

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY407		
Name of Service:	Precious Children Childcare		
Address of Service:	37 Ravensdale Park, Kimmage, Kimmage, Dublin 12, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D12 FE4F		
Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Cummins		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	10/05/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM 12
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.		
Inspection undertaken by:	Sarah Quigley & Fiona Carty		
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

Precious Children Childcare is a privately owned service which offers care and education on a part-time basis to children aged 2 to 6 years. The programme of care is facilitated through a play-based curriculum and an Early Childhood Care and Education scheme is offered. The service operates a morning and an afternoon session from 09:00am to 13:55pm and from 14:00pm to 17:45pm each weekday. Precious Children Childcare is located in a residential, urban area in Kimmage, South County Dublin. The service operates from the ground floor of a purposely adapted commercial premises and comprises of three care rooms. An outdoor play area is also provided to the rear of the premises with artificial grass surfacing.

Staffing

The service currently employs 4 staff members, including the registered provider who works directly in the service. Two adults are also employed in an administrative role between the two centres operated by the registered provider. On the 10th May 2023, 4 staff were present when the inspectors arrived, 3 of whom were working directly with the children. The registered provider 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, 16, 19, 23, and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 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 1st June 2022. A sampling process was also used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1), and regulation 16(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) A sample of documentation was reviewed in respect of one adult who had commenced working in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected. The following records were available for the adult:

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure from The National Vetting Bureau for the adult.

(d) Not applicable as the adult had not lived outside the state.

(4) Not applicable, the adult did not require a qualification as they did not work directly with the children in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(a)(b) There was no second reference available for the adult. Although one reference was available for the adult from a past employer, there was no evidence available to show that the registered provider had appropriately validated it.

(3) A review of documentation evidenced the registered provider had not taken the required steps to ensure that the new recruit was suitable and competent before allowing them access to children as follows:

- A Garda vetting disclosure for the adult had been obtained after they had commenced working with the children in the service.
- There was no second reference available for the adult, and the one reference available had not been appropriately validated as detailed above under 2(a)(b).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider provided the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service addressed the staff member's reference, got it checked again and will do a double check on all the references from now on by two staff members. The service will follow the policies and procedures which were updated in the staff meeting. The service decided that with all new recruits a double check will be done on all the references from now on by two staff members and document it properly.

Supporting documentation submitted

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

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were not working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection as the minimum ratio of adults to children was not maintained at all times as outlined below.

(2) The registered provider did not ensure that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service at all times as required. An insufficient number of adults were available to the children attending on a part-time care basis in the ECCE room on the morning of inspection as outlined below;

- One staff member was observed caring for 12 children aged 3 years and over who were attending on a part-time and sessional basis from 9:20 am until 10am. Two staff were required for this group of children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider provided the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service try to maintain the ratio but there are some staffing issues which the service are working on, there are recruitment processes going on, we have put the staff job advertisements on online recruitment advertisement websites. A staff member was absent on the day of inspection, and one was late, there are enough staff employed. The service will strive to maintain ratios.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

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

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of documentation was reviewed by the inspector to assess compliance relating to the records of preschool children maintained in the service. The sample of documentation reviewed evidenced that a record was kept in writing in respect of pre-school children attending the service detailing the information outlined under Regulation 15(1)(a)-(i).

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) A record of the hours and days which staff members worked was available in the service.
 - (j) There were no written records of the administration of medication available in the service as no medication had been administered to a child. Appropriate documentation was available to record the administration of medication to children if required which was in line with the service policy.
 - (k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed documented necessary details.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Attendance records reviewed during the inspection were not reflective of the children present in the service. Six children in attendance who arrived in the service at 9:20am were not signed in until 11:40 when prompted by the inspector.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider provided the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service addressed this in a staff meeting and staff members will record the arrival and departure of each child in a timely manner moving forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation was submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider if implemented will address the non-compliance. The actions outlined will be accessed on the next inspection of the service. The regulatory requirement has been met.

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.

Drinking water was available in the care rooms at all times. Staff supported the children to wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the inspection. Children were observed using the toilet independently as required, and promptly changed children's nappies when required. Staff demonstrated kindness during interactions observed by the inspectors and made time for personal one on one conversations with children. The routine and play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led and children were observed to be content in their play throughout the inspection.

Staff alerted children in advance of transitions which ensued smoothly to new activities such as tidy up time, snack time, and circle time. This provided the children with adequate time to finish what they were doing and prepare for the next activity.

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 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 children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door into the service was effectively secured to ensure the safety of the children within, 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 in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor 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 using the toilet, after nappy changing, and before lunch. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspectors and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if 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 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service was appropriately insured for the type of service provision and the number of children enrolled in 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

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) The registered provider did not ensure that the premises of the service were cleaned, maintained and repaired as follows;
- There was evidence of damp, discolouration, and mould spores on part of the ceiling and wall of the children's sanitary area. This non-compliance was identified on a previous inspection of the service on the 20th May 2021 where a leak was present in this area.
 - There was evidence of damp and discolouration on parts of the ceiling tiles in the ECCE and Toddler room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider provided the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

Ceiling tiles have been replaced and the walls have been cleaned and mould treated and removed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider if implemented will address the non-compliance. The actions outlined will be accessed on the next inspection of the service. The regulatory requirement has been met.