

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS093		
Name of Service:	Little Saints Creche		
Address of Service:	Unit 4 Eaton House, Main Street, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin.		
Eircode:	D24 DF88		
Name of Registered Provider:	Gwen Woods Hughes		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	25/09/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	69	PM 55
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, 7th Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8.		
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern, F. Carty 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).			
Conditions if applicable	Not applicable		

Description of service

Little Saints Creche is an early years service offering, sessional, part-time and full day care to children aged 0-6 years. The service operates from a two-storey building on the main street in Rathcoole, County Dublin. An outdoor area is located to the rear of the building. Children are allocated to one of eight rooms according to their age and stage of development. Two separate sleep rooms are available on the ground floor. The service opens between 7am and 6:15pm and operates the ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) scheme between 9am and 12pm.

Staffing

There are 27 staff employed to work in the service including the registered provider.

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 areas of Governance/ Health, welfare and development of child and Safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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

(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.*

(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 person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The person in charge was on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or deputy to be present at all times of opening.

(2)

- (a) & (b) Through review of records it was evident that consideration had been given to past references for 25 of 27 staff members. References had been sourced from their past employers and from another source where they had only one or no previous employers. Records were available of phone calls made to verify the references.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults.
- (d) International police vetting was available for all adults whom it was required.

(4) Twenty-five staff members had been recruited to work directly with the children. Records were available evidencing that 24 staff members 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)(a) & (b) It was not evident that the registered provider had taken references into consideration prior to employing two staff members. There were no references available for one staff member. A reference had not been sourced from the most recent employer of a second staff member.

(4) It was not evident that one staff member employed to work directly with 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.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) & (b) Two references had been placed in the wrong file. These have been rechecked and returned to the correct file. The reference for the second staff member was received and checked on 5 October 2023. Management have numbered all staff file documents to ensure files are managed and no documents are missing. The recruitment policy has been updated to include that only the most recent references will be accepted.

(4) Record of the Level 5 award is now on file. All new staff members will need to provide a full award prior to starting. This has been updated in the recruitment policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a) & (b)

- Copies of outstanding references with a record of verification.
- Copy of recruitment policy dated 6 October 2023.

(4)

- Copy of record evidencing award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5.
- Copy of recruitment policy dated 6 October 2023.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted by the registered provider have been deemed to appropriately address the non-compliance. The effectiveness of the preventive actions will be assessed on the next 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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were 22 staff allocated to work directly with the children. The person in charge and deputy were available to help and provide cover for staff breaks. An adequate number of staff were working directly with the children in seven of the eight rooms in the service.

(2) At all times the minimum required ratio of adults to children was maintained.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There was not an adequate number of adults available to meet the needs of the children in ECCE Room 2 at all times. Staff and management had identified that one of the children had additional needs and required close supervision to assure their safety and wellbeing. One staff member was allocated to work directly with this child and seven other children from 12:38 to 13:06. During this period the inspector observed the child leave the room, a second child climb on a chair and a third child looking for help as their top had gotten wet. The staff member was unable to provide adequate supervision and care to all the children on her own. Staff told the inspector that there is only one adult allocated to the room at this time daily when staff members take their break.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has changed a staff members lunch hour so there is extra help in ECCE Room 2. A staff meeting was carried out on 26 September to express the importance of staff asking for help. All rooms have phones, so staff are expected to make the call when help is needed. If the staff roster is not working this can be brought to the attention of management.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The action submitted by the registered provider has been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliance. Compliance with the regulatory requirement 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-

(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

Children moved freely, exploring the environment within their rooms and the outdoor area. Drinks were always available and offered to children with their snacks and meals. Children were supported towards independence at mealtimes. Children in the Baby room used a spoon to feed themselves with the adult sitting with them, helping when needed. Children in the ECCE room were encouraged to take out their own lunch box and drinks and to clean up afterwards.

Staff supported the children to manage their personal care. Low level hooks were available for hanging coats and personal items. Bibs were provided to protect the children's clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating. Children were supported to clean their hands and faces at appropriate times. Children's nappies were changed at scheduled times and in between when required. Staff used these opportunities for warm one-to-one interactions.

