

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY300
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Once Upon a Time
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	25 & 26 Herbert Place (Basement), Dublin 2
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D02 AY86
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	AnneMarie McCormack
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/07/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	33	PM	32
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Finnegan Hayes & 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

Once upon a time is a privately operated full daycare service located in Dublin 2. It is one of nine service operated by the registered provider. The service operates from 7:30am-6:30pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service is located at basement level across two buildings in Herbert Place and consists of four care rooms; the Wobbler room catering for children aged 1-2 years, Toddler room catering for children aged 2-3 years, pre-montessori room catering for children aged 2-3 years and a Montessori room catering for children aged 3-5 years, a kitchen, sanitary facilities. An enclosed garden is provided to the rear of the premises

### Staffing

The registered provider employs eleven staff to work in the service including the person in charge, nine early years practitioners and a domestic staff member. All eleven staff were present on the day of inspection. The registered provider also employs a management team to work across the nine services; the training and development manager and an area manager arrived in the service during the inspection and worked directly with the children in the care rooms guiding and directing the staff. The registered provider does not work in the service but attended the service at 3pm to meet with the inspectors.

### 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.

## Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection under Regulation 23 in relation to an identified safety risk in relation to water which was not thermostatically controlled. It is acknowledged that steps were taken during the inspection to address the risk and a written response was received following the inspection which mitigated the risk. Further details are available under Regulation 23.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, training and development manager, area manager, 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.

(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

- (1)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise if required.
  - (b) A review of the staff roster and discussion with management showed that a designated person in charge is rostered to be on the premises for the duration of the opening hours of the service.
  - (c) The service had a management structure with clear roles and responsibilities.
- (2) A review of the staff roster and discussion with management showed that there are currently eleven staff employed in the service all of whom have commenced employment since the last inspection. The files of all

eleven staff were reviewed as part of the inspection process along with the files of the training and development manager and area manager as they were present on the day of inspection and their files had not been reviewed on the previous inspection.

(a) (b) Twenty-six written and verified references were available in relation to thirteen staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for thirteen staff; and the registered provider adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for nine staff members who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of more than 6 months.

(3) Evidence was available to show that the procedures required under (2) had been completed prior to the start date of all staff members.

(4) Evidence was available to show that twelve staff members who worked directly with the children 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) There were 33 preschool children being cared for by 8 adults on the morning of inspection. The person in charge and a relief staff member were available to cover breaks and assist in the care rooms as required.

(2) Ratios were maintained during the inspection. The following was observed:

Room	Age range	No. of children	No. of Adults present	Adults required
Wobbler room	1-2 years	7	2	2
Toddler room	2-3 years	7	2	2
Pre-montessori room	2-3 years	7	2	2
Montessori room	3-5 years	12	2	2

The area manager and training and development manager attended the service to facilitate the inspection and assisted with covering ratios during staff lunches.

### 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

The registered provider ensured that the information required was available in the service. The following was observed;

- (a) The name, position, qualifications, and experience of the person in charge and of every employee was available in the staff files and displayed in the hallway of the service.
- (b) Details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide was available in the Tusla registration certificate which was displayed in the hallway.
- (c) Details of the adult:child ratios in the service were displayed in the hallway of the service.
- (d) (e) the type of care or programme and facilities provided in the service were available in the statement of purpose and function.
- (f) The opening hours and fees were displayed in the hallway of the service.
- (g) The policies and procedures required were available for review.
- (h) Daily attendance records are recorded on a software application in a timely manner.
- (i) A staff roster was available.
- (j) A sample of twelve medication administration forms were reviewed all of which were completed in full.
- (k) A sample of nine accident and incident forms were reviewed all of which were completed in full.

### 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 provides all food to the children; breakfast at 9am, snack at 11am, dinner which is provided by an external company at 2pm and another snack at 4pm. Children were observed to eat cheese and turkey wraps, sliced tomatoes, and avocado for morning snack. Additional portions were available and provided to children as needed.

- Nappy changing was completed on a set schedule three times daily and as required to ensure the child's comfort.
- Staff were observed to support children with personal hygiene tasks and were alert to the children's needs for example nose wiping.

### **Physical and Materials environment:**

- Low tables and chairs allowed children to engage in mealtimes in a comfortable manner.
- Toys were grouped in defined areas and accessible to children on low level shelving. An adequate supply of toys was available in each care room for the age and stage and number of children present.
- The outdoor area was fitted with a soft play surface and had a climbing and slide play structure, mud kitchen with associated props, cars, scooters, and a basketball hoop for children to play with.

