

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY401				
Name of Service:	Whitefriars Childcare Ltd				
Address of Service:	Newmarket Hall, St Lukes Avenue, Cork St., Dublin 8				
Eircode:	D08 W9WF				
Name of Registered Provider:	Donna Farrell				
Service type:	Full Day				
Date of Inspection:	28/01/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>26</td> <td>PM</td> <td>22</td> </tr> </table>	AM	26	PM	22
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	<p>Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K</p>
Inspection undertaken by:	T Nelson and L Webster
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

Description of service

Whitefriars Childcare Ltd. is a full day care service located in an urban area of Dublin city and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 40 children aged 2 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm. The service is one of two services operated locally by the registered provider.

The service is located in a two-storey commercial building on Cork Street in Dublin 8 and comprises of two care rooms, a kitchen, an office and sanitary facilities. The Toddler Room caters for children from 2 to 3 years old and the Pre-school room upstairs facilitates the care of children from 3 to 6 years old.

The service does not have an outdoor play space but there is a public outdoor space off site available to them.

Staffing

There are currently seven staff employed by the service; the deputy person in charge, a cook and five childcare staff who work directly with the children. The person in charge who manages the oversight of the two services arrived at the service during the inspection and was available to provide cover across the rooms.

The registered provider does not work in the service.

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, safety and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9(1)(2)(3)(4) Management and Recruitment
- Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing Levels
- Regulation 16(1) Records in relation to the Preschool Service
- Regulation 19(1)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of child
- Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Child

However, on inspection additional non-compliances were identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following:

- (a) Regulation 16(1)(h)(i)(j)(k) – Records in relation to Preschool Service.

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

(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 named person to deputise as required.

- (b) Discussion with the deputy person in charge and a review of the roster showed that the deputy person in charge was present during the opening hours of the service.

(2) A review of the roster and discussion with the person in charge established seven staff work in the service and these seven files were reviewed. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) Eleven validated written references were available from recent past employers.

- (b) Two validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff members employed. 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 three adults had lived outside of the state of Ireland for six months or more as adults and international police vetting from that state was available for inspection.
- (4) The six 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 Affairs.

Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure the following:

- (2) (a)(b) One staff member had only one reference available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A second reference was received and both references were validated. The service will ensure that all staff will have two references available.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of validated references.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(2) has been adequately addressed.

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

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service. Seven staff including the person in charge were available to the 26 children on the morning of the inspection.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection with a breakdown as follows:
 - Toddler room - 3 adults to 13 children aged between 2 to 3 years old.
 - Toddler 2 room - 2 adults to 13 children aged between 3 to 6 years old.

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 was kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) Details of the name, position, qualifications, and experience of the staff were maintained in the staff files.
- (b) The service Tusla certificate was displayed within the service and detailed the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services.
- (c) (d) (e) The statement of purpose and function in the service policy book outlined the adult: child ratios, the type of care or programme provided and the facilities available within the service.
- (f) The opening hours and fees of the service were displayed on the noticeboard in the entrance hall of the service.
- (g) The service had 20 of the 21 policies, procedures and statements required under Schedule 5.
- (h) Attendance records detailing the arrival and departure of the children on a daily basis were maintained.
- (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster.

- (j) Following a review of a sample of 10 records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for the administration of medication.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure the following:

- (g) The following policy required under Regulation 10, detailed in Schedule 5 was not available:
- Policy on the use of the internet and photographic and recording devices.
- (k) Following a review of a sample of 10 records, the registered provider did not ensure a full record in writing was maintained for accident and incidents. The documentation in use did not allow for the recording of the date for the parents acknowledging they had been informed of any accident or incident.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (g) A new policy on Use of internet and photographic/ recording devices was drawn up and shared with all staff members who confirmed they read and understood the policy. The service will ensure that all policies are up to date.
- (k) The service has drawn an up-to-date accident/ incident form to include space for parents to date the page acknowledging they had been informed of any accident or incidents. The service will ensure that all paperwork has space for dates for parent, staff and managers to fill.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (g) Copy of policy. Staff sign off confirming they reviewed the policy.
- (k) Evidence of updated accident and incident sheet.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 16(1) have been adequately addressed.

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

The following appropriate and suitable care practices were observed:

- Practices such as mealtimes, nappy changing and toileting were observed to be timely and pleasant experiences for the children. Documentary evidence showed meals provided were regular and varied, with alternative meals available for those with alternative diets or food preferences. Children from both care rooms ate their dinner together, which facilitated a sociable occasion for the children.
- Children's drinks were freely accessible to the children throughout the day.
- The staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner for example a child who was upset was tended to immediately. Appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication such as low tones, eye level contact, touch and other strategies were observed. These strategies can facilitate emotional and social development in young children.
- A daily routine was available and reflected in practice. Routine provides for comfort and predictability.
- Children were observed to move freely throughout their care room, independently choosing their play experience.
- Transitions were observed to be planned for in advance which resulted in a smooth pleasant experience for the children. For example, the room was prepared for sleep while the children had dinner and a child who was new to the service was supported with a phased settling in period. A staff member was observed to engage with this child in their first language to facilitate the child's comfort during this transition.
- Engagement with families and parents was facilitated via a record of the child's food, nappy's, sleep and other information on the child's day which is sent home with the child every day. Parents can also speak with staff at drop off and collection time.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (b) The children did not have access to outdoor play on the day of the inspection. A review of documentation on outings to the outdoor play area for the Toddler room showed the children in that room had access to

outdoor play on only three occasions in January, no occasions in December and five occasions in November. Appropriate care practice should include daily access to outdoor play. This was identified as a non-compliance on the previous inspection held on the 22 June 2022 and actions put in place failed to prevent a recurrence.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service ensure that all children have had more access to the outdoors by including it in our daily activities. The service commits to continue to ensure children have access to the outdoors each day.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of recent outings to outdoor play area.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 19 has been addressed and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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 service ensured there was adequate and suitable furniture and equipment available, for example:

