

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE091
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Name of Service:	Blossoms Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Johnstownbridge GAA Centre, Johnstownbridge, Enfield, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	A83 HY99
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Name of Registered Provider:	Catherine Tyrell
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date 1 of Inspection:	25 April 2024
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Date 2 of Inspection:	26 April 2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	32	PM	6
Day 2	AM	30	PM	8

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 X38W.
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
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).

Description of service

'Blossoms Pre-School' was established in 2006.

The childcare service provides sessional care and education to pre-school children aged 2 -6 years of age.

The service operates from 9:00 – 12:00 hours and 12:15 – 15:15 hours Monday to Friday.

The premises are a single storey modular wooden building with three care rooms located within the rural, setting of Johnstownbridge GAA centre.

Car parking is available for drop off and collection.

Staffing

There were four adults including the registered provider present on the day 1 of inspection and working directly with the children.

Five adults including the registered provider were present on day 2 of the inspection. The registered provider was supernumerary and not working directly with the children.

All adults hold a major award in Early Childhood Care & Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

- Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4) - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1),(3) – Adult child ratios.

- Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials.
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.
- Regulation 24 – Checking in and out and record of attendance.
- Regulation 25 (1), (2)(a)(b) – First aid.
- Regulation 26 (1)(a)(b), (4) – Fire safety measures.
- Regulation 28 - Insurance

however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under:

- Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances.

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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Additional Information

A written referral was made to the Registration Office on 3 May the service was operating outside of its registration status.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The Registered Provider was operating outside of the registration for the service as evidenced by the following observations:

- There were six children aged 2 years 8 months - 6 years present and remaining in the service until 14:00 hours on day 1 of inspection.
- There were eight children aged 2 years 8 months - 6 years present and remaining in the service until 14:00 hours on day 2 of inspection.

The service is registered to provide sessional care in the morning (9:00 – 12:00 hours) and afternoon (12:15 – 15:15 hours) each day.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) A change in circumstances form has been submitted, detailing the issue around the affidavit for registration. For the purpose of registration an affidavit was submitted. I was not aware that in using this route, my service type was then unchangeable.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) Document relating to documents required for planning including a sworn affidavit as part of the reregistration process.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider have been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is not met for regulation 8.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

Five records were assessed.

- (2)
- (a)(b) Two written and verified references from a past employer or reputable source other than a past employer were available for five adults.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosure was available for five adults, three of which were in the dated within the last three years. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Not applicable, as no adult had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) Five adults employed and working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 5, 6, 8 and 9 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)
- There were thirty-two children attending the service being supervised directly by four adults on day 1 of the inspection.
 - There were thirty children attending the service being supervised directly by four adults on day 2 of the inspection.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The three pre-school rooms were well resourced with a wide variety of age-appropriate play and learning equipment and materials that provided a stimulating and curious learning environment for the children. All equipment and materials were accessible to the children and grouped to encourage children to use them independently. The tables and chairs provided were child sized which enabled all children to sit comfortably for snack and tabletop activities. All equipment and furniture were observed in a clean and well-maintained condition. There was direct access from each pre-school room to a covered outdoor play area for the children to access. The free flow indoor and outdoor play environments enabled the children to choose where they wanted to spend their time.

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 doors to the service were controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school rooms. The registered provider documented the inspectors visit to the service in the visitor's book on arrival.

Written indoor and outdoor environmental risk assessments were completed daily and maintained to ensure a safe play and work environment for the children and staff. Cupboards were observed secured with safety clasps and medication was stored in the office which was inaccessible to the children. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the safe storage of cleaning agents.

The staff members were aware of the foods that may pose a choking risk to a child. They also stated that they would remove any necklace/beads if observed that a child may be wearing on arrival to the service.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels in paper dispensers were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The children's hand washing practices were well established and supervised by the staff members. Foot pedal operated bins were in place for the hygienic disposal of used paper towels. Facilities for nappy changing were available for any child who was not toilet trained. Used nappies were disposed of in the outdoor bin immediately after changing.

Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. Medication was stored safely out of the reach of children. The staff members were aware of the administration of medication policy and the safe practices to follow when administering medication.

A written health care plan was available for a child who required medication to be administered as required for a pre-existing medical condition.

Safe Sleep:

Each pre-school room had a comfortable rest area co-located beside the library area for any child who wished to have a rest or take a break from activities for a while.

Fire Safety:

The staff members were familiar with the fire evacuation procedures from the service. Fire exits were not obstructed. Fire drills were carried out and records maintained.

Outing:

The service does not conduct outings.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for two staff members; however, the vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Fire Safety:

- The servicing of the smoke alarm system was not completed annually.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The GV update was submitted at 12.30 hours (25/04/2024) and completed on 29/04/2024. A front sheet has been added to our staff file with GV renewal date expiry.

Fire Safety:

- The smoke alarm term was carried out on 16/05/24. The company that carries out the servicing has agreed to automatically service smoke alarm in October of each year going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Garda Vetting document.

Fire Safety:

- Smoke alarm service.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider have been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 23.

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.*
- (2) Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.*
- (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*
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the documented attendance records maintained in the pre-school room.
- (2) Not applicable, as this was not a drop-in service.
- (3)(a)(b) The person in charge ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.
- (4) The person in charge confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period of time.

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) Persons were trained in in First Aid Response (FAR) for children and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)

(a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the care room.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available to the children attending the 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 fire drills completed in the service; the last recorded fire drill was on the 15 April 2024
 - (b) A maintenance record was kept of the firefighting and smoke alarm system in the premises. The firefighting equipment was serviced on 2 November 2023 and the smoke alarm system was serviced on 16 May 2022.
 - (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2025. The insurance provided cover for 42 children.