### **Supporting relationships:**

- Staff were encouraged to sit with the children while they ate which promoted a social atmosphere at mealtimes.
- Staff spoke kindly to the children and encouraged them to engage in activities throughout the day.
- Staff addressed minor disagreements between children quickly and used distraction to resolve disputes.
- A software application was used to share information with parents including meals, nappy changes, and sleep. This was observed to be updated in a timely manner throughout the day.

### 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 service entrance was secured on arrival. A video bell allows staff to see who is at the door before opening it. This prevents unauthorised persons accessing the service without staff knowledge.
- Blind cords were adequately secured out of reach of the children.
- Radiator covers were in place and adequately secured.

##### Infection Control:

- Handwashing was observed to be completed frequently throughout the day for example after garden time and nappy changing.
- Toys were observed to be sterilised frequently having been on the floor or in a child's mouth.
- Pedal operated bins were available in the nappy changing areas for disposal of contaminated items.
- Nappy changing areas and mats were maintained in a clean condition.

##### Administration of Medication:

- A detailed health care plan was available for a child who required medication. Staff were aware of the signs and symptoms and the medication was readily available in the care room if needed. The training and development manager advised that monthly checks are done on care plans to ensure they are up to date.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Children were observed to be monitored while sleeping and records of these checks were completed in a timely manner.

##### Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were unobstructed on the day of inspection.
- Staff were knowledgeable of the evacuation procedure in the event of a fire emergency.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. The water in the sink in the Toddler room which is used for handwashing by the children was not thermostatically controlled to prevent scalds. The temperature of the water was observed to be 55°C at 10:43am and posed a risk of injury to the children. It is acknowledged that the temperature of the water

had reduced by the afternoon and a plan was put in place to address the risk. An immediate action notice was issued to the provider on the day of inspection in relation to this issue.

### Infection Control:

2. Adequate space of 50cm was not maintained between three cots in the cot room which is not in line with Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) Management of Infectious disease in childcare facilities and other childcare settings which states that cots or sleeping mats should be spaced at least a half metre apart for infection control purposes. Two cots were spaced 28.6cm apart while the second and third cot were spaced 27.6cm apart this increased the potential spread of infection between the children using the cots.
3. Handwashing in the Wobbler room was completed too far in advance of morning snack being served. For example, handwashing was complete at 10:40am and children were observed crawling on the floor following handwashing prior to snack being served at 11:05am. This increased the potential risk of infection as the meal served which comprised of wraps and fruit was eaten by hand.
4. A section of flooring was missing from the floor in the Wobbler room which exposed the underlying concrete, and a build-up of dirt was present. This posed an infection control risk as the floor could not be effectively cleaned.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. Once it was noted that the water was too hot, the service immediately contacted our maintenance man, completed a risk assessment and used an alternative sink for effective hand washing. The issue was addressed on the day and as per the report the water temperature had reduced by the afternoon. The service have had mixing valves installed to ensure the water remains at the correct temperature. Morning and evening checks are carried out on the water temperatures, the staff check the water prior to the children washing their hands.

##### Infection Control:

2. The service ensure that when the children are sleeping there is the required 50cm between each cot. Our cot room has the required space for the number of cots and the required 50cm distance between each cot. A domestic staff member will ensure the cots are correctly spaced after the cot room is cleaned each morning and the staff will continue to ensure this when putting the children to sleep.

3. The service have reminded the staff to wash the children's hands closer to the mealtime. The staff will begin to wash the children's hands closer to the meal being served, any delays will be communicated by the domestic staff. The Manager will ensure this procedure is being carried out.
4. The flooring has been repaired. Flooring check has been added to the Daily Risk Assessment. The staff will check the flooring is in good condition.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **General Safety:**

1. Water temperature record form.

#### **Infection Control:**

2. Image of cot room with cots adequately spaced.
3. Daily risk assessment
4. Image of repaired floor

### **Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

## 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

(2) (a)(b) An adequately equipped first aid box was available and easily accessible to staff if needed but not accessible to the children.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that a staff member trained in First Aid Response (FAR) was available to the children at all times during the opening hours of the service. On the day of inspection, a staff member trained in FAR was not present on the premises until 10:15am when a staff member from head office arrived. It is acknowledged that a number of staff had completed paediatric first aid courses.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) Two staff members booked onto a FAR training course on the weekend of the 26th of July. This was in place prior to the inspection. The service have a training manager who is completing the FAR instructor course in the coming weeks so we will ensure that we have a sufficient number of staff with FAR training on the premises at all times.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Email confirmation of Far booking.

#### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions proposed by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance identified under Regulation 25.