

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015DS027 |
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| Name of Service: | SmallWorld Early Education |
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| Address of Service: | Muintir na Tíre, Distillery Lane, Lucan, Co. Dublin |
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| Eircode: | K78 R2Y7 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Sinéad McCarville |
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| Service type: | Sessional |
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| Date(s) of Inspection: | 05/11/2024 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 35 | PM | n/a |
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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 |
| Inspection undertaken by: | F Carty and S Early O'Brien |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable |
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Description of service

Smallworld Early Education is one of two childcare services operated by the registered provider located in an urban setting in Lucan, South West Dublin. A service is provided to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service is open Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 12.30pm for 38 weeks of the year. The premises is located in Muintir Na Tire Centre and comprises of three care rooms, and a small outdoor area to the front of the building.

Staffing

There were six adults working in the service directly with the children. All staff held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The registered provider arrived subsequent to the inspectors arrival and does not work directly with the children.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11 – Staffing levels

Regulation 15 and 16 – Information and records.

Regulation 19 – Health, welfare and development of the child.

Regulation 23 - Safety

Regulation – 25 First Aid

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 and 16 Information and records ...As a result, a sample of 10 records of a pre-school child and accident and incident records were reviewed.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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

The recruitment records of five staff employed in the service since the last inspection on the 27th May 2021 were reviewed on inspection. The following records were available:

- (2)
- (a) Six validated past employer records were available for three staff.
- (b) Four validated references from a source other than a past employer were available for two staff members.
- (c) Garda vetting records were available for all seven staff employed in the service and met the requirements of the Regulatory notice to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International Police vetting was available for two staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working with the children. There were six adults working with thirty five children.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained at all times in the service. Six adults were supervising the care of thirty five children on a sessional basis.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1)
A sample of ten records were reviewed by the inspector. The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a) to (i) of the above regulation for all of the records reviewed.

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;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(h) A written record was available in the care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.

(i) A staff roster was available in the service.

(k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed on the day of inspection documented necessary details.

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

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.

The children's learning, development and well-being being supported by the staff and the environment.

Materials and equipment in all care rooms were stored on low level shelves. In the Montessori room there were a variety of activities available to the children from the Montessori method of education, puzzles, a home corner, cushions and books. One preschool room had a variety of arts and crafts materials together with messy play

stations set out for the children. The other room was laid out with a home corner, small world play and construction materials.

The care rooms were bright with lots of natural light. Family photographs and children's artwork were displayed on the walls. A snack was provided by the parents of the children and included a variety of sandwiches, fruit and yoghurts. The room has child sized tables and chairs for children to sit at for mealtimes and table top activities. Staff were observed to sit with children throughout the session and assist them with a variety of activities and during snack time.

Children were comforted in a timely manner and their feelings were acknowledged when situations arose. Staff made themselves available to the children to scaffold and extend learning as well as be available should a child require support.

Appropriate and suitable care practices were evident in the service. Children were supported to be independent with their personal care. The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. The children were observed to use the toilet independently when they needed staff provided an appropriate level of supervision when required whilst also supporting the children's independence.

The atmosphere in the care room was calm, friendly and supportive. The staff demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children by using soft vocal tones, listening attentively and offering praise and encouragement.

Children's language development was supported through group discussions when carrying out art activities and during imaginative play during the inspection.

The service communicated with the parents at drop off and collection times.

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

Measures had been taken to safeguard the children as outlined in the examples below:

General Safety:

The entrance door to the service was adequately secure to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. All cleaning products were stored safely out of reach of children.

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were in good working order.

Infection Control:

Adults in the service were observed to implement infection control measures such as handwashing and cleaning. On the day of inspection encouragement and supervision of children's hand washing was consistent. The children were encouraged, supported and assisted with handwashing following messy play, prior to meals and after using the toilet.

Adequate supplies of liquid hand soap, paper towels and warm water were available to facilitate hand washing.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exits were unobstructed. Evidence of regular recorded fire drills were observed by the inspectors.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) A person with current first aid responder training was available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous position.

(b) The first aid box was available for use at all times.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-

(a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and

(b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

Compliance Information

(a) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place on the 10th October 2024.

(b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced in November 2023, and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had also taken place during November 2023.