

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL208		
Name of Service:	Mary Doyle's Creche		
Address of Service:	6 Upper Carrickhill Road, Portmarnock, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D13 RX20		
Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Doyle		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date(s) of Inspection:	25/06/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM 13
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6.		
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Cully		
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		

Description of service

Mary Doyle's Creche is a privately owned and full day care service, located in Portmarnock County Dublin. The service is registered to accommodate 16 preschool children between the ages 0 – 6 years, Monday to Friday from 8.00am – 6.00pm, closing at 5.30pm on Fridays. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) providing sessional preschool to eligible children. The registered provider operates the service from 3 care rooms adjoined to a private residence. There is also a sleep room, sanitary facilities, and kitchen. A side entrance is designated for access to the service with an enclosed outdoor play space to the rear of the premises. The service is also registered to provide School Age care.

Staffing

The service currently employs 4 staff members including the registered provider who works directly with the children attending the service. One staff member is currently on statutory leave.

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 announced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16,19, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15 Records of a Preschool Child.

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, 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.

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection.

The files for 4 staff including the registered provider were reviewed. The registered provider stated that one staff member is present in the service to further develop language skills and support staff to carry out activities. The file for the person on statutory leave was not reviewed.

(2)(a) &(b) Eight written and appropriately validated references were available.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and 3 staff members whose files were reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had lived outside the Irish state as an adult for more than 6 consecutive months.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the registered provider held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(9)(2)(d) International police vetting available for a second staff who had lived outside the Irish state as an adult for more than 6 consecutive months was not available in English or Irish. It is requirement that documents are available in English/Irish and are translated by a certified translator.

(4) Three staff members in the service did not hold an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent, 2 of which work directly with the children on a daily basis and 1 who, as the register provider stated, is present to develop language skills and support staff with activities.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(d) The required document has since been translated into English.

(4) Two staff members were currently completing their level 5 in childcare during the timeframe that inspection was completed. One member of staff has received her qualification on the 27/07/24. The second staff member is continuing the qualification (her timeframe had some setbacks due to personal and medical reasons) an extension has been obtained from the course provider. The third member of staff was not an employed member of staff

and was always monitored and supervised. Her role was to sing songs and play with the children only while supervised (this was to help further her English language skills). This person no longer attends the service.

Preventive Action

(d) Translation of non-English documents has been added to the list of documents which is required for new staff. Therefore, when a new staff member starts, this list will remind managers to complete this requirement.

(4) As a crèche we continue to follow all required and rules set however it is very difficult for small childcare providers to find suitable qualified staff. It is an ongoing issue and one we struggle with constantly. We are doing everything in our power to ensure all our staff get appropriate qualification which has been done and is currently being addressed. Also, our highest qualified staff member and manager is currently on maternity leave and due to return in September. The volunteer staff member who provides light sensory activities while supervised will no longer be joining the staff, going forward no extra volunteer staff will be used in the crèche if the necessary level 5 qualification is not possessed by the person in question.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of translated police vetting

Copy of 'new employee' file checklist

Copy of provisional statement of results from training provider confirming level 5 award for 1 staff member.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted in response to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9. The non-compliance in relation to Regulation 9(2)(d) has been adequately addressed.

In relation to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(4) an appropriate qualification has now been obtained for 1 member of staff. The registered provider has stated that the unqualified volunteer no longer attends the service. One staff member remains in the process of completing their training, therefore the non-compliance under Regulation 9 (4) in relation to 1 staff member remains outstanding.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) During the period of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school children.

(2) On the day of inspection, the adult to child ratios was correct with 3 adults working with 12 children aged 2 years 3 months to 5 years 4 months.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present in the service at all times. This was confirmed by the staff roster.

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) Twelve children's records were sampled for review. All 12 contained the required information as outlined in Regulation 15 (1)(a) to (h).

(3)(c) The children's records were available and open for review by the inspector as authorised persons.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(i) The 12 children's records sampled did not contain the information required under Regulation 15 (1) (i) "written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency".

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(1)(i) A new form has been sent to all parents and placed in all children's files since the inspection.

Preventive Action

(1)(i) This form has been added to the list of all documents required for all new children starting in the crèche. This list is referred to at the beginning of every child starting in the crèche and now has been adjusted to include a form signed by parents giving permission for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of form with required information included

Copy of child file checklist

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider. The non-compliance under Regulation 15(1)(i) has been adequately addressed.

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:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1)(i) The staff roster contained details of persons present on a daily basis. Staff signed in and out of the service on a mobile application.

