

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DS245
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Once Upon A Time
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Arena Creche, Whitestown Way, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D24 K223
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Anne Marie McCormack, David McCormack
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Day 1 of Inspection:</b>	16/11/2023
<b>Day 2 of Inspection</b>	17/11/2023
<b>Follow-up Inspection</b>	12/01/2024

<b>No of pre-school children Day 1</b>	AM	55	PM	51
<b>No of pre-school children Day 2</b>	AM	45	PM	N/A
<b>No of pre-school children 12/01/2024</b>		51		N/A

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla – Child and Family Agency Trinity Building, IDA Business Park Bray Co Wicklow
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Mary Redmond / Fiona Carty
<b>Title:</b>	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

This private childcare facility is one of a multiple of nine services operated by the registered providers. Full day care is provided for children aged one to five and a half years of age. The hours of operation are between 7.30am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a retail unit which has been adapted for use as a childcare facility in an urban area of southwest Dublin. Five care rooms were available over two floors and were in use for the care of pre-school children during the inspections. Two cot rooms were provided on the ground floor. The Junior and Senior wobbler rooms on the ground floor cater for the youngest children attending the service who were aged from eighteen to twenty-three months. The Toddler room catered for children aged two to three years of age and the Pre-Montessori and Montessori rooms generally accommodated children who were aged over three years of age. There was an enclosed outdoor space provided on the second floor which was normally accessed using a lift. (The lift was out of order during the inspection in November). The outdoor space was covered with an impact absorbing covering and a variety of play equipment was provided.

### Staffing

There were thirteen adults employed to work with pre-school children including the manager and deputy manager who are not normally assigned to care rooms but are available to provide assistance when required; an adult is also employed for ancillary duties. On the first day of inspection in November the deputy manager was assigned to a care room to cover one adult who was on unscheduled leave. The area manager was rostered for duty in the service and was present when the inspection team arrived and was assisting with childcare duties during the inspection.

The area manager was not rostered for duty in the service on the 12 January 2024 but arrived when called by the designated person in charge to allow the inspectors access to 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

- Regulation 9 Management and recruitment
- Regulation 10 Policies procedures of pre-school service
- Regulation 11 Staffing levels
- Regulation 16 Record in relation to pre-school service
- Regulation 19 Health welfare and development of child
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child
- Regulation 27 Supervision
- Regulation 32 Complaints

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 reoccurring. 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 was triggered by the receipt of information which was furnished to the Early Years Inspectorate on 4 November 2023. A response was received from the service on the 13 November 2023.

Following the inspection on the 16 and 17 November 2023 further information was received by the inspectorate on the 27 November 2023. The service was issued with correspondence regarding the information received on the 14 December 2023 and a response was received on the 19 December 2023. Following a review of the submissions received from the service the inspectorate was not satisfied that the issues raised had been adequately addressed and for this reason a follow-up inspection took place on the 12 January 2024.

### Acknowledgments

The inspection team wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the service manager and staff who facilitated the inspections and children who were present during the inspections. The registered providers, director and an area manager were present for the feedback meeting following the inspection in November 2023.

The director of the service and an area manager were present for feedback on the 12 January 2024.

### 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

The files for ten adults who had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection on the 13 June 2023 were reviewed.

The files for a further two adults who had commenced working in the service since the 17 November 2023 were reviewed on the 12 January 2024.

- (2)
- (a) There were written validated references available from previous employers for adults employed in the service.
  - (b) Suitable references from other sources were available for adults who did not have a previous employer.
  - (c) Garda vetting was available for all adults.
  - (d) Police vetting was available for adults who had resided outside the State for a period longer than six consecutive months.

- (4) There was evidence that adults who were working directly with children had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### Compliance Information

There were written policies, procedures and statements, as specified in Schedule 5, available for the service. The policies reviewed for this inspection included the policies on managing behaviour, accidents and incidents and the complaints policy. The service also had a policy on suspensions and exclusions which was also reviewed. The policies had sufficient detail to guide practice in the service.

## 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the service. There were ten adults working with fifty-five children on the first day of inspection and eleven adults working with forty-five children on the second day; this included the service manager and deputy manager. Area managers were also available on both days of inspection. There were thirteen adults working directly with fifty-one children on the 12 January 2024; this included the manager and deputy manager.

## 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:*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

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

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (i) Staff rosters were available. The rosters accurately reflected the adults who were available to care for children and who were working with children when the inspection team arrived.
- (k) Details of accidents, injuries and incidents involving children were recorded. Approximately 144 forms detailing accidents, injuries and incidents including biting incidents for children attending the wobbler and toddler rooms were reviewed for this inspection. There was evidence that parents had signed forms to confirm that they had been informed regarding accidents, injuries and incidents regarding their children.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(k) Details of an incident which had occurred was not given on the required form to parents of two children to sign as per the Accident and Incident Policy for the service.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

Incident forms were issued to parents following the inspection on the 12 January 2024. Parents were aware of the incident and meetings had been held with parents. Parents had not received individual incident reports regarding their children; these will be provided to parents if future incidents of this nature occur.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Submissions indicated that parents had received the incident forms relating to their children.

#### Summary Comment

The inspectors are satisfied that the registered providers have now met the regulatory requirement.

## 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-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

#### Compliance Information

The rooms were laid out with low level chairs and shelving with equipment which was appropriate for the age range of children attending each room.

There were cause and effect toys, music making equipment and areas of interest to support imaginative play in the Junior and Senior wobbler rooms. Sensorial play opportunities were also provided. Materials in the Toddler and Montessori rooms included paper and mark making equipment, natural materials, books and puzzles.

Equipment and materials were also provided to support imaginative play.

The outdoor area had an impact absorbing covering with a variety of play equipment available including a playhouse, ride-on toys, footballs and sand play.

Adults engaged children in appropriate activities such as storytelling, reading, arts and crafts and floor play for younger children.

## 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:

Doors in the service were secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service. Combination keypads allowed parents and adults working in the service access to the premises.

Toys and equipment observed were in good, working condition. Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.

##### Infection Control:

Children's hands were washed after outdoor play and before eating. The nappy changing procedure observed was effective for infection prevention and control.

##### Safe Sleep:

The temperature of the cot rooms was maintained within the recommended range of 16 -20 degrees Celsius while children were sleeping. Children were physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were recorded every ten minutes.

### 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

Children were observed to be supervised appropriately during the inspection, for example, when going to the toilet and during the nappy changing procedures. Children attending the Toddler and Montessori rooms on the first floor were supervised on the stairs when accessing the outdoor area on the second floor. The inspection team did not observe children attending the Junior and Senior wobbler rooms on the ground floor accessing the outdoor area on either day of inspection in November.

On the 12 January 2024 children from the Senior wobbler room were observed accessing the outdoor area using the lift. Children were brought in small groups and the manager was available to assist; children were appropriately supervised during the procedure and there was always an adult present in the lift while children were using it.

### Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

#### Regulation 32 – Complaints

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) There was a comprehensive complaints policy available for the service.

- (a) The management of complaints was outlined in detail through different stages. Complaints are made in the first instance to the manager of the service and if not resolved then a formal written complaint is made on a form which is available for the recording of complaints.
- (b) The complaint is acknowledged and a plan for how it will be dealt with is made including a timeline for when it will be resolved and keeping records of all interactions regarding the complaint.
- (c) The policy outlines that the person making the complaint will be informed of the outcome and will have the opportunity to have the complaint referred to a third party for resolution if required.