

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015DS048 |
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| Name of Service: | Knocklyon Lodge Crèche & Montessori Ltd |
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| Address of Service: | Knocklyon Lodge, Old Knocklyon Rd, Knocklyon, Dublin 16 |
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| Eircode: | D16 XF25 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Jeanette Sheerin |
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| Service type: | Full Day |
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| Date of Inspection: | 12/06/2025 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 87 | PM | 66 |
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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K |
| Inspection undertaken by: | L Jameson and E Griffin |
| 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

Knocklyon Lodge is a full day care service located in a residential area in Dublin16, providing care to a maximum of 108 children from 08:00am – 05:30pm Monday to Friday. The service also offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme through 3 daily sessions, 08:30am – 11:30am, 09:00 – 12:00pm and 11:40am – 02:40pm. The service comprises of seven care rooms over two adjoining buildings and an additional cabin for school aged children only. The Rainbow room caters for children aged 1 – 2 years, the Sunshine room caters for children aged 2 - 2.5 years and the Starlight room caters for children aged 2 - 3 years. In the adjoining building, the Turtle, the Dolphin, the Seahorse and the Shark rooms cater for children enrolled in the ECCE scheme aged 2.5- 5 years. The Shark room is used for school aged childcare in the afternoons. The premises also has a kitchen, sanitary facilities, two cot rooms, an office, staff room and four enclosed outdoor areas.

Staffing

The registered provider employs twenty-one adults to work in the service, including the person in charge, two deputy persons in charge, fifteen early years educators to work directly with the children, one school aged staff, one chef and one cleaner. On the day of inspection, two deputy persons in charge, fifteen early years educators, one school aged staff, one chef and a student were present when the inspectors arrived unannounced in the service. The cleaner arrived in the service during the inspection. The registered provider and the designated person in charge were not present during 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 9(1)(2)(3)(4) Recruitment and Management, Regulation 15 (1)(a-i) and (3)(c) Record of a Preschool Child, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Rainbow room, the Sunshine room and the Starlight room.

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 two deputy persons 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
- (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.

(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 designated person in charge and two named persons to deputise as needed.
 - (b) The deputy person in charge was rostered to be present all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on and when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff members were aware of their own role and responsibilities.

- (2) The full staff files of two adults employed to work in the service since the last inspection, on 12 June 2024, were reviewed along with the full file of a student and Garda vetting for seven adults which had expired since the last inspection.
- (a) Six written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for nine adults employed in the service and one student. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
 - (d) Documentary evidence showed that one adult had lived in a state other than Ireland for more than six consecutive months as an adult. International police vetting from one of the relevant countries was available for one staff member.
- (3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to two adults before employment commenced.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the one adult who worked directly with the children held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (d) International police vetting was not available for one adult in respect of one country that they had lived in other than Ireland for more than six consecutive months as an adult.
- (3) Evidence was not available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to one adult who had access to the children. The following was observed:
- International police vetting for one adult had not been obtained prior to their commencement in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (d) An application for international police vetting has been made and will be added to the staff files once obtained. The staff member will continue to work in the service outside of operational hours with no

contact with the children until the police vetting has been obtained. Management will ensure that all international police vetting is completed before new staff members commence in the service.

- (3) Management will ensure all checks are completed before a new staff member commences employment in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)

- (d) Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

- (3) Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 9.

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

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children throughout the inspection. In the morning there were fifteen adults caring for eighty-seven children and during the afternoon there were sixteen adults caring for sixty-six children. In addition, the deputy person in charge and one student were available to provide support in a supernumerary capacity where required.
- (2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff members were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children in the rooms.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sampling process was used in relation to the children's records. All of the 24 sampled registration forms were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

(3)

- (c) The children's records were available and open for review by the inspectors as authorised persons.

