

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY340
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Name of Service:	Woodlands Creche
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Address of Service:	Ballyfermot FRC, Lynch's Lane, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D10 K319
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Name of Registered Provider:	Roslyn Richardson
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	09/12/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	39	PM	16
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	Sarah Quigley & Roisin Phillips
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

Woodlands Creche operates from Ballyfermot Family Resource Centre in Ballyfermot, Dublin South West. It was established in 2005, and offers full time day and part-time day care, and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 09:00-12:00 Monday to Friday. The service provides care to children from one to six years of age. There are five care rooms, an office, a kitchen and suitable sanitary facilities for the children and adults. There is an outdoor area available to the children at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are twenty staff employed in the service, the registered provider manages the service and works directly with the children where required. There is also an administration support staff member and a cook. Two adults participating in a work placement programme were also present during the inspection.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 (2)(4) Management and recruitment, 11(1)(2) Staffing levels, 16(1)(h)-(k) Record in relation to a preschool service, 19 (1)(b) Health Welfare and Development of the child, 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child 25 (1)(2)(a)(b) First Aid, 26 (1)(2)(4) Fire Safety measures and 28 Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16, records of a preschool service, and regulation 19 Health Welfare and Development of child, as a result, the scope of the inspection included Pre-wobbler, Toddler, Preschool 1 and Preschool 2 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 registered provider, 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

(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

(2) Following discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that eight new members of staff including two students were employed in the service since the last inspection on 1st December 2021. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these new staff members, and regulation 2(c) was assessed in relation to all twenty-two adults employed and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a) Of the sixteen written validated references that were required, eleven were available from a past employer.

(b) A further five references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for each of the twenty-two adults and were in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate’s regulatory notice which requires registered providers to renew garda vetting every three years.

(d) Two staff members who had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for six consecutive months or more as adults also had police vetting from the respective countries.

(4) There was evidence that four of the staff members had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent. Two adults did not require a qualification.

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 was an adequate number of adults working with the children in the service throughout the inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twelve staff working directly with thirty-nine children in the service in the morning, including the registered provider. Another staff member came on duty at 12 midday and sixteen children remained in the afternoon.

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

- (1)
 - (i) The staff roster was available to the inspectors, and indicated correctly the staff present and rostered on the day of inspection and throughout the week.

- (j) Records were available in the service which detailed medication administered to children. A sample of these records were reviewed during the inspection and contained signed parental consent.
- (k) Records of accidents and incidents were available in the service. A sample of 19 records of accidents or incidents which had occurred in the service were reviewed by the inspectors and met the requirements.

Non-Compliance Information

(h) The attendance records maintained in the pre-wobbler and toddler rooms were not accurate on the morning of inspection as follows:

- At 09:59 in the Pre-Wobbler room 5 children were present and only 4 were signed in. The child had arrived at 09:45 and was signed in retrospectively when the inspector brought this to the attention of staff.
- At 10:35 in the Toddler room 5 children were present and only 4 were signed in. The child was signed in retrospectively when the inspector brought it to the attention of the staff.

Inaccurate records of attendance pose a risk to the safe evacuation of children the event of an emergency. The corrective and preventive action submitted following the last inspection of the service on the 1st September 2021, has not adequately addressed this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

A meeting with staff from both rooms took place, it was explained to staff the dangers involved in not recording accurate attendance, and not signing children in and out of rooms. Examples of potential dangers were explained. Staff have assured me that they will accurately record attendance. Management have been conducting spot checks to ensure attendance is documented correctly.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. The actions outlined by the registered provider will be assessed on the next inspection of the service.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

Suitable and appropriate care practices were observed throughout the inspection, as evidenced by the following:

In all care rooms observed, staff spoke to the children with a gentle tone of voice, showing affection for the children. The staff were observed facilitating child led play and chatting to the individual children in a relaxed manner. The children's behaviour was managed in a calm and positive manner, evidenced by adults encouraging problem solving and using suggestions to resolve conflicts whilst offering positive reinforcement.

Staff were observed supervising and encouraging the children in the preschool rooms to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. They served the mid-morning bagels and cheese and fruit on suitable plates. The children in these rooms were observed eating independently, as the staff sat at low level tables with the children engaging in conversation while they ate in a relaxed manner. Older children accessed the toilet independently and younger children's nappies were changed in a timely manner, as required. The play experiences in the service were observed to be play based and child-led, and children were visibly engaged and happy in their activities throughout the inspection.

Lunch time was observed to be a sociable occasion, staff sat with the children engaged in conversation.

In all the rooms inspected children's rest and sleep was facilitated as required. Although sleep times were scheduled, staff in Pre-wobbler and Toddler rooms described facilitating sleep as children needed.

