

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS196				
Name of Service:	The Wombles Pre-school				
Address of Service:	Scoil Mhuire Primary School, Arlie Heights, Doddsborough, Lucan, Co. Dublin				
Eircode:	K78 EY17				
Name of Registered Provider:	Stacy Goodwin , Gwen Hughes				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	27/04/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>38</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	38	PM	N/A
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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				

Description of service

The Wombles Preschool is a private early years service which is located in a residential area of Lucan, South County Dublin. The early years service offers an Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme on a sessional basis to pre-school children aged 2-6years. The programme of care is facilitated through an emergent, play-based curriculum. The service is registered to operate from 09:00 to 16:30 each weekday and offers a morning and afternoon session. The Wombles operates from two classrooms within the Scoil Mhuire primary school. A large outdoor play area is available on the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 6 staff members, including both of the registered providers who work directly in the service on a daily basis. On 27th April 2023, 5 adults were present and working directly with the children, including both of the registered providers.

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, 26, and 28; These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9(2)(3)(4). As a result, the scope of the inspection included a review of documentation for staff members who had been employed in the service following the last date of inspection on the 26th November 2020. A sampling process was also used to assess compliance under regulation 16(1), and regulation 15(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 providers, 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) A sample of documentation was reviewed in respect of one adult who had commenced working in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected. The following records were available for the adult:

(a) (b)

The registered provider demonstrated that they had verified the references obtained from two sources for the adult.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure from The National Vetting Bureau for the adult.

(d) Not applicable, the adults had not lived outside the state for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(3) A review of documentation evidenced that the procedures specified above under Regulation 9(2) had been completed prior to the adult commencing employment in the service.

(4) There was evidence that the adult had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications.

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 thirty-eight children present in the service being supervised by five 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

(1)
A sample of documentation was reviewed by the inspector to assess compliance relating to the records of preschool children maintained in the service. The sample of documentation reviewed evidenced that a record was kept in writing in respect of pre-school children attending the service detailing the information outlined under Regulation 15(1)(a)-(i).

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 record was available in each of the care rooms detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
 - (i) A staff roster was available and displayed in the service.
 - (j) Written records of the administration of medication were available. A sample reviewed on the day of inspection documented necessary details.
 - (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.

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 inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

Drinking water was available in the care rooms at all times. Staff supported the children to wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the inspection, and promptly changed children's clothing if they became wet or soiled. Children were observed using the toilet independently as required.

The children were all provided with the opportunity to play outdoors and were dressed appropriately to the weather. Staff demonstrated kindness and affection during all interactions observed by the inspector, and comfort was provided promptly if a child became upset. The routine and play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led, and children were visibly content and engaged in their play throughout the session. The adults were observed to have a supportive role in the children's learning and play, getting involved only when invited by a child or to extend the child's learning through scaffolding. Adults were observed to offer continuous praise and encouragement towards the children. Time was consistently afforded by the staff members for open-ended, exploratory conversations when prompted by the children.

Children were continuously interacting with their peers and the staff members present and were encouraged to take turns, listen, and engage in discussions, creating a language rich environment in the service. Staff alerted children in advance of transitions which ensued smoothly to new activities such as tidy up time, snack time and outdoor play time. This provided the children with adequate time to finish what they were doing and prepare for the next activity.

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 staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door into the school building 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. The registered providers had taken measures to ensure the indoor 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. Staff were observed to carry out consistent hand washing as appropriate. Staff stated 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 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 trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) 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 adults 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 service was appropriately insured for the type of service provision and the number of children enrolled in the service.