

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS054
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Name of Service:	Sweet Pea Preschool
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Address of Service:	2 Liffey Valley Drive, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K78 DW71
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Name of Registered Provider:	Loretta McDonagh
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	17/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
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Inspection undertaken by:	Fiona Carty
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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	Not applicable
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Description of service

Sweetpea Preschool is a privately owned sessional service located in an urban setting in South West Dublin. A service is provided to children aged 2 to 6 years. The service offers two separate sessional services and is open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 12.30pm and 1pm to 4pm for 38 weeks of the year. The premises is located in a purposely adapted domestic dwelling and comprises of 4 care rooms, sanitary accommodation, an office and an outdoor area to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There were eight adults present on the day of inspection including the registered provider who did 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, information and records health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16, 19, 23, 25, and 26. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1) and 16 (1).

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 inspector wishes 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.*

(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

The inspection focused on the recruitment records of two new staff members who had been recruited since the last inspection dated 16th September 2020.

(2) (a) Two written past employer references were available in respect of one employee.

(b) Two written references from a source other than a past employer was available for one employee who had no previous employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for both adults.

(d) None of the new staff members had lived outside the state for more than six months as an adult and therefore did not require police vetting.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to a person being employed in the service.

(4) Both staff members held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at minimum Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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) An adequate number of adults were working with the children at all times.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratios were maintained. There were seven adults caring for 25 preschool children.

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 12 records were reviewed by the inspector.

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) of the above Regulation for all of the records reviewed.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (b) The registered provider did not ensure that a record in writing was available showing the date the child began attending the service in two records of the documentation inspected.

(h) There was no record of immunisations, if received by the children in six of the documents reviewed.

(i) There was no written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the case of emergency in one of the records reviewed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b)

- Going forward into the new registered preschool year all children's records will show the date the child began attending the service.
- Records have been cross checked and updated.

(h)

- All children's immunization records for September 2023 are being formulated pre attendance and parents have been notified that their child cannot attend our service without their child's immunisation record.
- Records have been cross checked and updated.

(i)

- Written consent for appropriate medical treatment in the case of emergency is part of are registration pack and all records have been cross checked and rectified.

From September 2023 all records will be crossed checked by room leader and management.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 15.

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

- (1)
- (h) A written and digital record was available in each care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
 - (i) A staffing roster was available in the service detailing hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection.
 - (j) Signed parental consent was available to administer temperature reducing and emergency medication.
 - (k) A sample of accident and incident records were reviewed and were signed by staff and adults and 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-

(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 inspector observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

The play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led. Children were observed exploring their environment, engaged in activities and playing with each other and the staff. The children were all provided with the opportunity to play outdoors and were dressed appropriately to the weather. Older children were observed using the toilet independently.

Staff were observed interacting warmly with the children when providing personal care and demonstrated an awareness of each child's individual care needs. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children, addressing them by name and making conversation. Staff demonstrated kindness and affection during all interactions observed by the inspectors, and comfort was provided promptly if a child became upset. 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.

An emergent curriculum was evident in the service. Children's interests were clearly incorporated into the activities and interest areas. Ongoing observations and assessments were documented which informed curriculum planning. There were a variety of equipment and materials that met the developmental needs of the children. Children's language development was supported through group discussions, singing and storytelling which was observed in all care rooms on the day of inspection.

An online interactive application was used by the service where staff directly communicated details surrounding each child's day to parents including information on activities enjoyed throughout the session. There was evidence that the service engaged with external agencies in order to enhance the experience of children who were attending with additional needs.

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:

Access to the service was secure ensuring no unauthorised access to or from the building. Cleaning materials were stored out of reach of children. Heavy furniture was secured and cables were out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

Children washed hands before mealtimes, after using the toilet and after outdoor play. Thermostatically controlled warm water was available to the children along with liquid soap and paper towels. Pedal bins were available throughout the service.

Cleaning schedules were available, records are signed off on a daily basis and were up to date on day of inspection.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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 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

(1) (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 26th April 2023.

(b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on the 10th January 2023, and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had also taken place on the same day.