

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015FL039

Name of Service: Tigers Childcare

Address of Service: 20 St. Samson's Square, Balgriffin, Dublin 13, Co. Dublin

Eircode: D13 Y542

Name of Registered Provider: Karen Clince

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 29/11/2023

No of pre-school children:	AM	67	PM	52

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Finnegan Hayes & E. Griffin
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

Tigers Childcare is a privately operated full day care service located in a residential area in Dublin 13. The service caters for up to 107 children aged 0-6 years per day in a purpose-built building with eight care rooms, two cot rooms, a kitchen, laundry room, sanitary facilities, a staff room and an office. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The care rooms include:

Room name	Age group
Discoveries 1	6-12 months
Discoveries 2	1-1.5 years
Discoveries 3	1.5-2 years
Explorers 1	1.5- 2 years
Explorers 2	2- 3 years
Explorers 3	2.5-3.5 years
Active cubs	3- 5 years
ECCE room	2-4 years

Sanitary facilities are accessible within each care room. An enclosed outdoor space available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs a total of 25 staff including person in charge, deputy person in charge, 21 childcare staff, a cook and a cleaner. There were 23 staff present on the day of inspection along with an adult from a local preschool support service and two students who were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under;

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels,

Regulation 16(1)(k) Records relating to the preschool service,

Regulation 19(1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of child,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, Welfare and Development of child,

Regulation 27 Supervision.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included Discoveries 3, Explorers 1, Explorers 2 and Active cubs and did not include the other care 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.

Additional Information

The inspection was triggered by information received to the inspectorate on the 17th November 2023.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, 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

(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.

(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) (b) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise when required. The deputy person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced and was present for the duration of the inspection. The person in charge arrived in the service when their shift started.

(c) Discussion with staff and management showed a clear management structure and roles and responsibilities within the service.

(2) Discussion with management and staff and a review of the roster showed that there are currently 25 staff including person in charge, deputy person in charge, 21 childcare staff, a cook and a cleaner with a further 3 adults present in the service on the day of inspection. A review of the staff files showed that 18 of these adults had commenced work in the service since the previous inspection on the 9th May 2023; the files of these staff were reviewed along with garda vetting for all other staff members.

(a)(b) Thirty-six written and verified references were available from a past employer in relation to 18 adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in relation to 28 adults.

(d) Police vetting was available in relation to 13 adults who had lived outside Ireland for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.

(3) Evidence showed that all the checks required under (2) above were completed before the employment start date of 18 adults.

(4) Evidence was available to show that 18 staff members who work directly with the children held 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.

(7)(a)(b)(c) The service has a robust induction, staff training and supervision policies. A sample of the records were reviewed. The following was observed;

- The service manager and deputy manager were observed to attend the rooms frequently throughout the day and offer support to staff as required.
- Induction records which showed that staff were provided with the policies and procedures of the service were reviewed in the staff files.
- Discussion with management and a review of staff supervision records showed that supervision occurs on a quarterly basis and provided an opportunity for open discussion between staff and management. Evidence was available to show that suggestions provided by staff to improve work practices and service quality have been taken onboard by management and implemented.
- Staff meetings are conducted on a quarterly basis and minutes were available for review. Evidence was available to show that additional team meetings are held if/when the need arises.

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 were 67 preschool children being cared for by 20 adults on the morning of inspection. The person in charge, deputy person in charge and two relief staff were available to cover breaks and assist in the care rooms as required.

(2) Ratios were maintained during the inspection. The following was observed:

Room	Age range	No. of children	No. of Adults present	Adults required
Discoveries 1	6-12 months	2	2	1
Discoveries 2	1-1.5 years	5	2	1
Discoveries 3	1.5-2 years	4	2	1
Explorers 1	1.5- 2 years	5	3	1
Explorers 2	2- 3 years	12	2	2
Explorers 3	2.5-3.5 years	8	2	2
Active cubs	3- 5 years	18	5	2
ECCE room	2-4 years	11	2	1

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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(k) The service, maintained documentation detailing accidents, injuries or incidents involving children attending the service. A sample of 16 were reviewed and contained all the necessary information.

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-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

- A warm welcoming atmosphere was evident throughout the service. Staff were observed to greet parents and children as they arrived in the care rooms in the morning and to check in with parents as to how the child was today.
- The service provides breakfast, dinner, and afternoon snack for the children. On the day of inspection dinner was 'tunnels and tents' followed by beans on toast for afternoon. The service supports parental choice, child preferences and dietary requirements with modified dinners available each day. Additional portions of dinner were available and provided to children as required to suit the children's individual appetites.
- Children bring a lunch from home which is eaten in the morning. The service has a healthy eating policy which is communicated to the parents and the lunches observed contained a variety of food such as crackers, yoghurts, and fruit in line with the policy.
- Water was available to the children in the care rooms and outdoor area throughout the day.

- Independence was supported throughout the service for example children in Explorer 1 and Discoveries 3 were supported and allowed time to walk up the steps to the nappy changing unit independently while children in Active cubs were supported to complete self-care tasks and clean up after themselves.
- Nappy changing was done routinely 3 times per day and as needed to ensure the child's comfort.
- Bibs were used for the younger children during meals to help maintain their personal appearance.
- Behaviour management practices were observed to be respectful, age appropriate and in line with the service policy for example staff stated clearly when something was not acceptable behaviour. Staff spoke about using age-appropriate strategies and modelling behaviour.

