

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL348		
Name of Service:	Clever Clogs Play School		
Address of Service:	9 Kellys Bay Promenade, Skerries, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	K34 EY13		
Name of Registered Provider:	Jane Murphy		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	17/04/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6		
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Coyle		
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

Clever Clogs Playschool is a sessional Early Years service located in Skerries, north Dublin offering early childhood care and education to children aged between 3 and 6 years. The service operates from Monday to Friday between 09:15am to 12:15pm. The state funded early childhood care and education (ECCE) scheme is offered to children of eligible age for 3 hours daily, over 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from 2 rooms in the registered providers private residence including a section of the registered providers kitchen along with a separate room. Sanitary accommodation for children is located off the hallway of the residence. There is an enclosed outdoor play area in the garden that is directly accessed from the care room.

Staffing

The service employs 2 staff members including the registered provider, both staff members work directly with the children attending 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 announced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare, and development of child safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 24, 25 and 26.

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*

(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.

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

The files for both staff members both of whom work directly with the children were reviewed.

(2) (a) & (b) Two validated written references were available for 2 staff members.

Two written references were available for the registered provider.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 2 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as documentary evidence reviewed on inspection indicated that neither the registered provider or staff member had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for longer than 6 months as an adult and therefore did not require international police vetting.

(4) Both staff members who worked directly with children in the service held appropriate childcare qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) The adult to child ratio was correct in the service when the inspector arrived announced and remained so throughout the inspection.

There were 2 adults working directly with 8 children.

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 sampling process was used in relation to the children's records. The 6 sampled registration forms were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

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:

- The staff members were observed to be caring and attentive and were responsive to the children's individual needs and preferences.
- The children brought their own snacks from home including sandwiches, crackers, cheese, yogurts and fruit. The children enjoyed their snack in a relaxed manner chatting amongst each other and to the staff members whilst eating.
- The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to the age and stage of development, including hand washing, toileting and caring for their belongings.

Supporting relationships:

- Relationships between staff and the children were supportive and warm. Staff sat at the child's level while assisting them with activities. Staff praised children for sharing toys and completing work.
- Parents were observed being warmly welcomed on collecting children from the service and the staff members spent time conversing and sharing information in a welcoming and friendly way.

Physical and material environment:

- There was adequate and suitable furniture and play equipment available for the children. Play material included a play kitchen with supportive materials located alongside, a range of transport toys, construction resources, arts and crafts materials in addition to tabletop materials.
- A range of books were available in the cosy reading areas which supported children's language and development.

- An outdoor area was located to the rear of the service. A playhouse in addition to ride on and push along toys were provided for the children to use. Due to the inclement weather on the day of inspection the children did not have the opportunity to access the outdoor play area.

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 door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided to support effective hand hygiene in the sanitary accommodation in the service.
- The premises, play equipment and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

- No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Documentary evidence was available to confirm that fire drills are completed on a monthly basis in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The children did not wash their hands before they ate their morning snack.
2. The paper towel that was available in the sanitary area was not hygienically dispensed and was subject to repeat handling thereby increasing the risk of cross contamination which was inadequate for infection control purposes.

Corrective and Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Manager ensure children wash their hands before lunch or any handling of food going forward.
2. Paper towels are now placed separately into a box and each child is given 2 sheets to dry hands after hand washing.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed and accepted. The regulatory requirement for regulation 23 has been 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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

Compliance Information

(1) An attendance book was in place to record the arrival and departure times for each child attending the service on a daily basis. The attendance book was recorded correctly.

(3)(a) A system was in place to ensure that no person other than the children's parents/guardians, employees or authorised visitors can enter the pre-school. The early years inspector was requested to sign into the service on arrival.

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 including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service as evidenced in the in-date FAR certifications provided for inspection in respect of staff members.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions on the premises, out of the reach of children.

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 of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 19/03/2024.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms both of which were last serviced on the 27/09/2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed on the premises.