

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY090
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Name of Service:	Happyways Greenfields
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Address of Service:	Greenfields Community centre, Shanliss Avenue, Santry, Dublin 9, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D09 C9Y2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Miriam Caffrey
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/12/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	Not Applicable
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Floor 7 Brunel building Heuston South Quarter Dublin 8 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	L. Jameson 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.
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Description of service

Happyways Greenfields is a sessional service located in a community centre in a Dublin City suburb. The service offers a sessional service to children aged 2 to 6 years old and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service operates a morning session from 09:30 to 12:30pm and an afternoon session from 1:00 to 4:00pm, Monday to Friday during term times only. The service is currently only providing a morning session. The service comprises of one care room, which has access to a large hall and outdoor area. There is access to sanitary facilities on site.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. The registered provider employs five adults to work in the service; the person in charge who oversees the day-to-day operation of the service and four adults to work directly with the children including two adults whom are employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) and one adult who provides relief cover from an another service operated by the registered provider. On the day of inspection, there were two adults working directly with the children, two of whom were employed under the Access and Inclusion Model. The person in charge and deputy person in charge arrived shortly after the inspection began and remained on the premises throughout the duration of the inspection. Near the end of the inspection the relief staff member arrived to provide assistance to the two adults in the care room.

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. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2)(3) (4) Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(3) Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-School Child.

Regulation 16 Record in Relation to Pre-School Service.

Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of child.

Regulation 25 First Aid.

Regulation 27 Supervision.

Regulation 28 Insurance.

However, on inspection an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29 Premises. The findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the care room and adjoining hall. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under: Regulation 15, Regulation 16, Regulation 19 and Regulation 23.

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 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.

(c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities

(2) The files of registered provider and the five adults employed were reviewed.

(a) Six written and validated references were available for two staff members from previous employers.

(b) Six written and validated references were available for two staff members from reputable sources.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for six adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Not applicable as none of the staff had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or longer, after the age of eighteen.

(4) The registered provider and five adults held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) The designated person in charge or the named person to deputise were not present when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service. The deputised person in charge arrived at the service at 9:55am and the person in charge arrived at the service at 10:15am.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

The person in charge has been changed to the Manager in the service. This was an oversight as the role changed and the record was not updated. At our monthly meeting the importance of informing management if a team member is delayed so another team member can be placed in the service until the delayed team member arrives was discussed. Management do not foresee this as an issue as this was a once off issue.

Preventive Action

Management have implemented a new alert system using an electronic messaging application and a backup plan involving another team member who is out of ratio in case of emergency when a staff member is delayed getting to the centre.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of staff meeting agenda.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance identified under 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.*
- (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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. There were two staff caring for 9 children when the inspectors arrived unannounced in the service.
- (3) Ratios were maintained on the day of inspection. The following was observed.
- There were two staff were caring for 9 children at 9.45am and there were three staff members caring for 10 children at 10.15am.

In addition, the person in charge was available to provide support in the care room where required.

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.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,

(b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and

(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

A sample of eleven children's registration records were reviewed as part of the inspection.

(1) The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g),(h) and (i) was maintained for nine of the eleven children's registration records.

(3) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) From a sample of 11 children's registration records reviewed, the registered provider did not ensure children's registration records were fully completed for two of the children attending the service. Evidenced as follows:

- There was no registration record on file for one child attending the service.
- Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency was not completed on one child's registration record.

This information is essential in the case that either child required emergency medical care.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Management introduced a checklist to make it easier identify any missing files. We have reverted to using the service's old medication record sheet so that it has all the information required.

Preventive Action

Staff had retraining on required governance at our monthly meeting.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of staff meeting agenda.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance identified under Regulation 15.

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;*
- (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) Documentary evidence of the children's arrival and departure times was available in the care room.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(j) A blank medication administration form was reviewed on the day of inspection. The following was not included on the form.

- No provision for a witness signature in the event of the administration of medication to a child in the service.

It is acknowledged that the person in charge confirmed that medication had not been administered to any children in the service in 2024.

(k) A sample of ten accident and incident forms were reviewed on the day of inspection.

- Two records did not include the date when the parent signed.
- Four records did not include parent's signatures.

It is important that parents/guardians are informed of any accident/incident relating to their child so they can monitor their child appropriately.

- One record did not have a record of the name of the staff member completing the form.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(16)(1)(j) Management have changed the medication record sheet so that it has the information required.

(16)(1)(k) The centre manager will check accident and incident books monthly to address any ongoing uncompleted forms.

