

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY154
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Name of Service:	Nurture Childcare & Early Learning Centre
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Address of Service:	The Collinade Dept of Education & Science, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D01 RC96
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ciara Gallagher
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	13/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	25
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne
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

Nurture Childcare and Early Learning Centre was established since 2008 in its current location in Dublin 1. It is a private service which provides sessional, part-time and full day care and education to a maximum of 38 preschool children aged from 0 to 6 years and it participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE). The service operates from a two-storey building which has three care rooms, all of which were in use on the day of inspection; the Baby room on the ground floor along with an office, kitchen and sanitary accommodation and the Toddler room, the Montessori room, sanitary accommodation and staff kitchen are on the first floor. An enclosed outdoor area is available to the front of the building

Staffing

The registered provider employs nine staff within the service. On the day of inspection the designated person in charge, the deputy designated person in charge and 6 childcare staff and one student on work experience were present in the service. The designated person in charge facilitated 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/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations as follows:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4).

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(2)(8)(a).

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

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

Regulation 25 First Aid.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety.

Regulation 28 Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the three care rooms - the Baby room, the Toddler room and the Montessori room.

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 designated 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) During the Inspection, the files of ten adults were reviewed.

(a) Two written and validated references were available for four adults from a past employer.

One written and validated reference was available for three adults from a past employer.

(b) Two written and validated references were available for three adults from a source other than from a past employer.

One written and validated reference was available for three adults from a source other than from a past employer.

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

(d) Police vetting was available for nine adults who had lived outside of Ireland for a period of more than 6 months.

(4) Evidence was available to show that nine adults who worked directly with the children held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (d) Police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside of Ireland for a period of more than 6 months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The adult had arrived to the state the night before and was on first day of work experience on day of inspection. The service had garda vetting in place, plus Police Vetting from the country where the adult was from and lived.

The service acknowledge that the adult did not have vetting from their time in another country but would like it noted that the service had vetting from the adult's country of origin and garda vetting from the state in place.

The adult was removed from the rooms and their work experience was cancelled. The adult did not complete their work experience with the service as they could not obtain the vetting from the country required in time to finish the work experience.

The service has spoken to the organisation that organised the vetting and outlined that all vetting must be in place for adults who have lived in any country for longer than 6 months as an adult over 18 years of age.

Management is aware that if there is evidence on a adults Curriculum Vitae outlining that they have lived outside their own country for longer than 6 months over the age of 18 of age, then vetting must be provided. This is in our policy and management has reread this policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff risk assessment document submitted

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 9, the non-compliance outlined above has been addressed.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

On the morning of the inspection there were eight adults working directly with 29 children aged between 8 months to 6 years and on the afternoon of the inspection there were eight adults working with 20 children aged from 8 months to 6 years.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection as the table below demonstrates.

Room Name	Age profile	Morning	Afternoon
Baby Room	8months to 2years	2 adults with 6 children	2 adults with 5 children
Toddler room	2 years to 3 years	2 adults with 8 children	2 adults with 8 children
Montessori room	2 years 11 months – 5 years	2 adults with 15 children	2 adults with 12 children
Total		6 adults with 29 children	6 adults with 25 children

The designated person in charge and one additional staff member were also available in a supernumerary capacity and covered in rooms as required.

(8)(a) On review of the service roster it was observed that two adults were on the premises during the operation of the service.

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) Basic Needs:

- The service had a four-weekly menu for dinner and afternoon tea. It was displayed in the service. Children were observed to be offered meals and snacks at regular intervals throughout the day, Dinner and afternoon tea were hot meals for the children. The hot meals were supplied by an external catering company and were prepared in the kitchen of the service. The inspector observed; dinner at 11.30am of Turkey Chilli with sauté sliced potatoes, an afternoon snack was served at 2.00pm of crackers, afternoon tea at 3.30pm of honey fried beef and rice. The designated person in charge confirmed that the children had a morning snack at 10am of fruit with crackers. Different dietary requirements were catered for if required and additional food was observed to be available, for example, an alternative of vegetarian chilli was available for the children and additional portions were observed to be available and offered. Water was available in each care room for the children to drink from their own individual labelled drinking bottles and water and milk were offered at mealtimes in drinking cups.
- Mealtimes observed were relaxed and sociable events, with children given time to sit at low tables appropriate to their ages. Children were encouraged to self-feed with age-appropriate cutlery, but staff were on hand to help as required, supporting independence and wellbeing.
- Nappy changing and toilet visits were completed at set times and as needed to ensure each child's comfort and staff were observed to encourage the children to be independent in managing their personal care such as handwashing.
- Children's need for sleep and rest were met through the provision of comfortable rest areas available. Cots and low beds with individual bedding were available to the children who required sleep and the rooms were darkened to provide for a restful environment.
- Children from all care rooms were observed to enjoy outdoor play during the inspection, in the outdoor area to the front of the service, with appropriate clothing provided.