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

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Mealtimes were observed to be a sociable and pleasant event, with staff members sitting alongside the children, engaging in meaningful conversations and offering support and encouragement to the children. Alternative meal options were available for children with different dietary requirements, likes and dislikes.
- The children who were toilet trained used the toilet independently with discreet supervision provided by staff members. Nappies were changed at scheduled times and more frequently when required.
- Staff members were observed to tend to children's individual personal needs promptly, for example assisting with hand washing and blowing noses.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Staff members were observed to be respectful in their interactions with children and colleagues, using kind and positive language on the day of inspection.
- Staff members were observed to positively reinforce the children's achievements with praise and recognition. A child who required additional support was observed to be encouraged by staff to explore their environment, supported during activities and transitions and given freedom of choice.
- Staff members were observed to actively supervise and guide the children throughout the day, sitting at low levels and playing with the children. There was a clear sense of familiarity between staff members and the children. Children appeared content and comfortable in their environment with staff members attending to the children's individual and specific needs as required.
- Staff members discussed how they communicate with parents through updates on daily record sheets and through email as well as through informal chats at drop off and collection times.

Physical and material environment:

- Low level tables, chairs and highchairs were available for use by the children which allowed them to engage in tabletop activities and meals comfortably.
- Toys and materials were in good working order and accessible on low level shelving which allowed children to access them independently. The care rooms were designed to support the age and developmental stages of the children and included defined areas of interest, such as home corners and cosy areas.
- Materials including jigsaws and puzzles, a selection of books, cars, animals, dolls, sensory activities and kitchens with supporting props were available to the children, facilitating a range of play and learning experiences and promoting imaginative play.
- Children’s artwork, photographs, family walls and birthday charts were displayed throughout the care rooms and service, supporting the children’s sense of identity and links between home and the service.
- The outdoor areas provided opportunities for a variety of play experiences including sensory play, gross motor and imaginative play.

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 leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- A visitor book was available at the front door. The inspectors were asked to sign in and sign out at their arrival to and departure from the service.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Flexes and cords were stored safely out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- The care rooms and sanitary areas were equipped with warm water, liquid soap and hand paper towels. Staff members were observed to support children with handwashing at regular intervals throughout the day, before eating and after toileting.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas to ensure the hygienic disposal of contaminated materials.
- Windows were observed to be open to allow circulation of fresh air and reduce malodour in the care rooms and sanitary accommodation.

Administration of Medication:

- Emergency and anti-febrile medication was observed to be in date, stored in the correct packaging and out of the children's reach. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff members were observed to physically check and record the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children every 10 minutes.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained for sleeping children over one years old in the cot rooms and care rooms.
- Cots and sleep mats were observed to be in good condition and positioned 50cm apart, allowing staff members to move easily around the room while carrying out sleep checks.
- Appropriate bed linen was in use for sleeping children.
- The blinds were closed and white noise played in the background, creating a relaxing environment for sleeping children.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The use of window restrictors was not observed on windows that were easily accessible to children in the Sunshine room and Starlight room, posing a potential risk of injury to children. It is acknowledged that there are latches on the window frames, but these were not in use on the day of the inspection.

Infection Control:

2. The following equipment was observed to be torn, leaving the internal foam exposed:

- Foam blocks in the Starlight room.
- The nappy changing mat in the Starlight sanitary accommodation.

This reduced the risk of effective cleaning and increased the risk of cross contamination.

3. The foot operated pedal bin in the Sunshine sanitary accommodation was observed to be broken. This posed a potential risk of cross contamination through repeated touch to the surface.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Window restrictors are in use. Management have spoken to all staff to ensure the window restrictors are in use at all times.

Infection Control:

2. A new changing mat has been bought and placed in the changing area; any damaged equipment has been removed. Management will check all equipment for rips or wear and tears and update as required.
3. A new bin has been bought and placed in the changing area. Management will check all bins and update as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Infection Control:

2. Documentation and photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed
3. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 23.

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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. The records indicated and staff members reported that fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 20 May 2025.
 - (b) A record was kept of the maintenance of the fire extinguishers in the premises which was certified as having been serviced most recently on 24 March 2025 and the smoke alarms on 11 June 2025.
- (2) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All fire records requested by the inspection team were available for review.
- (4) The evacuation procedure was displayed in the hallway of the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire or emergency in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured to reflect the type of care provided. The insurance certificate had an expiry date of 27 March 2026.