Physical and Material environment:

- Toys and equipment were organised into clearly defined areas of interest in the care rooms with a variety of supporting equipment available in each area. This variety of equipment allowed the children to engage in a range of spontaneous and imaginative play experiences in line with their interests.
- Evidence of long and medium terms plans were available to support the staff to plan activities in line with the interests of the children and children were observed to engage in a range of activities both child initiated and led activities with a small amount of adult initiated activities in which children were allowed the autonomy to engage in a way that suited them.
- Appropriately sized chairs and tables allowed children to engage comfortably in mealtimes and tabletop activities throughout the day.
- An enclosed outdoor area which provided a range of imaginative and gross motor play experiences was available to the rear of the premises. This contained a range of toys and equipment including two climbing frames with tunnel space beneath, plastic blocks, seesaws, bikes and a mud kitchen with a selection of supporting equipment.

Supporting Relationships:

- Interactions between staff and children were observed to be kind, caring and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children.
- Room leaders were observed to take charge of the room and support staff to complete tasks as required. This ensured the structure of the day was maintained and the needs of the children were met in a timely manner.

- Staff managed and supported transitions in the service safely and effectively for example staff were observed to use verbal cues to provide advance notice to the children when activities were coming to an end. This allowed children to finish their games and mentally prepare for the transition. Staff in the Active cub's room were observed to manage the transition from the garden to their care room on the first floor safely. Staff were positioned at the front, middle and back of the line and staff ensured all children were gathered before moving on. A headcount was observed to be conducted as children entered the care room to ensure all children were present.
- Staff were observed to engage in the children's play experiences throughout the day which provided opportunities to extend the children's learning and promoted positive relationships between staff and children.
- Information is recorded daily about the children and is shared with parents via a software application such as how much the child has eaten, nappy changes and sleep. Staff discussed sharing other information about the child's form on the day, any incidents that arose or activities that the child engaged in or enjoyed.

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 entrance to the service was securely locked on arrival and operated on a buzzer system which prevented unauthorised persons entering the building and prevented children from leaving unsupervised. A second door inside the main door is fitted with a release button for opening. The locking mechanism on these doors are connected which allows only one to be opened at a time. This created a containment space which restricted access and exit ensuring the safety of children.
- An additional door inside the main entrance is fitted with button release to open which is out of reach of the children. This prevented children from leaving the service unsupervised.
- The gate in the outdoor area was secured with button release system.
- Risk assessments which were completed to date were available for review.
- Toys were maintained in good condition throughout the service.

Infection Control:

- Lunches which were brought from home were stored in the fridge in each care room to prevent spoiling of perishable goods contained.
- Cots and sleep mats were positioned a minimum of 50cms apart while children slept to prevent the spread of infection.
- Pedal operated bins were used for disposal of contaminated items in the nappy changing area.
- Soothers were kept in individual labelled containers to prevent cross contamination.
- Nappy changing was observed to be in line with best practice and the service policy.
- Handwashing was observed to be completed regularly in the service such as after nappy changing and before mealtimes.

Administration of Medication:

- Health care plans were available for children who required emergency medication. Staff were knowledgeable of the individual requirements of each child and medication was clearly labelled and easily accessible in the care room of each child.

Safe Sleep:

- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained in rooms where children aged over 1 year old were sleeping. The service has recently had air conditioning installed in all care rooms and cot rooms to ensure appropriate temperatures are maintained.
- Staff were observed to physically check sleeping children and these checks were recorded on a software application.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were observed to be unobstructed.
- Staff were knowledgeable of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Three sofas in the Active cub's room were observed to be fraying at the corners which prevented adequate cleaning. This posed an infection control risk.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The sofas were removed immediately. An order was placed to replace the sofas with a cosy corner. Colleagues were briefed on the importance of monitoring the condition of furniture to include fraying fabric on their daily risk assessment safety checklist under the safety of furniture check. Colleagues were instructed to flag fraying fabric on furniture to their manager so action to replace can be taken immediately.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the Daily Checklist, Equipment order form and photographs were reviewed.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Staff were observed to provide adequate supervision throughout the care rooms and in the outdoor area throughout the day. The following was observed;

- In the outdoor area staff were observed to be spaced around the area and engage in games and play with the children in small groups.
- Staff were aware of children who required additional support and were two staff were observed to prioritise supervision of these children as needed, for example one child appeared to like to open the door to the building. Staff stayed with the child and were observed to pre-empt attempts to open the door and redirect the child away from the area with items of interest.
- Low furniture in the care rooms allowed for supervision primarily by sight and staff were observed to sit with children during play and mealtimes.
- During handwashing and toileting staff were observed to stand at the door to the sanitary area providing adequate supervision and being available if needed but also respecting the privacy of the children.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with.

Compliance Information

- (1)(a)(b)(c) The service had a complaints policy which detailed the steps to be followed in the event of a complaint being made.
- (2)(a)(b) A record of complaints received by the service were reviewed. A sample of two complaints which were received by the service in the last 2 years were reviewed and contained all the information required.
- (3)(a)(b) Written record of complaints were available and provided to the inspector for review.
- (4) The complaints reviewed showed that the service has retained detailed records of complaints received for a period of two years.