

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY233
Name of Service:	Westwood Childcare
Address of Service:	Westwood Club, Clontarf Road, Dublin 3, Co. Dublin
Eircode:	D03 T6T3
Name of Registered Provider:	Karen Polley
Service type:	Full Day, Drop-In
Date of Inspection:	12/04/2023
Day 2 of Inspection:	13/04/2023

No of pre-school children Day 1:	AM	87	PM	86
Day 2	AM	96	PM	78

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 and A Dunne
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

Westwood Childcare is a private service located in an urban area on the north side of Dublin city. The service provides full day care services to children aged from 2 months to 5 years and operates from 7:30am to 6:30pm Monday to Friday. A drop-in service is also provided to children of parents attending the leisure facility.

The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.

This purpose-built service occupies two floors in a sport and leisure facility and has seven care rooms, namely, Nursery Junior and Nursery Senior rooms on the ground floor and the Wobbler room, Toddler room, Playschool room, Bright Stars Junior, and Bright Stars Senior on the first floor. Two separate sleep rooms with a total of 29 cots are available on the ground floor and the first floor. An outdoor area to the side of the building and an indoor play area on the ground floor are available to the children.

Staffing

The service employs a total of 45 staff to include the registered provider, designated person in charge, deputy designated person in charge and 42 childcare staff. On the first day of the inspection there were 28 staff working with 87 children and on the second day of the inspection there were 31 staff and two students working with 96 children.

The registered provider does not work within the service and the designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge are not assigned to a care room but are available to assist if required.

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 regulations:

9(1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4),

11(1)(2)(8)(a),

16(h)(i)(j)(k)

19(1)(a),

21, 23,

25(1)(2)(a)(b) and 27.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations:

16 Record in relation to Pre School children,

19 Health, Welfare and Development of child,

21 Equipment and materials,

23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,

27 Supervision,

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels was 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, 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

(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 required.

(b) The designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge were on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced and were present for the two days of the inspection.

(2) The files of 45 employees and two students working within the service were reviewed under Regulation 9 Management and recruitment.

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

- One written reference for the registered provider.
- Two validated written references for 26 staff members and 1 student.

- One validated written reference for 15 staff members and 1 student

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

- One written reference for the registered provider.
- Two validated written references for 3 staff members.
- One validated written reference for 15 staff members and 1 student.

(2)(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for 45 employees and two students.

(d) International police vetting was available from 27 countries in respect of 27 staff members who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for more than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Thirty-eight 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(d) International police vetting was not available from one country in respect of one staff member who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for more than 6 months as an adult.

(4) Four staff members employed within the service did not have 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.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) International vetting was obtained from staff member. Please see attachment 1. All prospective staff members will be required to present evidence of all police vetting for countries in which they have lived in for more than 6 months prior to starting work.

(4) The staff contacted their Higher Education Institute to inform them that the letters being issued regarding years of study must be verified by the DCEDIY, which the institute are now applying for. Supporting evidence submitted on 12/05/23. Staff will not be employed without qualifications that are formally recognised by the DCEDIY. Letters from higher education institutions will not (alone) be accepted as recognition of qualifications any longer.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(d) Police vetting for one staff member.

(4) Supporting evidence submitted on 12/05/23.

Summary Comment

Regulation (9)(4) remains outstanding. Four staff undertaking a level 8 qualification did not have their correspondence that was available from their college verified by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) that the course completed to date was equivalent to at least a major award at level 5.

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.*
- (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.*
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and*
 - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

Compliance Information

- (1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there were 28 staff working with 87 children on the first day of inspection and 31 staff and two students working the 96 children on the second day of inspection.
- (2) It was observed that the correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection as the table below demonstrates.

