

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS082
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Name of Service:	Daisy Chain Playgroup
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Address of Service:	Tymon Bawn Community Centre, Firhouse Road West, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24 R889
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sheila Howlin
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	13
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	Sarah Quigley
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

Daisy Chain Playgroup is a privately owned preschool service located in a residential area of Tallaght, South County Dublin. Care and education are provided on a sessional basis to children aged 2 to 6 years on a school calendar basis. Two sessions are provided, one morning and one afternoon. The premises is located on the 1st floor of a multi-purpose community centre and consists of one care room, sanitary accommodations, and a quiet/sensory room. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area, and a large indoor hall for gross motor play.

Staffing

The service currently employs 6 adults including the registered provider who works in the service.

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/ safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15.

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

- (2) Documentation was reviewed under regulation 9(2)(3)(4) in respect of 2 adults who commenced employment in the service following the last date of inspection. Documentation relating to 9(2)(c) was reviewed for all 6 adults employed to work in the service. The following records were available for the adults:
- (a) (b)
The registered provider demonstrated that they had verified the references obtained from 1 source for 1 of the adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for each of the 6 adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years, as detailed under Regulation 23.
- (4) Both adults held a relevant major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) (b) There was no evidence to show that 2 references for 1 staff member and 1 reference for another staff member had been appropriately verified by the registered provider.
- (d) International police vetting was not available for 1 adult who had resided outside the state for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.
- (3) Documentation reviewed evidenced the procedures outlined under regulation 9(2) had not been carried out prior to adults working directly with the children as outlined above.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (a) (b) All required references are now on file with validations. The provider created a new folder for each staff member and will do so for every future staff member. Preventive action below under (3).
- (d) The staff member has applied for international vetting from the relevant country. Preventive action below under (3).
- (3)
A staff documentation checklist for each existing staff member is now on file. Staff documentation checklists will be fully compliant before any future staff member commences employment. This includes validating every reference and documenting how and when the reference was validated.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the inspector.

Summary Comment

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.*
- (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 directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were 13 children present in the service being supervised by 4 adults during the inspection.

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

A sample of 12 records of preschool children maintained in the service were reviewed by the inspectors to assess compliance. The documentation reviewed evidenced that each of the records detailed all of the required information outlined under Regulation 15(1) as detailed above.

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 throughout the inspection. The children moved freely around the care room and were afforded choice in their activities, engaging with each other and staff members as desired. The children spent time outdoors during the inspection and were dressed appropriate to the weather. Older children used the toilet independently and staff supported younger children where required. Children's hands were washed at appropriate intervals.

Drinking water was made available at all times to the children and snacks were taken in from home. Snack time was relaxed and sociable, children sat with staff chatting and engaged in conversation throughout.

An area was available within the care rooms where children could rest or take time away from the group if required and a separate quiet/sensory room was made available at all times. Staff availed of opportunities for warm individual engagement with the children and addressed them by name, using gentle tones and interacting with them in a positive manner. Staff intervened early to resolve minor conflicts and comforted children promptly if they became upset.

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 inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with the registered provider, and inspection of the premises that the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door into the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons gaining access or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor and outdoor play environments were safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal-operated, lidded bins throughout the service. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet and before snack. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. The registered provider outlined appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy.

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 detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspector.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. The registered provider 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)

An adult trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) and was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was stored in a conspicuous location within the service.

(b) A first aid box was available to the registered provider and children in the service 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.

(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 written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service.

(b) There was record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had taken place as required.

(4)
The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations within the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the preschool service was adequately insured for the number of children currently enrolled to attend the service and the type of service provided.