Preventive Action

(16)(1)(j) Management facilitated retraining on required governance at the monthly meeting. Management have now made this the official medication book for medication record sheets going forward.

(16)(1)(k) Staff have been retrained on filling out accident incident forms and the importance of them being completed correctly.

Supporting documentation submitted

(16)(1)(j) Documentary evidence of staff meeting agenda.

(16)(1)(k) Daily risk sheet attached and meeting agenda.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 16.

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

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic Needs:

- A rest area was available to the children in the care room. The area included soft, child sized furniture, providing the children with a comfortable place to rest or engage in quiet activities.
- Children's water bottles were readily accessible to them within the care room.

- The sanitary facilities were located outside of the care room, in the main hallway of the building, the children were accompanied to the sanitary accommodation by staff members who provided discreet support and supervision as needed.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

- The staff were observed to use positive and respectful language on the day of inspection. The staff were observed to positively reinforce the children's achievements with praise and recognition. Children were encouraged by staff to explore their environment and were supported during activities and transitions.
- A child was observed to be upset at intervals on the day of inspection. The staff attended to the child's needs promptly, offering additional support and comfort where required.
- The care room provided a sense of identity and belonging for the children attending. Children's artwork, photographs and a birthday wall were displayed throughout the care room. Individual storage was provided for each child's belonging.
- The service uses an electronic communication application to share information with parents, including photographs and activities. Through discussion with staff members, it was stated that verbal handovers are carried out at drop off and collection times. Staff members were observed to welcome parents and guardians at collection time, and the opportunity for updating guardians regarding their children's day in the service was taken at this time.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The care room was designed to support the age and development of the children attending, providing areas of interest such as a home corner with supporting toys and equipment. Children were provided with opportunities for sensory play, for example, the children played with modelling dough and coloured pasta shapes on the day of inspection.
- Toys and materials, including a selection of jigsaws and pincer grip activities, were available to the children in the care room.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children, facilitating a comfortable area to eat meals and take part in tabletop activities.
- Access to the community hall provided opportunities for gross motor play, such as dancing games.

Non-Compliance Information

1. There was no documentation available in the care room detailing important information on the care, supervision and strategies required for children who had additional care needs attending the service. This information should be readily available in order to provide and plan for children's safe care and development.
2. The children were not observed to use the outdoor area on the day of inspection. This practice is at variance with the service's outdoor play policy, which states outdoor time is an extension of indoor activities and part of the service's daily curriculum.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(1) This was an unfortunate oversight as previously this documentation was done in line with a quality support agency. Staff have now completed this documentation for the child who required it.

(2) Management have implemented a visual timetable in the classroom to ensure adherence to the daily schedule, including outdoor play. Management have conducted a staff meeting to reinforce the importance of outdoor play.

Preventive Action

(1) This documentation will be completed prior to the child attending the service and updated with any changes throughout the year.

This has now been added to the reopening plan and checklist so that management and staff have the information in place prior to a child starting in the service.

(2) Management will conduct routine checks to ensure compliance, establish a feedback mechanism for reporting disruptions.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

(2) Meeting agenda.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 19.

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 following measures were observed to safeguard children:

General Safety:

- The entrance door leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. A buzzer system was in place which was managed and monitored by staff members.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of children.
- The play equipment and materials observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were in good working order.

Infection Control:

- Lunches and perishable items were refrigerated.
- A pedal bin was used in the care room, reducing the risk of contamination by repeated touch to surfaces.

Administration of Medication:

- Anti febrile medication was observed to be in date, stored in the correct packaging and out of the children's reach. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, it was observed that all fire emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This helped ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for two staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. Uncut grapes and cherry tomatoes were present in children's lunches and were not quartered or halved, posing a choking risk. In addition, there was a full-sized plum observed in a lunch box which did not have the stone removed posing an additional choking hazard.

3. Equipment stored in the care room and the hall that children were observed to use on the day of inspection were stacked in hazardous positions, posing a risk of injury. Evidenced by the following:
 - Adult sized chairs were observed to be stacked and stored on top of adult sized tables in the hall. In addition, on the stage in the hall there were tall bar stools and heavy equipment such as adult sized tables and chairs were stored and easily accessible to children.
 - A fan heater was observed to be stored on top of a plastic shelving unit which was accessible to children. This posed a risk of injury if pulled down.
4. The temperature in the care room was too warm, recorded at 24.7°C at 10:45am. This is outside the required temperature range of 18-22°C to ensure the children’s safety and comfort. It is noted that staff members opened the windows to reduce the temperature of the care room when the inspector brought this issue to their attention. The temperature in the care was recorded to be 23.5°C at 12:30pm.
5. The outdoor area was not maintained in a manner that was safe to children. Evidenced by the following:
 - There were broken toys observed in the outdoor play area to the side of the service.
 - The outdoor play area was unclean with litter in the area to the front and to the side of the service.

