

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS112
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Name of Service:	Sunflowers Childcare
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Address of Service:	Ballyowen Lane, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K78 WF44
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lynn O'Dwyer
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	11/07/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	15
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	Fiona Carty
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

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.

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 8 adults present on the day of the inspection including the centre manager and deputy manager. All of the 8 adults present worked directly with the children throughout the inspection. The registered provider did not work with the children on the day of inspection but arrived subsequent to the inspector's arrival.

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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,16,23 and 27. These findings are outlined within the report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations (9)(2) and (4) and 16 (1)(k).

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.

Additional Information

This inspection has been triggered by receipt of information to the Early Years Inspectorate on the 15th June 2023 and focussed on Regulation 23 and 27.

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.

(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)

The inspection focused on the recruitment records of 5 staff members.

(a)(b) Past employer references were available for all 5 adults.

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

(d) Police vetting documents were not required as no adults had lived abroad as adult for more than six consecutive months.

(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

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. 6 adults were allocated to work directly with 15 children. The person in charge and deputy were 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 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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed documented necessary details including details of the incident and parental and staff signatures.

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 main entrance into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service. This prevented unauthorised access to the service and children exiting unsupervised.
- Toys materials and resources were observed to be maintained in a good state of repair.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of children.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the preschool children on the day of inspection.
- Leads and flex were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The outdoor area was walled and there was internal fencing and gates to secure separate areas.
- The outdoor area contained various equipment including climbing frames which were all maintained in a good state of repair.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The service had made some changes to their supervision policy and practice following a recent incident in the outdoor area.

The outdoor area is risk assessed every day prior to children accessing the outdoor area. The play equipment has been rotated and the children are supervised by staff at all times. The staff ratios were maintained whilst the children were in the outdoor area and positioned in different areas within the outdoor areas. Staff were made aware of the supervision requirements whilst children were in the outside area during a staff meeting.