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Room and age profile of children	Day 1		Day 2	
	AM Staff: Children	PM Staff: Children	AM Staff: Children	PM Staff: Children
Nursery Junior (0-2 years)	4:8	4:7	4:10	4:8
Nursery Senior (1-2 years)	5:7	5:8	7:14	5:12
Wobbler room (1-2 years)	5:13	5:13	5:11	3:7
Toddler (1-3 years)	4:15	4:14	4:15	3:13
Playschool (2-3 years)	4:15	4:15	5:16	5:16
Bright Stars Junior (3-4 years)	3:16	3:16	4:16	3:9
Bright Stars Senior (3-5 years)	3:13	3:13	2:14	2:13
Total	28:87	28:86	31:96	25:78

** Calculated as per Schedule 6 Adult: Child Ratios Part 1.

(8)(a) The staff roster available demonstrated that two adults were on the premises during the operation of the service.

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;
- (i) details of staff rosters 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

- (h) The arrival and departure time of each child in the Wobbler room, Playschool room, Bright Stars Junior room and Bright Stars Senior room were recorded in the service electronic application.
- (i) The staff roster available adequately reflected the staff present on the two days of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

- (k) On review of 20 accident and incident records from the Wobbler room and Bright Stars Senior room it was observed that 6 forms did not have the date of the parent’s signature recorded.
- (j) On review of 25 administration of medication records the following was observed.
 - The name of the second staff member who witnessed the administration was not recorded on one form.
 - One form did not have the signature of both staff members and the signature of the parent to confirm they were aware of the administration.
 - The signature of the manager was not recorded on one administration of medication form.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(k) Revision of how to complete Accident and Incident Records at Wobbler Room Team meeting, please see minutes of meeting attached – Attachment 4. Revision of how to complete Accident Incident Records at Department staff meeting, please see minutes of meeting attached – Attachment 5.

Staff will ensure that forms are checked following parents’ signature to ensure all areas of the forms are complete. The Childcare Supervisor will check all forms each morning when doing the morning check in with all rooms to ensure all parts to the forms are complete.

(j) Revision of how to complete Administration of Records at Wobbler Room Team meeting, please see minutes of meeting attached – Attachment 4. Revision of how to complete Accident Incident Records at Department staff meeting, please see minutes of meeting attached – Attachment 5.

Staff will ensure that forms are checked following parents' signature to ensure all areas of the forms are complete.

The Childcare Supervisor will check all forms each morning when doing the morning check in with all rooms to ensure all parts to the forms are complete.

Supporting documentation submitted

(k) and (j) Supporting evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified.

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:

- Staff were observed caring for the children in a calm and friendly manner with attention given to their individual needs and preferences. Suitable outdoor clothing was provided for each child when going outside and assistance was given to the children when required.
- Rest areas were provided in the care rooms to enable the children to rest and relax throughout the day. The children had the space and freedom to move throughout the care rooms and actively engage with the play materials and areas of interest.
- Each child was provided with a basket that was identified by their photograph. Children accessed the baskets independently and were familiar with their personal belongings when getting ready for the garden and soft play centre.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff in the four care rooms inspected engaged with parents daily through verbal conversation at drop off, collection and by an electronic application. The staff updated parents on their child's meals, snacks, sleeping, nappy changes and activities undertaken.
- The children were familiar with the daily routine of the service with consistent and scheduled activities planned and undertaken by the staff. Additional staff were available to offer the children the opportunity to engage in small group play and games.
- Staff encouraged the children to interact with each other in a calm and friendly manner while emphasising turn taking and sharing.

Non-Compliance Information

Basic Needs:

1. The children attending the Playschool room and Bright Stars Junior room received a snack at 10:30am from home which consisted of a selection of crackers, cheese, yogurts, and fruit. The next opportunity for food was 2pm. This exceeded the recommended maximum time between meals of 3 hours.
2. The transition of children from sleeping to mealtime in the Wobbler room was observed to be disorganised and unresponsive to the individual needs of the children. For example, the children were placed in low chairs at the table with their dinner while still waking up and orientating from their sleep.
3. Children in the Wobbler room were not encouraged to remove their soothers after sleep to enhance their language development.
4. The children in the Wobbler room were not provided with outdoor play on the first day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Management met with staff from the Playschool Room and Bright Stars Junior Room to discuss the importance of meals being no more than 3 hours apart, please see attachment 6. The class routines were revised, and staff are aware that their routines must always accommodate this. This was also reviewed with all staff at Department staff meeting, please see attachment 5. The staff have flexibility and discretion to change their routines should the day need it to ensure the children have no more than 3 hours between meals.

