

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY192
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Name of Service:	St. Finbar's Playschool
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Address of Service:	St. Finbar's Boys N.S., Kilkiernan Road, Cabra, Dublin 7, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	DO7 T3F1
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Name of Registered Provider:	Marion Rooney
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	No.
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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:	E Hosford
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

St. Finbar's Playschool is a community service which operates from St. Finbar's Boys National School in the urban area of Dublin 7.

The service provides sessional care and education to children aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years of age and operates from 9.15am to 12:15pm Monday to Friday. The service is situated on the first floor of the school and consists of three care rooms Room 1, Room 2 and Room 3, a staff room and sanitary facilities for staff and children. An outdoor area to the front of the school is used by the early years' service during the session.

Staffing

The service employs 7 staff to include the registered provider, and 6 childcare staff, one of which was employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

On the day of inspection there were 7 staff caring for 31 children aged from 2 to 6 years of age.

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

The unannounced inspection focused on an examination of compliance under The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d),(4),(6)(A).

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(3),

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,
Regulation 25 First Aid (1)
and Regulation 26 Fire Safety measures

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

21 Equipment and Materials

And 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,

The scope of the inspection included the Room 1 and Room 2 and it did not include Room 3.

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment and regulation 11 Staffing Levels were assessed across all the rooms. 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 registered provider, 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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information

(2) The staff files of seven employees working within the service were reviewed.

(a) The following references were available from a past employer.

- Two validated written references were available for one staff member.
- One validated written reference was available for four staff members.

(b) The following references were from a source other than a past employer.

- Two validated written references were available for two staff members.
- One validated written reference was available for four staff members.

- (2)
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for seven staff members.
- (d) Documentary evidence available demonstrated that international police vetting was not required as no staff member had resided outside of the jurisdiction for more than 6 months as an adult.
- (4) Seven staff members employed within the service had evidence to confirm they held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.
- (6)(A) one staff member was employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

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) It was observed that the correct adult to child ratio was maintained in the following care rooms during the inspection.
- Room 1 there were 2 adults working directly with 10 children aged between 2 to 6 years of age.
 - Room 2 there were 3 adults working directly with 11 children aged between 2 to 6 years of age.
 - Room 3 there was 2 adults working directly with 10 children aged between 2 to 6 years of age.
- (3) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the service during the inspection. On the day of inspection there were 7 staff caring for 31 children aged from 2 to 6 years of age.

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Room 1 and Room 2 were laid out with materials and activities easily accessible to the children throughout the session. Areas of interest were well equipped with supporting equipment to enable the children to explore and expand their play and develop curiosity. For example.

The home area had play kitchens stocked with pots, pans, dishes, utensils, dress up clothes and bags. Dolls with clothes and prams were positioned beside the rest area which consisted of soft mats, cushions, and books.

A construction space had blocks of different sizes and textures, shape sorters, trains with tracks, magnetic shapes, cars, and trucks.

The tabletop area had tables and chairs suitable to the age of the children and were positioned beside puzzles, games, jigsaws, and bead boards.

Sensory opportunities were available throughout the morning, and they consisted of a sand tray with spades, buckets, scoops, and cups along with playdough and utensils for moulding, cutting, and rolling.

An art easel with paper, paints and brushes were available to the children with scissors, pencils, and crayons.

The outdoor area was used by each classroom daily and the children had space for games and running while given the opportunity to use a slide, large wooden boat, and a balance beam.

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 main door of the service was locked with entry to authorised adults under the supervision of the registered provider.
- The outdoor area was secured with a locked gate and high walls. Children were supervised while in the area and staff conducted regular head counts of the children going to and from the area.
- The cleaning materials and equipment used by the staff in the service were stored out of children's reach.
- The arrival time and departure of each child was recorded in the care room roll book which increased the effective and smooth evacuation of children in the event of an emergency.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available in the sanitary facilities used by the children. Children were supported and encouraged to wash their hands after outdoor play and after using the toilet.
- The service was observed to be clean with each staff member given responsibility for ensuring that the care rooms, floors, materials, and sanitary facility were cleaned and maintained on a regular basis.
- Food eaten by the children either from home or provided from the service was stored in the refrigerator to reduce the potential risk of food growth bacteria.

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 registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff held First Aid Responder (FAR) certification training. Seven staff currently hold FAR certification.
- (2)
(a) and (b) First aid boxes were suitably equipped, accessible and available to the children attending the service.

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)
The record of fire drills that had been completed was reviewed. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 21 June 2023, prior to the service finishing for summer holidays.
- (b)
The number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was present in the service. Fire extinguishers were serviced on the 28 September 2022, and smoke alarms were last serviced on the 28 June 2023.
- (4)
A notice of the fire procedure to be followed in the event of an emergency were clearly displayed in the care rooms and main hallway.