

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS112				
Name of Service:	Sunflowers Childcare				
Address of Service:	Ballyowen Lane, Lucan, Co. Dublin				
Eircode:	K78 WF44				
Name of Registered Provider:	Lynn O'Dwyer				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	27/06/2024				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>27</td> <td>PM</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </table>	AM	27	PM	27
AM	27	PM	27		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8				
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty and S Quigley				
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
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Description of service

Sunflowers Childcare is an early years service located in Lucan, Co Dublin offering full day, part time and sessional care. The service is provided from a purposely adapted dwelling for the provision of a pre-school service.

The service operates from 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday. A sessional only service operates from 9.15am to 12.15pm daily for 38 weeks of the year. A school age service was also available to children on the day of inspection.

The service consists of 5 care rooms, sanitary facilities and an office area. A secure outdoor play area to the rear of the building is available.

On the day of inspection there were three care rooms operating for the care of preschool children.

Staffing

There were twelve adults present on the day of the inspection including the centre manager and registered provider. Of the twelve adults present seven were working directly with the preschool children throughout 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, information and records, health, welfare and development of child, safety and premises and space requirements. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23 and 30.

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

A sampling process was used to assess compliance as a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler, Junior Preschool and Senior Preschool rooms.

A sampling process was also used to determine compliance under Regulation 15. Fifteen child 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.

(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 all fourteen staff members. Regulation (9) (3) was assessed for eight staff recruited since the last inspection dated 11th July 2023.

(9)

(2)(a)(b)

There were twenty seven validated references available from a past employer for fourteen adults and one verified reference from a source other than a past employer for one staff member.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all adults.

(d) International Police vetting was available for three adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months.

(3)

The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to the newly appointed staff commencing employment in the service.

(4)

Records were available to evidence that all adults employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(d) International Police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(d)

International Police vetting has been obtained and is now available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months. All relevant vetting documentation will be obtained from incoming staff members prior to their commencement of work. All staff files will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the necessary documents as required are held on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

Police vetting document submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents have been reviewed and are deemed to meet the requirements of 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 an adequate number of adults were working with the children on the day of inspection. six adults were allocated to work directly with twenty seven children. The person in charge was available to assist as needed.

(2) At all times the minimum ratios of adults to children were maintained during the period of 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 fifteen records were reviewed by the inspectors.

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

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) Two records did not contain the date the child started in the service.
- (e) One record did not contain details of the persons authorised to collect the child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (b)(e) Both records now contain the date the children started in the service.
All children's files will be checked to ensure all relevant information is correctly filled in on their file before they start with us. All children's files will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the necessary documents as required are held on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

Updated children's records submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents have been reviewed and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 15.

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 service had a weekly meal plan which detailed a range of nutritious meals and snacks served to children at regular intervals throughout the day. The hot meal served to the children is provided by an external company and regenerated on site.

Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported younger children who needed assistance with their dinner. Children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner as required. Drinking water was available in the care rooms at all times. Bibs were provided for younger children when eating.

Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including using the toilet independently and cleaning up after their play. Children who wore nappies had these changed at scheduled times and in between when needed. Inspectors observed staff using these times as an opportunity for warm one to one interaction.

Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Staff were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour management policy.

Children were observed moving freely, exploring their environment, playing and engaging in activities. The children's rooms were laid out with designated interest areas including home-corners, construction areas and cosy areas. Materials and equipment were appropriate for the developmental stages of the children and included stacking toys, small world play, cause and effect toys, puzzles, mark making materials and books.

Staff described how they record information about each child's day using an online application detailing information on food, sleep, nappy changes and activities.

All children spent periods outdoors throughout the inspection. There was equipment available to support full-body-movement and imaginative play including a climbing frame and ride on toys.

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 inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered providers had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service 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.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. A system was in place for effective sterilisation of mouthing toys and soothers which were appropriately stored until sterilised after use. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing.

Administration of Medication:

Twelve administration of medication records are reviewed. Staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to take when giving medicine to children, including obtaining written parent/guardian consent. Records were available detailing medicines given. These included the signature of the staff member who gave the medicine and the staff who witnessed the medicine being given. The records had been signed by parents indicating the information had been shared.

Safe Sleep:

Sleep logs were maintained in all rooms where children slept, cots were provided for all children under the age of 2 years to sleep in and children who were aged 2 years were facilitated to sleep on low level beds.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A number of cleaning products were in reach of the preschool children attending the Senior Preschool room. Ingestion of these products can cause harm to children.

Infection Control:

2. A nappy mat and rubber matting in the Wobbler room were torn exposing internal foam. These cannot be cleaned effectively and are an infection control risk.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A rail has been installed up high for the disinfectant sprays in the classroom, out of reach of the children. Staff in the room have been made aware of the risk the sprays pose if ingested by children and asked to keep them out of the children's reach, on the newly installed rail.

Infection Control:

2. New nappy change mats have been purchased to replace the old ones. We have taped over the torn rubber matting in the Wobbler Room, with PVC repair tape. Monthly checks will be carried out on the equipment going forward. Staff have been instructed to alert Management of any damage they see.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photo of new installed rail.

Infection Control:

2. Photo of new changing mats.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents have been reviewed and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Adequate floor space was available in the Senior Preschool room for the amount of children attending.

A total of 30.37sqm was available to a maximum of thirteen children attending on a daily basis.