Supporting relationships with Children:

- The service used an electronic application to communicate with parents daily. The inspector observed staff greeting the parents at collection time and updating them verbally on their child's day in the service.
- During lunch and afternoon tea times, staff were observed to sit with the children while they ate their lunch creating a relaxed and social environment promoting social interaction.
- Staff were observed to be engaged with the children and their play. They were responsive to the children and were observed to give them choices regarding their play activities. For example, in the Montessori room the children were invited to create pretend food dishes for a menu for the care room restaurant which was to open the following day. The staff member was engaged with the children and took time to discuss each dish created by each child, wrote down the dish on the menu board and also took photographs of each dish.

Physical and Materials Environment:

- The rooms were bright and inviting play spaces.
- The toys, equipment and play materials were easily accessible and visible to the children, this nurtured children's independence, ability to make decisions, enabling exploration and develop their play opportunities.
- The care rooms were laid out with a range of materials and toys that were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children. For example : Home areas with play kitchen with supporting equipment and play food, shop and cash register, dolls, dolls clothes, doll carry cots, range of construction toys to include wooden puzzles, jigsaws, building blocks, magnetics, waffles; toys for transporting such as cars and trucks, garages; small world play toys of animals and dinosaurs; sensory play table with sand , or pasta or rice or cereal ; for imaginary play dress up clothes and instruments: for arts and crafts – mark making materials, sponges, stencils , paper and paint directly accessible to the children; Montessori learning approach materials supporting the areas of practical life, sensorial, language, maths and culture were also present.
- The furniture provided in each care room was low level and suitable to the needs and age of the children. There were sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in each care room.
- Displays of pictures of the children who were attending with their families and displays demonstrating the children's birthdays were displayed on the walls in each care room in the service which supported children's identity and belonging.
- Cosy areas with soft mats and cushions for rest and relaxation were present.

- The enclosed outdoor play area was available for the children which consisted of two areas; one with a soft artificial surface with a fence surrounding and then the rest of the outdoor space had a concrete surface. The equipment and toys available included trikes, bikes, ride-on bikes, balance bikes, ride in cars, seesaws/rockers, slides, a playhouse, balance beam, football goals, sand and water trays, providing learning opportunities for the 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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspector, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- A weekly roster reflected the staff present in the service.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- The outdoor area was enclosed securely and the outdoor play equipment and materials were observed to be safe and suitable for use by the children.

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition throughout, with the premises and equipment observed to be visually clean.
- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included warm water, liquid soap and paper towels and childrens hands were observed to be washed frequently throughout the day, for example after outdoor play time, before mealtimes and after nappy changing and toilet visits.
- Nappy changing facilities were available for the children and nappy changing was completed for the children, at set times or when required in accordance with the service policy.

- Soothers used within the service were stored in individual boxes and staff confirmed that soothers were cleaned after use daily which reduced the potential risk of cross infection.
- Staff confirmed that laundry is washed every week.
- Nine cots had nine mattresses with safety labels and had nine removeable wipeable covers present.

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep needs for six children under two years of age and for one child over the age of 2 years, were facilitated with access to cots for sleep.
- The sleep needs of 12 children over two years of age were met through the provision of low beds or floor mats.
- Shoes and clothing were removed from children while they slept.
- Children were provided with cellular blankets for sleep.
- Staff were observed to physically check sleeping children every ten minutes and completed sleep check records while children slept which included each child's colour, breathing and position. The temperature of the care room was also recorded.

Fire Safety:

- Fire Drill records showed that the service had completed monthly fire drills, the last fire drill took place on the 26 April 2024.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The practise of washing hands of children after nappy changing in the nappy changing facility of the Baby room by standing the child at the sink with no step, was not a safe practice. For example, after a nappy change at 2.48pm, the staff member positioned a child at the sink to endeavour to wash their hands, the inspector observed the child's head was at the level of the sink and then whilst the staff member helped the child to reach the water coming out of the tap, the child banged their head off the sink.
2. In the Montessori room, the press was observed to be unlocked with a box of suncreams accessible to children, this can lead to a risk of safety and injury. It is acknowledged that at 1.10pm when the inspector highlighted this non-compliance to the designated person in charge the suncreams were removed immediately from the press.
3. In the Montessori room, trailing flexes were within reach of the children, leading to a risk of injury.

Infection Control:

4. In the sanitary facility off the Montessori room, the radiator cover was observed to be visibly dirty and damaged, which reduced the ability to clean the area adequately.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Step has been purchased for the Baby Room to allow children to stand safely while getting their hands washed.
2. Suncreams are now kept in a high shelf, away from the children.
3. Flex has been taken away from the children as the Flexes are tacked to the wall.

Infection Control:

4. Radiator cover has been replaced and is on the cleaning routine now, the service will ensure that the radiator cover is wiped down as per the cleaning routine in the Changing Room.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic Evidence submitted.

Infection Control:

Copy of the Cleaning routine and Photographic Evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The non compliances outlined above, under Regulation 23, have been addressed.

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) The service provided evidence that two adults trained in First Aid Response were available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.

(2) (a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in each care room and the kitchen.

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 of the fire drills completed in the service.

(b) A record was available of the number, type, and maintenance of the firefighting equipment which were last serviced 4 April 2024 and for the number, type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms in the premises, which were last serviced on the 17 April 2024.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed on the premises

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Evidence of insurance cover was available to demonstrate there was cover for a maximum of 42 preschool children in full day care, with an expiry date of 27 March 2025.