

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK057
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Name of Service:	Marbles Creche
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Address of Service:	7 Marble Crest, Ardnore, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
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Eircode:	R95 P234
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lorna Mc Cormack
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	15/08/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	19
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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

This full day service is located in an urban setting in a housing estate in Kilkenny city. A service is provided to children aged 6 months to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday 08:00 to 18:00 hours. The premises is a detached two storey building with five early years rooms, two sleep rooms, toilets, nappy changing facilities, on site kitchen and a safe, suitable and secure outdoor area to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There were 11 staff employed in the service including the manager who also works directly with the children. All staff working directly with the early years children, held a major award in early childhood care and education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations,

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4)

Regulation 10 Policies and Procedures

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2)

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child (1) (a)(b)

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child

Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b)

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4)

Regulation 28 Insurance

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 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,

(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)(b)

The childcare manager was the designated person in charge and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection. There was a second named staff available to deputise as required.

(2) The files for all 11 staff members were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)

There were 19 written and validated references available on file from past employers.

(b)

There were three written and validated references available on file from reputable sources.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available on file in the service for all staff members.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were available on file for three staff members.

(4)

Certificate of qualifications for 10 staff members working directly with the children was available on file.

Non-Compliance Information

(4)

There was one staff member in the service who did not have evidence that they held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider will ensure all certificates of qualifications are available on file in the service prior to staff commencing employment in the future. The registered provider and staff member are waiting for the college to issue final certificate of qualification. This will be sent to the inspector when received.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the services induction policy was received by the inspector. The policy includes the requirement that all certificates of qualifications are available on file in the service prior to staff commencing work in the service in the future.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response and evidence submitted meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The policies, procedures and statements as specified in Schedule 5 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 were available for inspection. For the purpose of this inspection the following policies were reviewed, and were found adequate and specific to the service:

- Policy on infection control, including hand washing.
- Policy on nappy changing.
- Policy on healthy eating.
- Policy on complaints.
- Policy on supporting positive behaviour.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
There was an adequate number of staff working with the children for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)
During the morning, there were 21 children being directly cared for by 6 staff. During the afternoon, there were 19 children being directly cared for by 5 staff. The childcare manager was also present on the premises, and available to assist across the playrooms as needed during the day.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The manager ensured that each child's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of appropriate activities observed during the inspection including eating together, playing in the outdoor areas, and enjoying planned activities in the early years rooms in the service.

Children were encouraged to be independent, appropriate to their age and stage of development, for example, in the Montessori room children were observed clearing their plates after their dinner and helping the staff to tidy the room. They enjoyed free movement throughout the room.

The staff and children sat together for their morning snack. The staff supervised the children with handwashing, and then they all sat together to eat. The atmosphere was relaxed, with staff and children chatting freely all morning. There was lots of conversation about activities the children had enjoyed over the weekend with their families. The children and staff were observed moving around the room and engaged in different activities and free play during the morning. The children were observed to enjoy free play. One group of children were observed creating a car park "like the one in town".

Staff were observed to be constantly engaged with the children in their care. Children were observed enjoying free play in the outdoor area. Staff were observed playing with the children and engaging them in imaginative games. For example, throwing the ball to each other.

The materials and equipment available included a large range of developmentally appropriate arts and crafts materials and other open-ended materials which were easily accessible to children. There was a range of equipment and materials available in the outdoor area, such as, a long bench for children and staff to sit on, picnic tables, ride on toys, a covered sand pit and an outdoor play kitchen which was resourced with a good selection of utensils.

1(b)

The manager ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place. Nutritious and varied food was offered to children on the day of inspection. Dinner time was observed. Children were seated in comfortable and good quality chairs. Young children were encouraged to feed themselves appropriate to their age and stage of development and were helped when needed.

Children were served a freshly cooked dinner served from the onsite kitchen. The dinner was made from chicken, potatoes, gravy, and peas. The children were also given a desert of yogurt and fresh fruit following their dinner. At 15:00hrs children were served a meal consisting of ham, pasta and sweet corn. There was a 4-week menu available for parents to see in the main hallway in the service. Children had water to drink from their water bottles and cups. Children who asked for extra portions were provided with them. Children were given water to drink throughout the day of the inspection.

Children who wore nappies had them changed regularly throughout the day and at other times when required. Nappy changing was observed by the inspector. Staff were consistent in washing their hands before and after the procedure. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently and were encouraged to wash their hands afterwards. Bibs were put on younger children before eating and their hands and faces were cleaned afterwards.

Sleep routines were reflective of children's individual needs. The staff member in the wobbler room was observed to promptly pick up on cues for sleep given by the children in their care. Safe sleep practices were adhered to. The children's position, colour and breathing were observed and recorded every 10 minutes. There was a system in place where the baby's routine was documented in a mobile phone application which could be accessed by the parents of the children in attendance. The children's individual care needs were documented on the wall of the room. Staff who spoke to the inspector said this measure was to ensure continuity of care for the children attending the service.

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:

Accident and incident record books were reviewed on the day of the inspection. The recording of any minor bumps or falls that occurred was in line with the service policy. Access to the service was gained through the front door by ringing a bell. Staff were required to see the person through the door prior to allowing them access to the service. The openings of the windows were restricted with appropriate restrictive opening devices. The fire doors were not obstructed. The main stairway was well lit. There was a banister in place for the safety of staff and children. The outdoor area was observed to be safe, suitable, and secure. Cleaning products were stored on shelves that were inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

The service was observed to be clean with no obvious maintenance required on the day of inspection. Daily cleaning schedules were on display in all the early years rooms. Staff who spoke to the inspector were clear when describing the cleaning practices in the service. Handwashing procedures observed were consistent. Warm water, liquid soap and disposable hand towels were freely available. Children’s personal hygiene needs were attended to. Staff were observed prompting children to wipe their noses and wash their hands. Tissues were freely available in the rooms.

Safe sleep

The sleeping children’s colour, breathing and position were observed and recorded every 10 minutes as outlined in the services safe sleep policy. Children over two slept on low level beds in the early years rooms in the service. A staff member was observed to stay and supervise the children in the room.

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)
There were staff trained in first aid available to the children attending the service.
- (2)(a)(b)
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the premises and was available for use.

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)

Monthly fire drills were completed in the service. A fire drill was last carried out on 5 July 2023.

(1)(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment was serviced. The last maintenance carried out in the service was recorded as having taken place in December 2022. The smoke alarm was last serviced in June 2023.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was insured to provide full day care for all children present on the day of inspection.