

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY404			
Name of Service:	Little Tots Creche & Montessori			
Address of Service:	Lansdowne Valley, Drimnagh Road, Dublin 12, Co. Dublin			
Eircode:	D12 WT7K			
Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Cleary , Lorraine Dunne			
Service type:	Full Day			
Date of Inspection:	29/05/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	20
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co Wicklow.			
Inspection undertaken by:	Sarah Quigley			
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	N/A			

Description of service

Little Tots Creche and Montessori is a privately owned service located in an urban area of Drimnagh, Dublin 12. Full day, part-time and sessional care are provided to children aged six months to six years and an Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme is offered. The service opens from 07:30 to 18:00 each weekday and operates from a single storey, purposely adapted premises on the ground floor of a residential housing complex. Care and education are provided across three rooms and a designated sleep room is available. An outdoor play area is located adjacent to the property with a blend of artificial and natural grass surfacing.

Staffing

The service currently employs eight staff members including the two registered providers and a cook. On the day of inspection, five staff members were present and working directly with the children. One of the registered providers arrived subsequent to the inspector's arrival to facilitate 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/information and records/ health, welfare and development of child/ and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation(s) within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9(2)(3)(4). As a result, the scope of the inspection included a review of documentation for staff members who had been employed in the service following the last date of inspection on the 31st August 2022. A sampling process was also used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1).

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, 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.

(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

(2)(3)(4)

The requirements for Regulation 9(2)(3)(4) were met during the last inspection of the service on the 31st August 2022 in respect of the adults currently employed. Therefore, Regulation 9(2)(3)(4) were not assessed during this inspection as no new adults had commenced employment in the service since the last date of inspection.

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)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.

(2)

The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were twenty-one children present in the service being supervised by five adults during the inspection.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Non-Compliance Information

(1) Of the 12 records reviewed, 8 did not contain all of the required information as set out under regulation 15(1) as follows:

- (b) Five of the records did not detail the date on which the child first attended the service.
- (e) One of the records reviewed did not detail authorisation for collection of the child.
- (f) Two of the records did not detail any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention.
- (g) Three of the records did not detail the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner.
- (h) Four of the records did not details a record of immunisations, if any, received by the child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All of the records that did not have the required information were sought out and returned to the parents to be filled in as required. All records were returned to the service with the information updated as requested. On starting new children into the service, parents will be asked to take a couple of minutes with the provider/s into the office and make sure all information is filled in fully.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive action submitted by the registered provider if implemented will address the non-compliance. The actions outlined will be addressed 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

The inspectors observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

The service provided breakfast, snacks, a hot meal, and an afternoon tea to the children. Bibs were worn in the younger care rooms to protect the children's clothes from becoming soiled or wet when eating. Drinking water was available in the care rooms at all times. All children were supported to eat independently during meals, and staff assisted children where required. Staff sat with children and engaged in conversations during mealtimes creating a sociable, relaxed atmosphere.

The play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led. Children were content in their environments and happy at play alone and in groups as desired. The children were all provided with the opportunity to play outdoors during the inspection. Older children were observed using the toilet independently and younger children wearing nappies were changed regularly and when required. Staff demonstrated kindness and affection during all interactions observed by the inspectors and comfort was provided promptly if a child became upset. Staff supported the children to wash their hands and clean their faces at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

Children were provided with an opportunity to sleep after their lunch on low level beds and cots within the Baby room and the dedicated sleep room. Staff provided comfort to the children when they were settling them to sleep, using soft tones and offering reassurance where required. Rest areas were available for children to relax or take time away from the group if required.

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 inspector 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 children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door into the community centre was adequately secured. The door into the pre-school was appropriately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor and outdoor play environments were safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal-operated, lidded bins throughout the service. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including after play, after toileting, and before snack. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff were observed to carry out consistent hand washing as appropriate. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy.

Safe Sleep:

Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance and placed babies on their backs to sleep. Sleep logs were maintained in the dedicated sleep room and individual children's observations recorded room temperature, breathing, colour and position every ten minutes. Standard cots were provided for children under two years to sleep and low-level beds were provided for children over two years to rest as required. The temperature of the sleep room was maintained between 16 - 20°Celsius as required.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

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 available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service.
 - (b) There was record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced and that maintenance of the fire detection and alarm system had taken place as required.
- (4)
- The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations within the service.

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, and*

Non-Compliance Information

The children's sanitary area was not appropriately maintained and repaired as follows:

1. The flooring of the had become unstuck and was protruding from the wall in places exposing the unfinished surfacing beneath which could not be effectively cleaned.
2. The linoleum flooring was not appropriately fitted in parts exposing areas of concrete underneath and creating crevices where accumulations of dirt. Dust, and debris were present.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A new flooring /linoleum flooring is to be fitted before September. The current flooring is quite old so has come away from the skirting area of the cubicle in the bathroom. A new properly fitted flooring will prevent this happening again and we will also add this to our risk assessment for the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

As the corrective action has not yet been implemented by the registered provider the non-compliance remains outstanding. The regulatory requirement has not been met.