

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE097
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Name of Service:	Chatterboxes Childcare Celbridge Ltd
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Address of Service:	Backweston Lab Campus, Stacumny Lane, Celbridge, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W23 VW2C
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Name of Registered Provider:	William McMickan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	31/07/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM	23
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91 X38W
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern and T. Duignan
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

Chatterboxes Childcare Celbridge Ltd opened in 2005. It is one of two Early Years Service's operated by the registered provider. The service provides full day, part-time and sessional education and care to children aged 0-6 years. It is registered to operate between 7:30am and 6pm and accommodate a maximum of 43 children. The service operates from a purpose-built premises situated within the campus of the State Laboratory close to Celbridge. The children are allocated to one of four rooms according to their age and stage of development. There is a separate sleep room with five cots, and an outdoor area to the side and rear of the service. There is a kitchen, office and staff room on the premises.

Staffing

There are 14 staff members employed to work in the service including the person in charge and the cook. Seven staff members were allocated to work directly with the children on the day of inspection. An eighth staff member and the person in charge were available to provide break cover and assistance as needed.

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 areas of governance/ safety/premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

Regulation 9 (2) & (4) - Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1), (2) & (8) - Staffing levels

Regulation 16 (1) (h), (i), (j), (k) - Information and Records

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 (2) - First Aid

Regulation 29 (c) & (d) - Premises

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

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection, under regulation 23 in relation to the non-compliance identified under regulation 25. A response was received by the inspectorate on 1 August 2024 which mitigated the risk identified.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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

(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

The records of the registered provider and the fourteen staff members employed to work in the service were reviewed.

(2)(a),(b) Thirty written and verified references from a past employer were available in respect of fifteen staff members.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for fifteen adults, twelve of which were 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) Police vetting was in place for four adults who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4) Twelve adults employed to work directly with the children held qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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 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) An adequate number of adults were working with the children. Seven staff members were allocated to work directly with 23 children. An eighth staff member and the person in charge were available to provide break cover and assistance as needed.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement was always maintained.

(8) There were at least two adults on the premises throughout the inspection, this was confirmed on review of the staff roster.

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of required information as outlined:

(h) Details of children's attendance, including their arrival and departure times at the service, were readily available.

(i) A staff roster was available detailing the start and finish times for all staff members.

(j) A sample of ten records documenting medication given to children was reviewed. Each record included appropriate details and was accompanied by signed parental consent.

(k) Records detailing accidents, injuries, and incidents involving children were readily available. A sample of ten records was reviewed. Each record contained appropriate details.

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:

Measures had been taken to safeguard the children. Entrances and exits were secured to prevent unauthorised access or children leaving unsupervised. Equipment was properly maintained, and items that could pose a hazard to children, such as cleaning products and medicines were securely stored out of their reach.

Emergency exits were kept clear to ensure the prompt evacuation of children in case of a fire. Staff demonstrated an understanding of fire safety measures, including the locations of fire extinguishers, fire drill procedures, and the importance of maintaining an up-to-date attendance record for each child for reference during an evacuation.

Infection Control:

Measures were taken to reduce the risk of infection spreading. Children were required to wash their hands after using the toilet, after outdoor play and before meals. The premises and equipment were visibly clean and well-maintained. Bottles, beakers and soothers were individually labelled, and soothers were stored in separate containers to ensure each child used their own personal items. Sterilising equipment was readily available for use as needed.

Waste management practices included the use of pedal-operated lidded bins to ensure proper containment. Individual bed linens were provided, and comprehensive cleaning schedules provided for these to be laundered at least weekly. Staff were aware of guidelines for when children and staff should stay home due to illness, including symptoms such as fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, and contagious conditions.

Administration of Medication:

Medications were stored in their original packaging out of reach of children while remaining readily accessible to staff. Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of procedures to safeguard children when administering medicine. This included obtaining written consent from parents or guardians, having a second staff member

present as a witness during administration, and maintaining detailed records shared with parents or guardians upon collection.

Safe Sleep:

Measures were taken to safeguard children during sleep time. Children slept in cots or on low beds suitable for their age and developmental stage. The cots were maintained in good condition and were equipped with appropriately fitted mattresses. Staff demonstrated knowledge of procedures to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), such as maintaining room temperatures between 16 and 20° Celsius and using appropriate bedding to prevent overheating. They conducted checks on children at 10-minute intervals during sleep periods, which were documented for monitoring purposes.

Outing:

No outings were conducted on the day of inspection. The service had an outings policy which included procedures to safeguard the children on outings. Staff demonstrated an understanding of the procedures including obtaining parent/guardian consent and undertaking a risk assessment prior to the outing.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for all staff members. However, three staff member's vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Infection Control:

2. Infection control procedures for nappy changing were not consistently followed. The inspector observed the following:

- Staff members handled items within the changing area with gloves which had been used to remove soiled nappies.
- Children's hands were not consistently washed with running water after nappy changes. This posed a risk of cross-contamination and the spread of infection within the service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was out of date for three staff. One staff member left during the summer. Garda vetting had been updated and is now available on file. An application has been sent to renew the Garda vetting for the third staff member. It will be put on file when received. Management will have been reminded to check dates on certs and reapply for up-to-date certs when required.

Infection Control:

2. Staff have been spoken to about this and they are reminded regularly about the proper procedures. Since the inspection and subsequent report, management have again reminded staff with regard to proper procedures.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Supporting documents were submitted in keeping with the actions stated.

Infection Control:

2. Supporting documents were submitted in keeping with the actions stated.

Summary Comment

The actions and supporting documents have been reviewed by the inspectorate and deemed to adequately address the non-compliance.

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

- (2)
- (a) The first aid boxes were appropriately equipped, easily accessed, and safely stored in conspicuous positions on the premises.
- (b) The first aid boxes were always available for use on the premises. Staff reported that they bring a first aid box on outings as per the Outings procedure.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There was no adult present on the day of inspection who held a First Aid Responder training certificate. This posed a risk to the safety of the children if first aid was required. An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider under regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child in relation to this non-compliance.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

- (1) First Aid Responder training was undertaken by all staff. All certs are in their files. The management has been reminded to regularly check certs and make sure the appropriate training is undertaken on time.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

(c) The service had adequate natural lighting which was supplemented with artificial lighting as needed. An air conditioning system was operating which maintained the care room temperatures between 18-22°C. Sleep room temperatures were maintained between 16-20°C. An underfloor heating system was available for use in colder weather. The premises was adequately ventilated through use of natural ventilation with mechanical ventilation operating in nappy changing areas.

(d) The premises and equipment were adequately cleaned and maintained with documented cleaning schedules available.