

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL008
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Name of Service:	Anchor Childcare Centre CLG
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Address of Service:	Racecourse Shopping Centre, Grange Rd, Baldoyle, Dublin 13, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D13 T9VO
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jean Melia
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	17/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	37	PM	23
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airsíde Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. McDonnell
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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

Anchor Childcare Centre CLG is located in Dublin. A registered full day care, part -time and sessional service is provided for children aged between 6 months to 6 years old. The service currently provides care for children over 1 year old. The service operates from 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). A registered School Age service is also in operation at Anchor Childcare Centre CLG.

Anchor Childcare Centre CLG is located in a converted first floor premises of a shopping complex. There are four care rooms currently in operation which include a Waddler Room, Playschool Room, Sessional and Afterschool Room and a Sessional Room. The Nursery Room has been closed since 2021. There is an outdoor area available onsite.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service on a daily basis in a supernumerary capacity. There are 15 staff members employed in the service. The 15 staff members include a designated person in charge who works in a supernumerary capacity; two designated deputy persons in charge and an onsite cook. Since the last inspection in April 2022 one new staff member and a student have been employed.

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/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 – 9 (1)(a)(b)(c),9 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), 9(3), 9(4), 9(6), 9(7), 11,15,20,21 and 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 9 - management and recruitment, 9 (1)(a)(b)(c),9 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), 9(3), 9(4), 9(6), 9(7) Regulation 15 – Record of a Preschool Child, Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play, Regulation 21 – Facilities and Equipment, and Regulation 29 – Premises. Regulation 11- staffing levels was assessed in all care rooms that were in operation on the day of inspection.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.

(6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who-

- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and

(b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date.

(6A) is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

(1) (a) On the inspector’s unannounced arrival the person in charge of the service was available.

(b) A roster was available to demonstrate that the person in charge or designated deputy person in charge was available on the premises at all times.

(c) There was a clearly defined management structure in the service. A management structure was in place and displayed within the service on the main notice board which was visible to parents and visitors.

The inspector reviewed the two new staff members files (which included the student) who had commenced in the service since the last inspection of 20 April 2022. All staff members files were reviewed for Garda Vetting.

(2)(a) Of the 4 references required the registered provider had 2 written and validated references required from a past employer.

(b) Of the 4 references required the registered provider had 2 written and validated references required from a source other than a previous employer.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 2 new staff members in the service. A renewed Garda vetting disclosure, completed in 2023 was available for the registered provider and all 13 other staff members. Previous Garda Vetting was also available. The updated Garda Vetting was in line with the service's updated recruitment and selection policy.

(d) On the inspector's review of the files there was documentation to show that the two new staff members did not require international police vetting.

(3) The inspector reviewed documentation which demonstrated that staff members' references had been obtained and validated and Garda vetting had been obtained prior to staff being employed in the service.

(4) There was evidence that the new staff member who worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education above Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6) No staff member was employed under the access and inclusion model.

(7) Staff members discussed how they were supported in their development with scheduled training throughout the year. The person in charge had documented training analysis in place to update staff members training in a timely manner. Staff discussed how staff meetings were held on a regular basis and supported the development of planning and children's development and welfare.

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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of staff working with the children at all times.

(2) The following ratios were observed on the day of inspection.

- Waddler Room – there was 1 adult working directly with 5 children aged 1-2 years old.
- Playschool Room – there were 2 adults working directly with 7 children aged 2-3 years old.
- Sessional Room – there were 2 adults working directly with 13 children, attending on a sessional basis aged 3-4 years old.
- Montessori Room – there was 2 adults working directly with 12 children aged 3-4 years old.

There were further staff available to support break cover, nappy changing and assistance during sleep.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) (a)-(i) The inspector reviewed a random sample of 10 files of the 37 children who were attending on the day of the inspection from all of the rooms. The files reviewed contained all information as required.

(3) (c) The inspector was able to review the files in the service on the day of inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(2) A registered provider-

(a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, or

(b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016,

shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

(b) Where no such space is provided, the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis to a suitable outdoor space.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The inspector observed that there was a difference in the layout of the rooms to support the stage of development of the children. For example, in the Waddler room all materials and equipment were based at a low level for the children to access. There were interest areas to support restful play and more active play for the children, for example there was a clearly defined cosy area separate from a home area. The Playschool, Montessori and Sessional rooms had more defined areas to enable self-directed play. These included home and dress up areas. There was also room for large group work and free play activities in the rooms. There were adult chairs to support staff members in sitting and interacting with the children. Whilst not used on the day of inspection there was also a large open area available indoors for children's play.

(b) A rest area, which contained small soft couches alongside a reading area, was available in each room. These were freely accessible throughout the day for the children. The service had a dedicated cot room, with 6 cots, used by the Waddler Room. Sleep mats were available for children over 2 years old.

(3) An outdoor play area was provided to the side of the property. The area was sectioned into two main areas with one area being partially covered.

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

- Appropriate equipment was readily available to the children in the rooms and suited the age and stage of development. Within each room there was access to water and sand tables. Low tables and chairs were available in the Waddler room for children’s play and eating. In the other rooms larger tables and chairs of appropriate size were available. Adult size chairs were also available and staff were observed to sit with children during play and whilst they ate.
- There was a range of wooden materials available to the children and battery operated toys were observed in working condition on the day of inspection. A range of books were available in the room and they were in good condition.
- The service had a range of equipment for each room for outdoor play. This included playhouses, slides, tunnels ride on cars and trikes. Basketball hoops and goal posts were available with balls. The children also had access to a large indoor play area.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(b) The entrance to the service was adequately secured. A keypad and call system was in place on the main entrance. Between the care rooms and main entrance hall an internal fingerprint system was in place for parents and staff to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access to the service.

(d) The care rooms were in a clean condition on the day of inspection. A cleaning schedule was available to ensure regular cleaning of the rooms. The inspector observed a housekeeper cleaning the communal areas and sanitary facilities.

(e) There were 6 children's toilets, a nappy changing unit and 6 handwash basins available in the toilet area. A separate changing area contained a nappy changing unit and a handwash basin. Two toilets and handwash basins were available, in a designated staff area, for the staff members. Warm water not exceeding 43°C, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided in the sanitary facilities and care room. Pedal bins were provided for the disposal of nappies.

Non-Compliance Information

(c) An ambient temperature was not maintained between 16 and 20°C while children slept in the Waddler room. At 12.40pm whilst 5 children slept in the cot room the temperature was 22.0°C. At this time 5 children aged 2-3 slept in the Waddler room and the temperature was 22.2 °C. The staff members took actions, such as opening a door and putting on an air cooler to reduce the temperature. This did not sufficiently reduce the temperature to the required range of 16-20°C when rechecked at 13.05pm.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

29(c) The registered provider stated that they have placed a portable fan in the Waddler Sleep room and a portable air conditioning unit in the waddler room. As their preventive action they stated reflective film has been placed on the windows in the waddler sleep room to prevent the sun heating the room.

Blinds in place on the windows in the waddler sleep room will be pulled down at least one hour before sleep time to prevent the sun warming the room.

Thermometers are turned on when opening each morning. Temperature is recorded before the children use the sleep room and if the temperature is not between 16-20 degrees staff will activate the fan and the air conditioning unit to bring the temperature to the required level. Where necessary one or both of these machines will remain on for the duration of sleep. Staff have undertaken training in safe sleep practices – Certificates attached.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of reflective film, fans and air cooling units in place.

Staff certificates for safe sleep training

Summary Comment

The actions outlined in the corrective and preventive action plan and evidenced provided have addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection.