wait outside the sleep room for ten minutes while a staff member made their beds.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Children will have access to cups or beakers at their level so they can have drinking water whenever they choose. Staff reminded that children need drinking water throughout the day.
2. Staff reminded that all children should be offered what is on the menu each day and there is now a picky menu if children choose not to eat what is on the daily menu.
3. Staff reminded about the prolonged use of soothers and the importance of not having prolonged use of soothers, language, social, etc and that soothers are to be used when a child is upset or tired and encouraged to use other forms of comfort like hugs, distraction etc.
4. When the child with additional needs communicates with the staff member to turn the tablet on each day to meet his needs, the door will always be opened to the courtyard at the same time because the children are given choice and sometimes the children will hear the music and choose to come inside to listen to the music or participate in dancing as the tablet is used for educational purposes as well as recording the children's daily information.
5.
 - a. Our childcare rooms have just been fully painted and we have just had a meeting with a provider to design the rooms with new furniture and toys to ensure that all children's needs are met. While we are waiting on this, we have rearranged the Wobbler and Toddler rooms to more defined areas and have re-enforced our daily routines.
 - b. Both Wobbler and Toddler rooms have books out on display in a small box every day.
 - c. Sand, water and playdough are available every day to the children.

Staff reminded to stick to their own routine, the children and staff will be busy, transitions from one activity to another will be smoother and this makes the day go more smoothly for everyone.

6.

- a. When children are transitioning from one activity to another, we will now use a bell for the children to recognise that it is nearly clean up time, as some children need a little more time to get ready to move on to the next activity and after a few moments we will remind the children that it is clean up time and help with the children clean up.
- b. From now on when it's time for the children to go outside we will wait until the other rooms have gone in before the Toddler room go outside.
- c. All staff have now been informed that all sheets are to be put on the beds first thing in the morning so the beds are ready for the children at sleep time which will be done first thing in the morning before children arrive at the centre the first staff member in each day for the toddler room will do this job.

All routines will be reinforced at our next staff meeting. We have also had an introduction meeting with a mentoring service who will meet with the staff in the childcare rooms. They will visit once a week for around 15 months.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. No supporting documentation submitted.
2. Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.
3. No supporting documentation submitted.
4. No supporting documentation submitted.
5. Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.
6. No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider for points 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 above have been deemed to address these non-compliances. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection.

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider for point 4 have not addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection. The regulatory requirement has not 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

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 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.
- Emergency exits were kept clear.
- Cables and cords were secured out of reach of children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. The children were supported to wash their hands after outdoor play and before meals.
- Individual bed linen was provided for the children in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms. Staff stated that bed linen was laundered daily.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep rooms temperatures for children under 2 years were maintained between 16° - 20° Celsius.

Fire Safety:

- A 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 24 March 2023.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

The registered provider did not ensure that all reasonable measures had been taken to safeguard the health, welfare and safety of children as outlined below:

1. Heavy equipment was not secured in the Toddler room. A free-standing air-conditioning unit was observed in the room which posed a risk of tipping and injury.

2. Cleaning products were not stored out of reach of children in the nappy changing area in the Toddler room. The safety latch on a low-level cupboard containing cleaning products was broken posing a risk of injury if accessed.
3. A section of wall was missing under a low windowsill in the outdoor area and a large hole was observed in the wall at the children's level exposing the polystyrene insulation within the wall.
4. In the outdoor area, a section of the shock absorbent rubber surfacing was observed to be missing posing a risk of tripping to the children.
5. A bin with no lid was observed in the outdoor area with plastic waste inside which was accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

Inspectors observed a number of practices which posed a risk of transmission of infection within the service:

6. Some nappy changing practices observed on the day of inspection in the service were inadequate for infection control purposes. Children's hands were not consistently washed following nappy changes and two children were observed with their soother in their mouth throughout a nappy change.
7. The children attending the Wobbler and Toddler rooms were of an age where they explored toys with their mouths. There was no attempt made to remove the toys when mouthed despite the room having a designated box for these. The toys remained in use between the different children posing a risk of cross infection. This non-compliance was present on the last inspection in 2021. The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider did not prevent the reoccurrence of this non-compliance.
8. Children in the Toddler room were served their fruit snack on paper towels on the table and children in the Wobbler room were served their fruit snack directly onto the table posing an infection control risk.
9. The pedal function on the bin in the Toddler nappy changing area was not working. Staff were observed lifting the lid of the bin to dispose of waste.

10. There was no bin in the Toddler room. Used paper towel for hand drying was observed stored in an open container beside clean paper towel.
11. An open bin was in use in the Wobbler room and was observed with waste inside.
12. There were no paper towel dispensers in the Wobbler or Toddler care rooms.
13. The steps up to the nappy changing table in the Toddler room were not appropriately cleaned and had a build-up of dust and debris.
14. There were no cushion covers on the cushions in the rest areas in the Wobbler and Toddler care rooms.
15. A mat in the rest area in the Toddler room was observed with tears at the corners and could not be cleaned effectively.

Safe Sleep:

16. Sleep checks were not consistently carried out every 10 minutes in the Wobbler room contrary to the service's policy on safe sleep. Between 11:01 and 11:51, four sleep checks were carried out at intervals of 12, 16, 8 and 14 minutes. Concerns regarding unsafe sleep practices had been identified on previous inspections in 2018 and 2021. The preventive actions submitted by the registered provider had not been effective in preventing the reoccurrence of this non-compliance.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The air purifier has now been removed from the room.
2. New latch has been placed on cupboard and all staff have been reminded to store cleaning products safely away from the children.
3. The large hole under the low windowsill in the outdoor area has now been covered with a new air vent.
4. The section of shock absorbent rubber surfacing as has been filled taking away the risk of children tripping.
5. A new bin has been placed in the outdoor area.

Infection Control:

6. New signs are placed in the nappy changing areas (no soothers and please wash children's hands after nappy change). Updated nappy changing procedure in the rooms.
7. Staff have been reminded about the importance of infection control and how important it is to use the mouthed toy boxes. We have also put new signs in bold nearby to remind the staff to always use them throughout the day.
8. Extra plates have now been bought and every piece of food served to the children will be on a plate.
9. New bin has been purchased for the toddler room.
10. The toddler room has a new bin placed in the room and a new hand towel dispenser has been supplied for the children to dry their hands.
11. The large bin that was supplied for the wobbler room has now been moved from outside the wooden gate and placed further inside the room for easier access.
12. New hand towel dispensers have been supplied for the children to dry their hands in both wobbler and toddler rooms.
13. We have now put the cleaning of these stairs in our nappy changing areas onto our cleaning rotas and end of day routine.
14. On the day of inspections cushion covers for both rooms were still in the dryer and not fully dry yet and were placed back into the rooms once fully dried. We have asked about rubber circle cushions for the children's rest areas from our supplier.
15. A new mat has been ordered.

Safe Sleep:

16. Staff are physically staying in one sleep room with 4 children every day and physically checking and recording the other sleep room every 10 minutes.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. No supporting documentation submitted.
- 2 - 5 Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Infection Control:

6. Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

7. Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.
8. No supporting documentation submitted.
9. Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.
10. Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.
11. Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.
12. Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.
13. Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.
14. No supporting documentation submitted.
15. No supporting documentation submitted.

Safe Sleep:

16. Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these non-compliances. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection.