

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY166
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Name of Service:	Pitter Patter Community Play Group
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Address of Service:	Macro Centre, 1 Green Street, Dublin 7, Co. Dublin
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Name of Registered Provider:	Conor Casby
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	09/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	
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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 & E Hosford
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

Pitter Patter Community Play Group was established in 2002. The service is located on the first floor of the Macro Community Resource Centre on the north side of Dublin City. There is one large care room, two children's toilets, one nappy changing area, a sensory room, a kitchen and an office. The partial outdoor area is located off the care room.

The service provides full day, part-time and sessional care to children from 1 to 5 years, operating from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. The service caters for 34 children with no more than 17 children on the premises at any time and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.

Staffing

On the day of inspection, the deputy person in charge, two childcare staff and one adult employed under the Access inclusion Model cared for 11 children aged from 1 to 5 years of age in the morning.

The registered provider was not present during 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.

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3), (4).

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

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,

Regulation 25 First Aid (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 Fire safety (1) (4)

Regulation 28 Insurance

However, on inspection non-compliance was identified under Regulation 22 - Food and Drink and under Regulation 29 (c) – Premises.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,

The scope of the inspection included the Preschool room.

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment was assessed for all staff.

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 deputy 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.

(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) During the Inspection, the files of six staff members were reviewed.

(a) One written and validated reference was available for three staff members from a past employer.

(b) One written and validated reference was available for three staff members from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting was available for six staff members.

(d) Not applicable as the registered provider provided evidence to demonstrate that police vetting was not required for any staff member currently employed.

(4) Evidence available demonstrated that five staff members who worked directly with children attending the service 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 (DCEDIY).

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)

- Two written and validated reference were not available for one staff member from a past employer.
- One written reference available for one staff member from a past employer was not validated.

(b)

- Two written references available for one staff member from a source other than a past employer were not validated.
- One written reference available for one staff member from a source other than a past employer was not validated.

(3) On review of documentation available for six staff members, it demonstrated that four staff had not been fully considered prior to commencement within the service, for example, two written validated references were not available and four written references were not validated, three curriculum vitae's were not available and one identification record was not available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- Two written and validated references from past employer for one staff member located and replaced in file.
- One written reference for one staff member from past employer validated and placed in file.

(b)

- Two written references from source other than past employer to be validated and replaced in file.
- One written reference from source other than past employer validated and replaced in file.

(3) Management to investigate internal procedures, update protocols and provide relevant training. Files to be reviewed and retrospectively updated. Staff training on procedures around management and recruitment to be provided by board of management to service manager. Recruitment policies reviewed and updated.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a) (b) Photographic evidence submitted.

(3) Photographic evidence, Minutes of Meeting dated 21 November 2023 for additional training and updated Recruitment Policy submitted.

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 9, the non-compliances outlined above have 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 correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection as follows:

- Preschool room – Four adults to 11 eleven children: two children age between 1 to 2 years, five children aged between 2 to 3 years and four children aged between 3 to 6 years.

(2) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children, there were four adults working with 11 children during the inspection.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that two adults were present on the premises at all times.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The service had a three-week menu plan which was on display in the hallway and visible to parents.
- Food provided within the service was prepared in the onsite kitchen

Non-Compliance Information

- Children attending a full day care service were not offered appropriate food every 3 hours, for example Breakfast consisted of cereals and toast offered between 9 and 9.30am Lunch consisted of buttered baguette bread with packet vegetable soup followed by custard with biscuits at 11.10am and snack of pancakes was planned for between 2.30 and 3pm. It is acknowledged that the staff member responsible for the purchase and preparation of food for the children on the day of inspection was not present. However, supplies of alternative and healthy food choices were not available in the kitchen to ensure that the children were fed nutritious food. The recommended food guidelines for children attending full time care are the provision of two nutritious meals, of which one should be hot and two nutritious snacks each day.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- Three-week menu reviewed and updated in accordance with recommended food guidelines for children attending full time care. Three-week menu to be displayed prominently within creche. Plan to be agreed among staff team for shopping and food preparation in absence of kitchen staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic Evidence Submitted

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 22, the non-compliance outlined above has been addressed.

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:

- Initial access to the service area via the front door of the main building is monitored by reception staff. The entrance to the service is secure with a button release lock system preventing unauthorised access into the service and unauthorised exit from the service.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the day of inspection.
- Emergency exits in the service were clear and unobstructed.

- The outdoor area was secure. This reduced the unauthorised access of an adult or the unsupervised exit of a child.

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition throughout, with the premises and equipment were visually clean.
- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included thermostatically controlled warm water, foam soap, and paper towels.
- Handwashing was completed after outdoor play, before mealtimes and after nappy changing.
- Nappy changing facilities were available for the children with a pedal bin available for disposal of nappies.
- Pedal Bins were provided for the disposal of wastepaper in the sanitary facilities.

Safe Sleep:

- During the inspection no children in the service slept but facilities were available to enable children to rest and if required children between one and two years of age were facilitated to sleep in a cot when their needs dictated for sleep.
- Ten-minute sleep checks documentation was available to record each child's position, colour and breathing pattern during sleep.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the outdoor area, two trailing flexes from two discarded electrical appliances stored within reach of the children, posed an injury risk.

Infection Control:

2. Nappy changing was not carried out in accordance with the Nappy Changing Policy of the service. This increased the potential risk of cross infection. For example.
 - A total of two nappy changes were observed, a staff member used the same apron when changing two children and wore the apron into the care room to collect each child to change.
 - The mat was not wiped down in between each nappy change during two nappy changes.
3. Bread and biscuits provided at lunchtime were placed directly on the table for the eleven children present, no plates or suitable tableware was provided, this leads to poor infection control.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Appliances and flexes were removed.

Infection Control:

2. Training provided to staff around Nappy Changing Policy at the service.
3. Food preparation and service hygiene to be reiterated to staff team through training provided by board of management.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic Evidence submitted

Infection Control:

- 2 & 3. Minutes of Inspection review meeting held 22 November 2023 with training given submitted.

Summary Comment

The non compliances as 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 four 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 was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.

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. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 8 of September 2023.
 - (b) A record was available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment demonstrating it was last serviced on the June 2023 and for the number, type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms in the premises, which were last serviced on the 22 August 2023.
- (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

Insurance certificate available demonstrated that the preschool service was adequately insured with an expiry date of 27 March 2024.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

Non - Compliance Information

(c) There was no mechanical ventilation or windows present or available in the toilets or nappy changing area of the service, to extract stale air.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(c) The Landlord has been contacted with request to make sufficient alterations to the building for removal of stale air. There is a scheduled site visit to address the issue on the 9 of December 2023.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (c) Letter to Landlord requesting implementation of Ventilation.
Response Letter from landlord.

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 29(c), the non-compliance remains outstanding but it is acknowledged that a plan is in place to rectify the issue identified.