Children in each care room inspected were facilitated to play outside and were appropriately dressed when doing so.

Non-Compliance Information

In the pre-wobbler and toddler rooms, drinking water was not freely available to the children. Water was only brought from the kitchen at mealtimes.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

During the staff meeting it was explained that water should be available at all times and not only for meals. Spot checks are conducted daily and access to water is available at all times

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

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 inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard the children attending:

The entrance doors to the creche were secured with an electronic locking system, to enable staff at the creche to authorise access. The outdoor play area to the rear of the building was secured, by two bolts on the garden gate, one high one low. The exit into the family resource centre was secured by a press release button at an adult's eye level, to prevent children leaving unsupervised, and preventing any unauthorised persons from entering the creche.

Cleaning products and hazardous materials were kept out of reach. Toys and play equipment were safe and in good working order.

Infection Control:

Soothers were stored in individually named containers, to prevent cross contamination. Handwashing was observed when the children used the toilet in the preschool rooms. Each sanitary area had liquid soap, warm water and paper towels. Cleaning schedules were in place and maintained.

The nappy changing areas were clean and stocked with appropriate personal protective equipment.

Individual children's bed linen was on labelled low beds, staff described a schedule of laundering bed sheets and blankets weekly, or as necessary.

Safe Sleep:

Staff outlined procedures in place for safe sleep during conversation with the inspectors and they remained in the room with the children sleeping on low beds. Records were in place which documented physical checks completed on sleeping children every 10minutes. The sleep room temperatures were monitored.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were clearly marked, and unobstructed in all the care rooms. Evacuation plans were clearly displayed throughout the service. Staff members detailed the procedures in place for fire evacuations and stated that drills are practiced monthly.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Two electrical cables were observed to be hanging down from a high shelf to a low-level plug socket, at the children's rest area in the Toddler room. This poses a risk of injury to the children as the cable was within reach of the children in that room.

Infection Control:

Some practices observed were at variance with the infection control policies and associated procedures in place in the service and posed a risk of cross contamination as follows:

2. Children in pre wobbler room did not have their hands washed before eating their snack, this poses a risk to children's health from the possible spread of infection.
3. There was no system in place for managing mouthed toys in the pre-wobbler rooms. Children were observed repeatedly mouthing toys in view of staff members which were not removed and cleaned when the child finished. The toys remained in circulation and were subsequently mouthed by other children, posing a risk of cross contamination.
4. Some staff members did not handwash following nappy changes.
5. An unlidded bin was in use in the pre-wobbler room for disposal of waste including used nasal tissues.

Administration of Medication:

6. Some of the records available for the administration of prescribed medications to children were incomplete and did not contain the required details to ensure safe administration to a child as follows.
 - Some of the records reviewed did not detail the name of the of the staff member who administered the medication.

- Some of the records reviewed did not contain evidence that a second adult was present to witness the medications being administered to a child.

These practices were at variance with the medication administration policy in place in the service and posed a risk of harm to a child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

General Safety:

1. The electrical cable has been fixed to the wall. The other electrical item was removed as it was difficult to fix to the wall. Spot checks will also take place to ensure the night light is on low level

Infection Control:

2. During the staff meeting we discussed the importance of handwashing before meals and the associated risk of infection. Spot checks are taking place regularly.
3. A labelled basin with Milton and warm water is kept in the room, as soon as a child drops a mouthing toy it is put straight into the Milton. Spot checks are taken place regularly to ensure mouthed toys are placed in the allocated Milton basin with warm water.
4. During a staff meeting the importance of the Handwashing policy and procedure was explained to staff, along with the risks of infection, staff believe handwashing always takes place after nappy changes. Spot checks are conducted regularly to ensure handwashing takes place after each nappy change, staff have assured management that handwashing is always conducted after nappy changes.
5. Correct waste disposal was discussed during the meeting with staff. The unlidded bin was immediately removed from the room and replaced with a lidded pedal bin.

Administration of Medication:

6. During the staff meeting we discussed the importance of completing the administration of medication form. Staff were retrained in completing the administration of medication record form, spot checks are now in place to prevent this from happening again.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

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 and deputy manager of the service held in date First aid response (FAR) training. The registered provider demonstrated that a person with FAR training was scheduled to be present and available to the children attending the service at all times when the service is in operation.
- (2) (a) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and easily accessible to the staff in conspicuous locations within the service.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the adults and the children in the service at all times.

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) A written record was maintained of the monthly fire drills carried out in the service. The last fire drill carried out was documented on 5/11/2024.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The maintenance records for the firefighting equipment were dated 05/06/2024, and for the smoke alarms was the 15/04/2024.
- (4) The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service is insured or the type of service provision.