

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY098
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Name of Service:	Galway Steiner Childcare
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Address of Service:	Na Blatha Craige, Clybaun Road, Knocknacarra, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 C5D4
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Name of Registered Provider:	Smaragda Petridi
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	01/12/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	F Kelly.
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

Galway Steiner Childcare was established in 2012. The childcare service provides sessional care to pre-school children aged 2 to 6 years. The Pre-school service operates from 9.30am to 13.00pm, Monday to Friday. The service is located in a residential housing estate on the outskirts of Galway city. The service consists of a 1 playroom, divided into 2 separate areas, children's and staff's sanitary areas. The service has access to an enclosed outdoor play area located to the side of the building.

Staffing

There were 2 adults working in the service, which does not include the registered provider.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 11,19 and 28, however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 9 and 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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

04/12/2023

An Immediate Action Notice was issued under Regulation 9(2)(c), a garda vetting disclosure was not available for one adult working in the service contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

05/11/2023

The service manager responded to say that the adult without vetting disclosures would not work directly with children until vetting is received and a copy of the vetting disclosure will be forwarded to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate when they are issued to the service.

12/12/2023.

A copy of the Garda vetting disclosure was received and accepted by the Early Years Inspectorate .

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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*

(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.

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

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.*
- (b) During the period of inspections, the manager was in charge and there was also a named person who could deputise.*

3 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

- (2) (a,b) There were 2 written and appropriately validated references available from a source other than the previous employer for the adult working in the service.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for 2 adults.
- (d) Police vetting was available for 3 adults working in the service had lived for a period longer than 6 consecutive months outside the jurisdiction.
- (4) All adults working directly with children have obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(c) There was one adult working in the service that did not have garda vetting disclosure on file.
- On the 04/12/2023, an immediate action notice was issued to the service by Early Years Inspectorate for the adult without garda vetting contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Relief staff panel and files will be reviewed annually to ensure sufficient amount of relief staff is available at all times and necessary documents including Garda Vetting is on file before cover is needed

Summary Comment

(2) (c) On 05/12/2023, the service manager responded to the Immediate Action Notice issued and stated that the adult without Garda vetting disclosures would not be working directly with children until vetting was received and a copy of these vetting disclosures will be forwarded to the office of the early years Inspectorate when they are issued to the service.

On the 12/12/2023, the service manager submitted a copy of the outstanding vetting to the Early Years Inspectorate.

The regulatory requirement of this regulation has been achieved.

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) During the period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service. On the day of inspection there were 15 pre-school children, attending the session.

(3) At 10.15 am on the day of inspection, the following care rooms was in operation. The playroom, there were 2 adults working with 15 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

Basic Needs of the Children

- There was a healthy eating policy in place and the parents were informed of this policy at the beginning of the year. The pre-school children attending were observed having a hot meal that was prepared earlier in the session by the staff. There was a weekly, menu on display, with a different hot meal offered each day.

The children were observed sitting around the dining table and having a meal of porridge, stewed apple and spices. There was a big emphasis on sharing and using meal times as an opportunity to talk together and to learn from each other. The children were all offered seconds and a large number of the children opted to eat more. The children assisted in the clean up by scrapping the left over food into a basin and washing up their plates and cups.

- Children were appointed to help with handing out the lunches, the staff filled the hot food and the children distributing the children's lunches to each child.
- Children are independent with their toileting needs and they have unrestricted access to the toilet that is located adjacent to the playroom.
- The children had access to relaxation area which consisted of bean bags, which was in a corner of the room.
- The outdoor play area provides the children with play, movement and exploration opportunities.
- Children have daily access to the outdoor play area, which was conveniently located at the side of the premises. Each child wore outdoor boots and waterproof clothes when playing outside. The children were encouraged to be as independent as possible when they were getting changed out of their gear. Staff were observed encouraging and praising the children and offered assistance when required.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

Water was stored in a portable container with a tap, a number of children were observed washing their hands in the basin of soapy water that had been previously used by other children. This posed a risk of cross infection as the water was not changed between uses.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:
Children are encouraged to wash their hands in the sinks in the bathroom.

Hand washing is now closely monitored, and staff will assist children during their hand-wash routine to prevent infection control

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement of this regulation has been achieved and will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service provided evidence that the preschool service was adequately insured.