Children attending the Baby rooms were placed to sleep in separate sleep rooms according to their individual routines. Children in the Wobbler and Toddler rooms were provided with an opportunity to sleep before dinner. Staff told inspectors that children are provided with the opportunity to sleep outside of this time if they show signs of tiredness. Children were made comfortable for sleep with staff removing their outer clothing and

providing soothers to those who used them. Children were placed to sleep in cots or on sleep mats according to their age and stage of development.

Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children through use of soft and gentle tones. Inspectors observed that children were promptly comforted by staff when they became upset. An app was used by staff to share information about each child's day with their parent/guardian.

Non-Compliance Information

Adequate care was not taken to ensure all children attending the Wobbler room had enough food to eat for dinner. The inspector observed one child accidentally knock their dinner onto the floor. Although a staff member acknowledged this, the child was subsequently taken to have their hands and face cleaned. A second child displayed signs that they were still hungry after finishing their meal. The inspector observed the child reaching into another child's bowl and eating food from the table, which other children had spilled. Although staff acknowledged both incidents the children were not offered more food. It is acknowledged that more food was brought from the kitchen, which the children ate when the inspector discussed this with staff after the mealtime had finished.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Bowls of extra food are provided in each room. This is to be offered to all children or if any bowl/plate falls to the floor. A staff meeting was held on 26 September to discuss the incident. Management highlighted to all staff to offer extra food at mealtimes and replace any bowl or plate if dropped.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of containers for extra food.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted by the registered provider have been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliance. This practice will be assessed on the next inspection.

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 registered provider had taken measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children as outlined in the examples below:

General Safety:

- Entrances/exits were secured to prevent unauthorised access or a child leaving unsupervised.
- Cleaning products were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Cables and blind cords were secured out of reach of children.
- Heavy furniture was secured to prevent tipping.

Infection Control:

- Children's hands were washed at appropriate times to prevent the spread of infection.
- The Pre-school rooms and sanitary facilities were observed to be in a clean condition.
- Children's nappies were changed in a manner that reduced the risk of cross infection.
- Sanitary facilities were equipped with liquid soap and paper towels for handwashing.
- Pedal operated, lidded bins were available for the safe disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was stored appropriately in the original packaging out of reach of children.
- Parent/guardian consent had been obtained for medications which had been given to children attending the service.
- A clearly documented plan was available for the administration of emergency medicine for a child who may require it in the event of an anaphylactic reaction. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the steps required to give the medicine safely if required.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were placed to sleep in appropriate facilities including standard cots according to their age and stage of development.
- Inspectors observed staff checking sleeping children at 10-minute intervals and maintaining a record of the checks.
- The temperature of the rooms was maintained between 16-20^oc when children were sleeping to prevent overheating.
- Appropriate bedding was used to prevent overheating.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Room attendance records were not reflective of the children present as outlined below. This could pose a risk to the appropriate supervision and timely evacuation of children in the event of an emergency.

- There were 13 children present in the ECCE 2 room at 1:52pm. Only 11 children were recorded as present.
- There were 10 children allocated to the ECCE 1 room at 1:50pm. Only 5 children were recorded as present. The inspector observed that 5 of the children were in the sanitary facilities washing their hands. The staff member told the inspector that she did not know how many children were allocated to the room at that time.

Administration of Medication:

2. It was not evident that parents/guardians were informed when medication had been given to a child as per the service's medication policy. The policy stated that a record is made of medications given to children and a copy is given to parents. Staff told the inspector that copies are not given to parents. There was no parent/guardian signature on the records to indicate the information had been shared.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. New diaries are in place for recording all children's names in the afternoons. A staff meeting was held on 26 September to explain the importance of recording all children's names during the day. This will be checked by management.

Administration of Medication:

2. A new form has been developed with a column for parents to sign after each dose given. The record will be signed by parents on pick up going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photograph of new diaries labelled for ECCE rooms 1 and 2 rooms.

Administration of Medication:

- Copy of new administration of medication recording template.
- Copy of medication administration procedure dated 6 October 2023.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted by the registered provider have been deemed appropriate in addressing the non-compliance.