

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY187
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Name of Service:	St. Benedict's Creche
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Address of Service:	St. Benedict's Resource Centre, Swans Nest Road, Kilbarrack, Dublin 5
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Eircode:	D05 V1F6
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Name of Registered Provider:	Margaret O'Reilly
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	18/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
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Inspection undertaken by:	E. Finnegan Hayes
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

St. Benedict's Creche is a community operated service which operates from two rooms in St. Benedict's resource centre. The service is registered to provide part-time care to a maximum of 39 children aged 1-6 years old from 9am-1pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. An enclosed outdoor area is available in an internal courtyard in the centre of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider employs eight staff to work directly with the children in the service including the person in charge. A qualified CE staff member is also employed two days per week. The registered provider does not work in 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 the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 person in charge, resource centre manager, 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)(b) The service had a named person in charge and a designated person who could deputise in their absence if required. A review of the roster showed that the designated person in charge or a deputy is on the premises between 9am-1pm daily.

(c) A clear management structure was in place in the service; all staff were aware of their role and responsibilities.

(2) Discussion with staff and management showed that eight core staff and a CE staff member are currently employed in the service. The files of these nine adults were reviewed.

(a)(b) Eighteen written and verified references were available in relation to the nine staff.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all nine staff.

(d) Police vetting did not appear to be required for any staff.

(4) Evidence was available to show that nine staff who worked directly with the children in the service 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.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(2) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were caring for the children at all times and that ratios were maintained in each care room. The following was observed; six staff were caring for 23 children aged 1-4 years on the morning of inspection.

- In the Toddler room three staff were caring for 12 children aged 1-2.5years old.
- In the Preschool room two adults were caring for 11 children aged 2 years 8 months- 4 years old. The person in charge was also working in this room between 9am-12pm and was then observed to float between the rooms offering assistance.

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:

- (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

(j) One medication administration record was available for review. This was completed in full, with the required information.

(k) Twenty-One accident and incident records were available across the two care rooms for review. All records contained the necessary information and were completed in full including the signature of a parent indicating they had been advised of the accident.

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 healthy eating policy and children were observed to eat food in line with this for lunch including sandwiches, yoghurts, fruit, and cheese.
- Nappy changing was done on a set schedule and as needed to ensure the children's comfort.
- Children were unrestricted in their movements throughout the day for example children were invited to the table to complete an art activity some children chose not to engage, and this was permitted. Children were observed to leave the table as they finished eating lunch and a staff member was available in the book area to read stories with anyone who wanted to engage while the one highchair which was in use was only used for the duration of lunch. The child was removed from the highchair once they finished eating.

Physical and Material environment:

- Toys and equipment in the care rooms were grouped appropriately by interest or related items and displayed clearly to the children. This supports the children's ability to choose toys and equipment to play independently.
- Low tables and chairs allowed the children to engage in tabletop activities and mealtimes independently and comfortably.
- Children's art was displayed in both care rooms promoting creativity and the children's sense of identity and belonging in the service.

Supporting relationships:

- A key worker system is in place in the service which fosters a nurturing environment which allows children to feel safe and secure.
- Staff were observed to support children with selfcare tasks such as nose wiping.
- Staff were observed to sit at children's level and engage in play with them encouraging partnership in play and allows the adult to extend learning.

Non-Compliance Information

1. There is only 1 designated time for children to access food in the service; lunch which is served between 11-11:15am. A part-time registered service is required to offer children one meal and one snack each day.
2. The sleep needs of two children aged 17 months and 20 months were not met on the day of inspection. One child appeared tired; crying on and off and rubbing their eyes while the second child was observed rubbing their eyes and yawning. Staff recognised the sleep cue for one child commenting that the child is tired however the child was not put down for a nap. Staff advised that children don't sleep in the service. The service policy stated that children under 2 years old would be put to sleep in a room away from the play area however the service does not have an additional room in which children can sleep.
3. The behaviour management strategies used by staff in the Toddler room were not in line with the service policy which details conflict resolution steps to be used. Staff were observed to intervene in disagreements without using conflict resolution and to advise children a toy would be put away if they kept fighting over it instead of seeking solutions from the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. A snack of fruit and toast will be offered to all children in both rooms each day at 9:30, provided by the canteen each morning. Children will also have their lunch at 10:30/11am each day. Childrens /drinks will be left in a drinks tray available to all children throughout the day. Children will be offered a drink or snack throughout the day to prevent them from being hungry or thirsty.
2. A cot is now available in the room for children who require sleep.
3. A room meeting was held to discuss behaviour management strategies used in the Toddler room. The room leader will model positive behaviour management on an ongoing basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photos in relation to above have been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance 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

General Safety:

- The entrance door was secure on arrival to the service. Staff were observed to attend the door to allow access which prevented unauthorised persons accessing the service. The inspector was asked to sign the visitor log on arrival in the service.
- The highchair used by one child had suitable straps which were observed to be used during lunch when the child was in the chair.
- Child proof locks were in use on presses to prevent children accessing hazardous items such as cleaning spray.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, dispensed soap and paper handtowels were available to support adequate hand hygiene.
- Windows were open for ventilation throughout the morning.
- Sanitary areas and nappy changing units were maintained in good condition and adequately cleaned.
- Handwashing was observed to be completed at regular intervals throughout the day for example after nappy changing/ toileting and before mealtimes.
- Lunches which were brought from home were stored appropriately in the refrigerator to prevent spoiling.
- Records of cleaning and refrigerator temperature checks were maintained in both care rooms.

Fire Safety:

- Staff were aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency in the service and said this is practiced regularly during monthly fire drills.
- Fire exits were observed to be clear during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A blind cord was not secured on the hook available. This posed a risk of injury to children who may have been able to reach up to pull the cord when using the book area.

Infection Control:

- The blue and red mats in the cosy corner and the cube shaped soft block in the Toddler room were observed to be torn at the edges with the foam exposed preventing adequate cleaning.

Safe Sleep:

- Appropriate sleep equipment was not available for use in the service for children aged under two years who required a sleep on the morning of inspection. Staff advised that the cots have been removed into storage and that they have mats available if a child required sleep. The mats available were not suitable for a child under 2 to sleep on in line with Tusla's guidance for the Early Learning and Care sector on sleep provision for children under 24 months which states that *"All floor beds must have a firm, flat and waterproof mattress (minimum depth 6 cm) that is easily cleanable and that offers the child the same level of support and comfort as they would have when sleeping in a cot"*.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- All staff have been reminded to use the hooks provided to secure the blind cords. This will be monitored by the room leader and manager on a daily basis.

Infection Control:

- The mats have been replaced. Mats and cushion will be checked daily to ensure they are not ripped.

Safe Sleep:

- A cot has been put back into the Toddler room and will remain in the room available for use as needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photos have been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

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.*
- (2) *A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) *a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a)(b)(c) The service had a detailed complaints policy which outlined the information required.
- (2)(a) No complaints have been received by the service to date.