In addition, there were no risk assessments for the outdoor play area available when requested. This was at variance with the outdoor play policy which states the outdoor area will be safe and will be checked by a member of staff for safety before use.

Infection Control:

6. There was no warm water available out of the hot tap of the hand wash basins in the care room or sanitary facilities. The water temperature in two hand wash basins in the sanitary facilities measured between 11.5°C and 13.1°C at 10:51 am. The water temperature in the care room measured 9.8°C at 11:00am. This did not support effective hand washing. This non-compliance was observed on the previous inspection in February 2022 and the preventive action had not been sustained.
7. A soft, foldable mat was observed to be stained and unclean. This posed a risk of cross infection.

Fire Safety:

8. Children’s attendance records were not completed in a timely manner after children had been collected from the service. Six children were observed to be collected by parents or guardians at 12:25pm. The attendance records were not updated to reflect this until 12:45pm. This reduced the effective evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

General Safety:

Corrective Action

1. Garda vetting was submitted for the two staff members.
2. Parents have been informed through a communication application that grapes etc must be chopped up and pitted. Also, a team member will check lunch boxes.
3. Management have put a request in with the committee that the stage is kept clear at all times so as not to pose a risk to the children. The chairs are moved so as not to pose a risk to the children. The fan heater has been moved to floor level so as not to be a risk (the fan is bladeless so not dangerous for children).
4. Management have added in a fan heater/cooler that can warm or cool the room as required.
5. The litter and toys have been removed and risk assessments have been reimplemented, staff normally have risk assessments but due to a printing issue they were not available.

Preventive Action

1. A digital tracker has been set up for staff files so management and the team member are aware when the vetting etc needs updating.
2. A team member will check lunch boxes as they are handed out for any choking hazards.
3. Moving the chairs and checking the stage has been added to the daily risk assessment.
4. Management have added regular temperature checks to the daily risk assessment.
5. Team members will alert management immediately if there is a broken toy that needs to be disposed of and the toy will be stored away from children until it is collected to be disposed of. The community hall committee has been informed of the build up of litter and the requirement of it to be disposed of.

Infection Control:

Corrective Action

6. Management got the temperature adjusted that evening to the correct temperature and checked back over the following days to make sure it was holding the temperature.
7. This mat has been removed.

Preventive Action

6. Management have added the temperature checks to the daily risk assessment so as to make sure the temperature does not drop again. Management have also alerted the club committee to the importance of handwashing temperature for all visitors to the club, not just children.
7. Management will aim to only buy wipe clean floor mats in future.

Fire Safety:

Corrective Action

- Attendance records will be completed in a timely manner, the team are now aware of why this is important.

Preventive Action

- One team member a day has the role of attendance so to make sure they are completed in a timely manner.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- An updated Garda Vetting disclosure for one staff member. Evidence that the registered provider has begun a Garda Vetting application for the second staff member.
- No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.
- Daily risk assessment.
- Daily risk assessment.
- Daily risk assessment.

Infection Control:

- Daily risk assessment.
- No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Fire Safety:

- No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances 2 – 8 under Regulation 23. However, Regulation 23(1) will remain outstanding until the one outstanding document has been received by the inspectorate.

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) Four staff members who were observed to work directly with the children on the day of inspection held in-date certification for First Aid Response (FAR) training which ensured that a person with FAR training was immediately available to the children attending the service at all times.

(2)

(a) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and easily accessible to the staff.

(b) The first aid boxes were available for the children attending the service at all times.

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 at all times. Staff were present when children were playing in the hall and the care room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for a sessional service with up to 22 children insured and an expiry date of 27 March 2025.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Non-Compliance Information

(e) The premises was not equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities. On the day of the inspection staff stated the sanitary facilities are used by adults working in the service, adults working and using the community centre and the children attending. Children and adults require separate sanitary facilities.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(e) Management have discussed this with the committee and have been given permission to sign post two of the cubicles to be used only by children attending the service during operating hours.

Preventive Action

(e) The sign posting of these cubicles has been added to the daily risk assessment to make sure it is completed daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

(e) Daily risk assessment and photographic evidence of two allocated toilet cubicles.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance identified under Regulation 29.