2. Management met with the staff from the Wobbler Room to discuss their routine and how the transition from sleep to the class to mealtimes could be made smoother and more child friendly, please see attachment 4.

Transitions were also discussed at the Department staff meeting and all staff were encouraged to look at their routines to ensure the transitions took into consideration the needs of the children in their class and how they could possibly change as we come into the summer months, please see attachment 5.

The staff have flexibility and discretion to change transitions according to the needs of their children. Monthly Room Leader meetings are part of the support between Management and staff where challenges can be raised, discussed, and shared with colleagues. Ideas can be shared, and solutions/resolutions can be found.

Monthly Department staff meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month are also part of the support between Management and staff. Observation sessions from Management in classrooms rooms are part of Staff Supervision in the crèche, where Management will visit and spend time in a room and offer insights and support to staff and rooms if needed.

3. Management met with staff from the Wobbler Room to discuss the use of soothers – Why do children use soothers? What are the benefits of soothers? What are the negative impacts of soothers? How can they affect language development? Please see attachment 4.

Staff have a clear understanding of the use of soothers and the use of soothers has been highlighted and will be closely observed by Management in their observation sessions of rooms.

4. Management met with the staff from the Wobbler Room to discuss outdoor time. The importance of outdoor time was discussed in depth for the development and well-being of the children. Please see attachment 4.

Supporting documentation submitted

1-4. Supporting evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

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

- The layout of the Bright Stars senior care room was well equipped with areas of interest to reflect the interests of the children. For example, the home area had play kitchens, pots, pans, and dishes, a shop area with play food and cash register, a construction area with work bench, shapes, blocks, connectors, nuts, and bolts. An area consisted of practical life, sensorial equipment, world mat and atlas.

Non-Compliance Information

- Tables and chairs were not provided in the Wobbler room and Playschool room between meals to enable the children to complete activities and puzzles.
- Areas in the Bright Stars Junior room were observed to be lacking in equipment and not appealing for the children, for example.
 - Books in the rest area were worn, torn and damaged.
 - The art and craft area were poorly equipped with the necessary resources to enable the children to actively engage with creating opportunities.
- The outdoor area consisted of bikes, moveable see saws, playhouses, and a play kitchen. However, there was no supporting equipment to enhance the games and activities for the children, for example.
 - The play kitchen and playhouses were observed to be empty.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- Following staff meeting with the Wobbler Room team, please see attachment 4. The layout of the room was discussed and the importance of leaving out tables and chairs for the children to sit on during free play. The staff understood the importance of having these facilities available for the children. The tables are available and accessible to children at all times so be able to rest, snack, read and do tabletop activities.
- Staff in the Bright Stars Junior team had put away their arts and crafts materials as they felt the room looked tidier with them tidied away. They acknowledged better care needed to be taken of the books. Care of books included in their care of the environment lessons with the children. The staff have organised the books on a rotation system and are more conscious of repairing them if they are torn or damaged or if they need to go to the recycling and be replaced. How to care for books is included in the class care of the environment lesson plans.

These are lessons that continuously take place throughout the year. Staff need to be vigilant when materials such as books are not being treated with care and revise care of books lessons with the children.

3. Garden equipment was ordered in early April, and we are awaiting its arrival. Please see attachment. A designated Quality Lead Person has been assigned to the garden and is working with staff on ideas for improving the garden area. The Quality Lead Person is designated to check the garden materials daily and liaise with Management in this regard.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation submitted to support 1,2 &3.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified.

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 external door and gate in the outdoor area were secured to prevent a child from exiting the building unsupervised and an unauthorised adult from entering.
- During the movement of children from the care room to the outdoor area and soft play centre each child wore a coloured bib to reflect the room they were from to ensure that staff within the sports and leisure complex could identify the children and ensure their safety.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap and paper towels were available at the wash hand basins in the sanitary facilities used by the children.