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) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service:

Basic needs:

- On the inspector's arrival to the service the children were engaged in play activities with engaging and supportive interactions provided by the staff. The children were observed to move freely in the space choosing materials that they enjoyed and were happy to join tabletop activities provided by the staff.
- Mealtimes were relaxed with children given ample time to eat food at their own pace while chatting together and with staff. Staff provided the children with assistance when needed. All meals are provided by parents of the children attending.
- Children who required sleep were facilitated to do so in the sleep room. The sleep room consisted of 5 standard cots and stackable floor beds were available for children over 24 months.
- Nappy changing took place as required and toilet trained children were provided with discreet supervision and support. The staff were observed to engage with children throughout nappy changing times in a warm manner, talking with them or singing songs together.

Supporting relationships around children:

- There was friendly and warm atmosphere in the service throughout the day. It was evident that the children and staff had developed close relationships as they spoke together about interesting activities, recent events and looked at scrapbooks together. The staff also demonstrated knowledge about the children's families and their siblings who previously attended the service or had just started primary school.
- Parents were provided with welcoming greetings on arrival. The staff spent time updating parents on their children's day and sharing relevant information.

Physical and material environment:

- There was a variety of materials available to the children which were stored on low level shelving supporting children to independently engage in play activities.
- Across the 3 connecting care rooms there were interest areas such as home corner, construction area, tabletop activities, cosy area and reading area. There was ample room in one care room for children to play with larger toys and equipment such as doll prams, large transport toys and garages.
- As the garden is directly accessible from the care room, the staff described that the outdoor play space is typically made available to the children throughout the day, but due to poor weather conditions this could not be facilitated on the day of inspection. The outdoor area was had a grass surface and a range of equipment such as sand/water table, picnic bench, playhouse, seesaw and basketball hoops. Additional outdoor resources were stored in the garden shed.

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 service is accessed through 2 gates to the side of the service, one of which is secured by a coded door lock. Both gates were secure on the day of inspection which prevented the children from exiting unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.

- The water temperature in the wash hand basins did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children in attendance.
- The kitchen was not accessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- The premises, furniture and play materials were in good hygienic condition and a cleaning schedule was on display in the service.
- Thermostatically controlled running warm water, liquid soap and single use paper towels were available at all wash hand basins to support effective hand hygiene procedures in the service.
- The staff were observed to follow the services nappy changing policy. Disposable aprons and gloves were available and in use.
- The children and the staff were observed to wash their hands prior to snack time and following nappy changing and toileting.
- Children's food from home was stored in the refrigerator.

Administration of Medication:

- No children were observed having or requiring medication on the day.

Safe Sleep:

- Five Standard cots were available for sleeping children under the age of 24 months.
- The mattresses provided in the cots were in good condition and covered in waterproof material.
- A digital thermometer was in use to record the sleep room temperature.
- A safe sleep record recording children's position, colour and breathing patterns was available and in use on the day.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

Safe Sleep:

A written, contemporaneous sleep log was not always maintained at 10-minute intervals when children were sleeping. From 11.50am to 12.15pm when the children woke, there was no record of 10-minute sleep checks carried out. It is acknowledged that 10-minute sleep checks had taken place up to this point, but staff must ensure that during busy periods of the daily routine safe sleep checks continue to be carried out at 10-minute intervals.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Safe Sleep:

Corrective Action

All staff have been retrained and attended a meeting being informed of the importance of not only carrying out these checks but to ensure paperwork is completed consistently.

Preventive Action

On a daily basis the manager will complete a rigorous check of the sleep charts at end of day and will do daily spot checks on staff and the sleep charts. Any staff members not complying will get verbal warnings which will be progressed in accordance with our HR policies and procedures.

Supporting documentation submitted

Safe Sleep:

Copy of completed form checked by management.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider. The non-compliance under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

Compliance Information

(1) A daily attendance record was maintained for children who attend full day care, with children signed in and out daily by an employee.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) A separate daily attendance record for children attending ECCE only was not maintained on the day with 3 children who left the premises at 12.15pm not signed out of the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

The staff have been told of the importance of ensuring children are signed out of the creche once they have been collected.

Preventive Action

The manager will carry out regular checks of the attendance records, especially at busy times of the day where children leave and others arrive, to ensure that the records are accurate.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of completed weekly attendance register.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider. The non-compliance under Regulation 24 has been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) A person trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a)&(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available and safely stored on the premises.

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 record was kept of fire drills that had taken place on the premises. The most recent fire drill took place 06/06/24.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Fire extinguishers and the smoke detection system was certified as last serviced 30/06/2023.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was adequately insured with a policy cover in place for 20 children attending the service on a sessional basis with an expiry date of 27/03/2025. There was also adequate insurance in place for a vehicle in use to transport preschool children.