- The furniture and equipment in the rooms was observed to be adequate for the number of children in the rooms, it was appropriate for the age range and stage of development of the children in the rooms, and was well maintained, durable and easy to clean.
- The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving, visible to the children, and were grouped in themed areas of interest. Labelling and imagery were used effectively to indicate where things belong.
- Interest areas were well resourced with a variety of play materials and equipment available to the children according to their age and stage of development, to include: arts and crafts materials, home areas with associated props; range of jigsaws; range of construction toys; sorting and stacking toys; range of toys for transporting such as cars and trains with tracks, small world play toys.
- Images of the children and their families were displayed throughout the rooms, and children had labelled coat hooks for their belongings.

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 service had the following measures in place to safeguard children:

General Safety:

- Entry to the service was secured when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and was observed to be secured throughout the inspection.
- The kitchen was inaccessible throughout the inspection.
- Blind cords were secured, and radiators were covered.
- Children's fruit including grapes were observed to be cut into appropriate bite size pieces.

Infection Control:

- Nappy changing practice was observed to support effective infection control. For example:
 - Appropriate protective equipment such as disposable gloves and apron were used for nappy changing.
 - Handwashing was completed after the nappy change for both the staff member and the child.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and single use hand towels were available at all wash hand basins used by the children and the staff members.
- Appropriate waste disposal bins were in use throughout the premises.

Safe Sleep:

- A log was maintained where the temperature of the room and the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children was checked every 10 minutes.
- Children were placed to sleep on appropriate low beds, which were placed with sufficient space between them.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The following posed potential trip risks for the children:
 - Yellow fencing stored by the bottom of the staircase was unstable.
 - Cord wrapped around the legs of the sand tray in both care rooms was trailing on the floor.
2. The storage press located of the Toddler toilet area was open and accessible to children. The items stored inside were not secured and could potentially fall on and injure a child.
3. The shelf in the Pre-school room was unstable and could potentially fall on and injure a child.
4. The fencing restricting children access to the window area in the Pre-school room was broken and posed a potential pinch hazard.

Administration of Medication:

The administration of medication was not sufficient to support effective safe practice and posed a potential risk to children:

5. There was no care plan available for a child who required a specific type of medication detailing the practice around when and how to administer the medication.
6. A child's emergency medication was observed to be stored in the child's bag, which was accessible to the children. The medication was not labelled with the child's name.
7. A staff member reported that they had administered a specific medication to a child on occasions in the previous week. There was no record of the administration of that medication documented in the child's file.

These practices were not in line with the service policy on the administration of medication.

Fire Safety:

8. The details of the attendance of the children in the two rooms were not accurately recorded in the attendance book. Contemporaneous accurate attendance logs must be maintained to support the safe evacuation of children in an emergency.

Outing:

9. Outings to the outdoor play area, which is a public park which is not directly adjacent to the service were not in line with safe practice or the service policy on outings. The following practices were observed:
 - There was no evidence that a risk assessment was used for every outing detailing the potential hazards.

- There was no evidence that a checklist was used outlining the requirements for the outing such as a first aid box, any emergency medication required by children, contact details for the parents, or that there was a person trained to First Aid Response level on the outing.

Appropriate safeguarding measures must be in place when children leave the premises.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The yellow fence has been moved and is now stored in the under stairs press. The cord has been removed from both trays.
2. The service will ensure that the press is always locked after use and key is put away so that a child would access it.
3. The shelf has been fixed. The fencing was fixed.

Preventive action:

A daily risk assessment was development considering the risks outlined in points 1 to 4.

Administration of Medication:

4. A care plan has been drawn up for the child in consultation with parents. The service will ensure any child that has medication has a care plan that we can use to support it.
5. The medication is now stored, clearly labelled in an accessible place, out of reach of children. The service will ensure medication is inaccessible to children.
6. Staff were reminded off the policy on administration of medication to know when and what to do after giving medication. The service will ensure that staff know about the policy and refresh this every few months

Fire Safety:

7. Staff were reminded of the importance of updating children's attendance accurately. The service will ensure staff are reminded of the importance of this.

Outing:

8. The service has developed a risk assessment which includes a checklist for first aid kits, and emergency contacts to use on outings. The service ensure they will use the risk assessment for all outings.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence and risk assessment was submitted for points 1 to 4.

Administration of Medication:

5. Evidence of care plan
6. Photographic evidence.
7. Copy of policy. Staff sign off confirming they reviewed the policy.

Fire Safety:

8. No evidence submitted.

Outing:

9. Risk assessment.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) The registered provider did not ensure the premises was maintained and repaired as required. The following was observed:

1. The following sinks required maintenance:
 - The tap on the sink used by children in the sanitary accommodation off the Toddler room was loose and moving about when in use.
 - The two sinks in the sanitary accommodation off the Pre-school rooms were not fixed securely to the wall.
2. The toilet roll dispenser in one of the cubicles in both the Toddler and in the Preschool sanitary accommodation were broken.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Corrective actions:

1. All sinks and taps have been fixed and secured. Checking bathrooms has been added to the daily risk assessment of the service.
2. Toilet roll dispensers have been fixed and are in good working order. Checking bathrooms has been added to the daily risk assessment of the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographic evidence. Copy of risk assessment.
2. Photographic evidence. Copy of risk assessment.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has reviewed the corrective and preventative actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 have been addressed and will be reviewed on the next inspection.