Safe Sleep:

- Children from the Wobbler and Toddler rooms slept in the first floor cot room. The room was observed to be well laid out with 19 standard cots, each fitted with a washable /wipeable mattress with a safety label. The temperature of the sleep room was recorded as 17.8 °C at 11:09am and 19.6 °C at 12:43pm.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The movement of children from the care rooms to the outdoor area, soft play centre and the cot room at sleep time was not reflected in the service written records or electronic application. This reduced the effective evacuation of children in the event of an emergency.
2. Cleaning products were accessible in an unlocked cupboard in the Bright Stars Senior care room.

Infection Control:

3. The nappy changing procedure was not completed as per best practice guidelines and the service policy.
 - The apron and gloves used were retained for the duration of the procedure.
 - At the end of the process the staff member did not wash their hands before changing another child.
 - The nappy mat was not cleaned between nappy changes.
4. The children in the Wobbler room, Playschool room, Bright Stars Junior and Senior rooms did not wash their hands before meals and after outdoor and indoor play.
5. Staff in the Wobbler room did not ensure that soothers were cleaned, sterilised, and stored securely after use, as it was observed that soothers were left on the tables in the care room.
6. A sink in the main sanitary facility had cold water, this reduced effective handwashing for the staff and children.

Safe Sleep:

7. It was observed that a child aged 4 years old who required sleep in the Bright Stars Senior room at 3pm was not positioned on a low bed as per the service policy. The child slept on a bean bag and staff did not complete ten-minute sleep checks to include their colour, breathing or position.
8. Two children in the Playschool room were given milk in bottles while lying flat on the low beds, this increased the potential risk of choking.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The movement of the children is recorded on an electronic application. There are new rooms added to the application where the children are allocated when they move - 'Cot Room', 'Garden' and 'Fitzone'. When the children return to their room they are reallocated to their room. Please see attachment 8.

Staff have easily adapted to the addition of the new rooms and the recording of the children when they are in the cot room, fitzone etc.

2. Child Locks have been installed. Please see attachment 6. All rooms agreed at staff meeting to ensure to continue to be vigilant of missing child locks/ they get broken damaged being replaced. Plentiful supply of child locks in the office so they can be replaced easily and quickly.

Infection Control:

3. All staff have been enrolled in a Nappy Changing Procedure course. Posters have been purchased and displayed at each nappy changing station to assist staff in the nappy changing procedure. Please see attachment 7. These posters have been scanned and sent to all staff, so each staff member also has a personal copy. A copy of the poster is also now on file as part of the staff induction training. The nappy changing procedure was also demonstrated at the department staff meeting, please see attachment 3.

Induction training features nappy changing procedure. The procedure in poster format will assist staff in the correct procedure.

4. Child size handwashing sinks are in the process of being sourced and the on-site maintenance team are organised for installing them. All staff have acknowledged the importance of handwashing practices for hygiene and infection control and will adapt routines/transitions to include handwashing. Please see attachment 3. Handwashing sinks will ease handwashing practices and encourage handwashing in all classes.

5. It was revised at the staff meeting and wobbler room meeting the use of soothers, the sterilisation and impact on language development. Please see attachment 3 and 4. 6.

6. In the main sanitary the sink has been fixed by the onsite maintenance team.

Safe Sleep:

7. and 8. Revision of Safe sleep at staff meeting. Please see attachment 3.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Documentation submitted.

Infection Control:

Documentation submitted.

Safe Sleep:

Documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified.

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.

(2) Well-equipped first aid boxes were available to the children attending the service.

(a) The first aid boxes were stored in an accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

From 1:27pm to 1:33pm it was observed that a child in the Wobbler room ate the food from another child's plate. The inspector alerted the staff member who removed the plate of food.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Reviewed and discussed at Wobbler Room Team meeting. Please see attachment 2.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified.