

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY248
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	St Joseph's ECDS
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	St Joseph's Early Childhood Care Education Centre, Morningstar Road, Maryland, Dublin 8, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D08 YD63
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Tracey Monson
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	14/11/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	24	PM	13
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Y. Kelly and T. Nelson
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

St. Joseph's ECDS is a full day care, not for profit service located in an urban residential area in Dublin 8.

Established since 1955, St. Joseph's delivers early childhood care and education to children aged 2 to 6 years of age through a HighScope curriculum approach. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, which is delivered on a sessional basis from 9.30am to 12.30pm.

The service operates from a single storey detached building and comprises of four care rooms, to include the Polka Dot Room catering for children aged 2 to 3 years, the Star Room catering for children aged 2 to 4 years, the Rainbow Room, catering for children aged 2 to 5 years and the Butterfly Room catering for children aged 2 to 3 years of age. There is a sanitary accommodation beside Polka Dot and star Rooms, and further sanitary accommodation beside the Rainbow Room and Butterfly Room. There is also a kitchen, a lunchroom for the children, a nappy changing room, an office and staff room. The outdoor play area is situated to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs a total of eleven staff members. The registered provider does not work in the service. On the day of the inspection there were thirteen adults present including the person in charge, the incoming person in charge, eight childcare staff, a cook, a student and a worker funded by an external agency.

### 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2) and (4)-Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing Levels.

Regulation 16 Record in Relation to Pre-School Service.

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials.

Regulation 22 Food and Drink.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of Child.

Regulation 25 First Aid.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included all 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, 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 named person to deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge was present during the inspection.

(c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.

(2) A review of the staff roster and discussion with the manager established there were 11 staff members, a student and a worker funded by an external agency. As a result, the files of 13 adults were reviewed.

The registered provider had completed the following checks:

(a)(b) Twenty-six validated written references were available from recent past employers or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 13 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Documentary evidence showed that one adult had lived outside of the state for six months or more as adult and international police vetting from that state was available for inspection.

(4) Eleven staff 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.

### 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) On the day of the inspection there were an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service to meet their basic care needs. There were 10 adults available to the 24 children present on the morning of the inspection and six adults available to the 13 children present on the afternoon the inspection.

(2) The registered provider ensured that the correct adult to child ratios were maintained in the service.

- Star Room: there were 2 adults working directly with five children aged 3 to 4 years old in the morning.
- Polka Dot Room: there were 1 adult working directly with seven children aged 3 to 4 years old in the morning. There was also a student present in a supportive role. There were 2 adults working directly with six children aged 3 to 4 years old in the afternoon. There was also a student present in a supportive role.
- Rainbow Room: there were 2 adults working directly with six children aged 3 to 5 years old in the morning. There were 2 adults working directly with seven children aged 3 to 5 years old in the afternoon.
- Butterfly Room: there were 2 adults providing direct care to six children ranging in age from 2 1/2 to 4 years old in the morning.

### 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:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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

- (1) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation the service:
- (a) the name, position, qualification, and experience of the person in charge working in the service were kept in the staff files, parent’s handbook and displayed in the hallway of the service.
  - (b) details of the class of service and age profile of children for which the service is registered were detailed in the services’ registration certificate in the office.
  - (c) details of the adult to child ratios were displayed outside the rooms and in the parent’s handbook.
  - (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service was displayed in the hallway of the service.
  - (e) the facilities available were outlined in the parent’s handbook.
  - (f) the opening hours and fees were outlined in the parent’s handbook.
  - (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child were available.
  - (i) details of the staff roster were displayed in the office.

(j) details of medication administered was available in a medication book. Details of medication administration was available for one child. This record had signed parental consent. The person in charge reported that medication is not routinely administered unless prescribed.

### Non-Compliance Information

(g) The services' policies and procedures were reviewed during the inspection. However, there was no policy in relation to use of internet and recording of photographs. All other required policies, procedures and statement of the service were available on request.

(k) Details of accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child were available. A sample of six accident and incident records were reviewed on the day of the inspection. Five out of six of the accident and incident records reviewed did not have the date that parents were informed of the incident documented.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective Action

(g) A draft policy has been developed by the service for the use of photographs, videos and internet.

(k) Accident and incident records have been dated.

#### Preventive Actions

(g) To review policies and procedures regularly.

(k) Discussed at recent staff meeting the importance of having records signed and dated.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

(g) Evidence of draft policy for the use of photographs, videos and internet.

(k) Photographic evidence of a sample of three accident, injury or incident records that have been dated.

Photographic evidence of minutes of staff meeting.

### Summary Comment

The inspector had reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances under Regulation 16

(1)(g)(k) have been addressed.

### 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 care rooms were divided into interest areas with similar items beside each other to support children’s active participatory play. Interest areas and materials were labelled using text and imagery to support children’s choice and independence in play.
- There were play materials that were suitable to the age and stage of children’s development to include the following: There were home corner areas to include real life items such as kettle and toaster, wooden utensils and weighing scales to support dramatic and pretend play. There were art materials such as paint easels, paint pots and brushes and aprons, markers, glue and playdough materials to support creative art and mark making for children. There was a variety of musical instruments. There were water and sand trays with cylinders and measuring jugs providing opportunities for sensory play and early numeracy learning. There were cosy areas for children to relax and a variety of books to provide opportunities for storytelling and early literacy experiences. There were large wooden hollow blocks, plastic building bricks, stickle bricks, toy building tools and construction workers hats and toy building tools for construction and early numeracy. There were table top materials including pegboards, jigsaws, magnets, sorting and matching toys. There were transportation toys to include cars, trains, train tracks, garages and small world toys including animals, dinosaurs with natural materials such as pieces of astro turf for animals to extend play. There were dress up clothes, dolls houses, dolls, buggies, doctors set for imaginary play.
- There was comfortable furniture with small child sized chairs and table for children to sit when carrying out table top activities or for mealtimes.
- Children’s coat hooks and cubbies using symbols for children’s names supported familiarity and children’s identity and belonging.
- Children’s artwork, family wall and daily routine were displayed at children’s level which supported children’s identity and belonging within the service. Photographs of people from different cultures and ethnicities were displayed to encourage respect for diversity, equality and inclusion. Children’s learning journals were accessible to the children.
- Mats were put down on floor for yoga and a laptop used for movement and physical activities.

- An outdoor play area was available for children with a synthetic flooring. The equipment and materials included a plastic slide, playhouse, large connecting waffles, bikes, ride on equipment, trolleys and hula hoops to provide opportunities for children’s physical and fundamental movement skills. The children changed into suitable outdoor clothing for outdoor play including outdoor playsuits and wellies.

### 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 ensured that there was adequate and suitable food and drinks available. For example:

- The service followed a three-week menu plan, and the documentary evidence available showed there was a varied selection of food available. Staff reported that alternative options for children with additional or alternative diets was available, and this information was clearly displayed in the care rooms and the kitchen.
- Food offered throughout the day included breakfast at 10.00am, a hot meal at 12.00pm, and an additional snack in the afternoon at 2.00pm. On the day of the inspection the children were offered selection of cereals with fruits, toast and pancakes for breakfast and coddle with mashed potato for lunch. Additional portions were available. All meals were provided by the service and prepared in the onsite kitchen.
- Drinking water was freely available in the care rooms throughout the day, and milk was offered at mealtimes.
- The mealtime experience was observed to be a leisurely sociable occasion, where staff sat with the children and supported them to serve themselves from platters. Appropriate cutlery was provided to the children.
- The practice observed was in line with the service policy on Healthy food which was reviewed.

## 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

The registered provider ensured the following measures were in place to safeguard children attending the service:

#### General Safety:

- Entry to the service was managed and monitored by staff. There is a glass door at the entrance allowing visibility of who is entering the service.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor area was covered in a synthetic floor surface which was in good condition and provided an even and safe surface for children to play on.
- There were socket covers on sockets and blind cords secured in care rooms.

#### Infection Control:

- The sanitary area was equipped with liquid soap and dispensed toilet roll and paper towels. Children were observed to hand wash after toilet use.
- Pedal operated bins were available for disposal of contaminated items.

#### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were unobstructed.
- There was a fire evacuation procedure and a fire safety plan displayed in the hallway of the service.
- Fire extinguishers were covered with a protective cover.
- Children were recorded accurately in an attendance log.

#### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. In the outdoor area of the service the gate was observed to not be adequately secured in a closed position at 10.30am on the morning of the inspection. This gateway opens out onto a road and therefore posed a risk that the children may be able to exit the service. Children were observed to be playing in the outdoor area riding bikes at this time.

#### Infection Control:

2. The nappy changing mat in the sanitary accommodation was torn and could not be cleaned effectively, leading to a risk of contamination.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

#### Corrective actions:

1. A lock was purchased to ensure gates are locked and secure.

#### Preventive actions:

1. A risk assessment template was developed for the outdoor area of the service.

#### Infection Control:

#### Corrective actions:

2. The nappy changing mat was replaced the next day after the inspection.

#### Preventive actions:

2. A nappy changing checklist was introduced to maintain closer inspections of the nappy changing mats.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence of a lock on the gate in the outdoor area of the service.

Photographic evidence of risk assessment for the outdoor area of the service.

#### Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence of a new nappy changing mat.

Evidence of nappy changing checklist.

## Summary Comment

The inspector had reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified 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 a person trained in First Aid Responder training was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2) (a) and (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.