

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY080
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Name of Service:	DRA Preschool and Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Doughiska Road, Doughiska, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 AE76
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Name of Registered Provider:	Dan Hurley
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	02/12/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	51	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan and F. Nic Dhonnacha.
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
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Description of service

The service is in an urban area of Galway city known as Doughiska. This preschool service offers the options of an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme and sessional programme from 9 am to 12 pm and 1pm to 4 pm, from Monday to Friday. The preschool caters for children aged between 2 to 6 years of age. There is a total of five designated playrooms in prefabricated buildings, sanitary facilities, kitchen area, storage areas and an office. The children have access to outdoor play in a secured area in a central location in the middle of all the preschool rooms.

Staffing

There is a total of 15 adults employed to work directly with children which included the manager and the registered provider who is not on the premises on a daily basis.

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.

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 manager, 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 had employed a manager who was the named designated person in charge. There was a named person who could deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection. A total of 15 adult files were reviewed which included the registered provider.
- (2)(a) There were 24 written, validated references from past employers available in respect of the adults working in the service.
- (b) There were 6 validated references on file in from a source other than the previous past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 15 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Nine adults had worked outside the jurisdiction, for six months or more, while over the age of 18 years of age, and required police vetting for that jurisdiction. These were available for inspection.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that all 14 adults working directly with children had a major award of a minimum of FETAC level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained, there were 14 adults working in the service with 51 pre-school children.

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:

- The healthy eating policy was available for parents and guardians to view the snacks were appropriate and the food observed on the day.
- The snacks supplied by the parents were healthy and nutritious and consisted of sandwiches, crackers, cheese, fresh fruit pieces, yogurts with milk or water available to children when needed.
- Perishable items were stored in the service fridge belonging to the children.
- Crockery and plates were offered and used during children's snack times and were appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children.
- Children attending the service were toilet trained and toileted independently or with some assistance or support by adults as required.
- Nappy changing was carried out in a timely manner throughout the session.
- The children self-care was assisted and encouraged by adults for e.g., to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting, after using a tissue and after messy play.
- In the playrooms the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couch in designated cosy area and the service also had a sensory room where children could take time out and relax.

- Communication with parents was at drop off and collection, newsletters and by phone or email.
- Children’s behaviour was consistently managed in a positive manner by adults, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement. Children are shown positive strategies to manage their behaviour during the session.
- Children were encouraged to take turns, play in large and small groups.
- There was an outdoor play area in the centre of the premises and a greenhouse area which were sufficiently spacious to accommodate the numbers of children attending the service.
- The play equipment and materials provided in the outdoor area supported a range of physically energetic activities and play experiences.
- All children were observed playing in the outdoor area and children wore appropriate clothing for inclement weather.
- Children were observed playing in the special interest areas, table top activities, circle time, playing with sand, riding the tricycles and dancing to christmas music.
- The themes of the week were ‘Dinosaurs, Winter and Construction’.

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) The service did provide evidence from the roster that a person trained in first aid responder for children was available to the children attending the pre-school service. There was a total of 3 adults with first aid responder.

(2) (a) There were first aid boxes easily accessible and in a conspicuous position in the playrooms in the service.

(b) The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 firefighting 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 monthly fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was the 22/10/2024 and documented monthly fire drills were available.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service dated 27/08/2024.
- The smoke and fire detection alarm system for the premises had the last annual service on the 31/07/2024.
- (4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire 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 service had in date adequate insurance for a 100 preschool children on a sessional basis which is valid to 18/09/2025.