

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK063
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Name of Service:	Nurture and Grow
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Address of Service:	38A Fiodh Mór, Ferrybank, Co. Kilkenny
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Eircode:	X91 K6KN
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Name of Registered Provider:	Laura Aylward
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	15/02/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	17
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City.
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Ryan.
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

Nurture and Grow is a private full day care service in a residential area located in South Kilkenny in the Ferrybank suburb of Waterford city. Opening hours are from 07:30 to 17:45 hours offering flexible full day, part day and sessional places. The age range of children catered for in the service is 1 to 6 years old. The premises is on the ground floor of a detached two-story building and is a purposefully adapted childcare facility that first opened in March 2010. This building has two childcare rooms, a kitchen, sanitary accommodation and a sleep room. Two prefabricated cabins were added on the grounds to the service in 2019 and are registered for a preschool sessional service in the morning and school age care in the afternoons. Outdoor play opportunities are available adjacent to the main building.

Staffing

The registered provider is the owner/manager and employs eight full time childcare staff to work directly with the children in the service daily.

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/ premises and facilities.

The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

Regulation 23 – Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of a child

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, 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 six 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

There were three staff working directly with the children present on the day of inspection and one of these staff was the registered provider.

(1)

(a) The registered provider was the designated person in charge. The service also had a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) At all times during the inspection the registered provider was on the premises.

(2) On review of the staff files, it was evident that two new staff members were employed to work with the children since the last inspection on the 25 May 2022. The following was observed on the new staff members files:

- (a) There were four written validated references from past employers.
- (b) Not applicable as all written references were from past employers.
- (c) There was evidence of completed Garda vetting disclosure certificates from An Garda Síochána on file completed in the last three years in respect of all staff members working directly with the children in the service.
- (d) One new staff member had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months, police vetting had been completed from the necessary jurisdiction.

(4)
There was evidence that all staff employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5, 6 and 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. There was evidence of continuous professional development and qualification certificates on file.

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)
On the day of inspection, the staff: child ratios met the requirement for the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.
- (2)
On the morning of the inspection the staff: child ratios were maintained as follows:
In the wobbler/baby room there were 10 children aged 1 to 2.5 years of age being cared for by 3 staff members.

In cabin 2 there were 10 children aged 2.5 to 3.5 years of age being cared for by 2 staff members.

On the afternoon of the inspection the staff: child ratios were maintained as follows:

In the wobbler /baby room, there were 9 children aged 1 to 2.5 years of age being cared for by 3 staff members.

In cabin 2 there were 8 children aged 2.5 to 3.5 years of age being cared for by 2 staff members.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The registered provider advised that there were daily opportunities to communicate and impart information to parents at drop off times, collection times, by telephone and by media messaging application.

Non-Compliance Information

The service had no parent handbook and there was no evidence to confirm if parents had acquired the following information as required under the regulation 16(1) (a-g)

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor.
- (b) details of the type of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services.
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service.
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service.
- (e) the facilities available.
- (f) the opening hours and fees.
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated in the CAPA response on 21 March 2024 that the new updated handbook was in progress and the completed final version would be available in three weeks after the easter break.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the new updated parent handbook was submitted to the inspectorate on the 9 April 2024.

Summary Comment

All evidence submitted on 9 April 2024 was appropriate to address the non-compliance under Regulation 17. Therefore, the requirements for the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 have been met.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

Compliance Information

1(a)

On the day of the inspection, there were two rooms in use for the care of preschool children. These were the large room called the wobbler/baby room in the main building and in cabin 2 on the grounds of the premises. As it was midterm break the children attending for the Early Childhood Care and Education programme were not in attendance. The wobbler/ baby room was a large rectangular shaped room organized to ensure that there was ample space in the centre of the room. This space was observed to be conducive to children learning to walk and move around with comfort. The children had access to activity sets, sound making and pop-up plastic toys, which were laid out and accessible to the babies on low shelves around the room.

The furniture was age-appropriate including highchairs, toddler chairs, child sized sofas and chairs for staff. Some of the children were observed sitting with the staff on the floor with baskets of play items and small toys. Staff were encouraging children’s engagement with these by chatting and conversing about their chosen play item. The cabin 2 room was arranged with a tabletop area that had low level tables and chairs suitable to the age and stage of development of the children using them. Child accessible shelving was arranged around the walls of the room with displays of fine motor activities, such as, jigsaws, baskets of small animals, crayons, pens, and paper. This supported the children to find and independently access the toys and materials they wanted. A small home area was set up to facilitate imaginative and pretend play. Also opened-ended play resources such as sand and water were available in the outdoor play space directly adjacent to the cabin. The walls of the cabin were suitable to display the recent craft work completed by the children for Valentine’s Day.

1(b)

The sleep room was adjacent to the wobbler/baby room. This room had four standard cots and a supply of stackable beds and storage cupboard space for linen. Both care rooms had cosy alcoves with furniture such as small couches defined by colourful soft floor matting, beanbags and mats.

(3)(a)

There were two designated outdoor play spaces that were safe and securely fenced off from the surrounding houses. The surface of the play garden was artificial grass throughout. This area was well resourced with a large activity frame that had challenging opportunities for climbing, sliding, and enclosed cubbies at ground level, that children used for playing house and shop. There was a mud kitchen, some ride on outdoor toys such as tractors, cars and tricycles were available on the cemented path surrounding the main building.

The garden had large tyres, a water wall with various sizes of piping and a large plumbed stainless steel water trough for water play and hand washing. A concrete raised platform covered by clear acrylic sheeting was secured with timber fencing and set up for the babies to be outdoors. The service had strollers, which enabled the youngest children to be brought for walks if needed. The second outdoor space was cemented throughout and adjacent to cabin one this was mainly used by the school age children.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

There was a catering kitchen on the premises that had been inspected by the Health Service Executive (HSE) Environmental Health Services in February 2023. There was a healthy eating policy available in the service, and a 2-weekly plan for the 3pm afternoon hot snack observed to be cheese and tomato pizza on the day.

Breakfast and snacks were prepared and cooked from this kitchen daily. The breakfast comprised of a selection of cereals and toast with milk or water drinks. The morning snacks provided by the service comprised of fresh fruit cheese and crackers. Parents provided the main meals, for children attending full day care. Drinking water and diluted juice drinks were available for the children throughout the day. One child was on milk formula that was supplied and prepared by parents and refrigerated in the kitchen area until required.

Dinners were supplied by the parents for reheating. On the day of inspection dinners were observed to be beef and chicken casserole dishes that were prepared to the consistency as required by the child. Some children brought their own drink bottles from home which were refilled with water 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.

Compliance Information

The service had taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending:

General safety:

There were two timber gates for entry on to the property of the service with bolt locks which ensured children did not gain access to the roadside.

All toxic materials and chemical cleaning agents were stored in a new purpose-built utility room. This room had been recently constructed externally as a lean-to onto the main building. The room was secured, and locks and keys were inaccessible to children attending the service.

Infection control:

An infection control policy outlined the appropriate exclusion period recommended for childhood infections. Child friendly prompts with picture instructions for hand washing were displayed on walls throughout the building. Hand sanitisers were available at various locations in the service. Hand washing facilities were provided in the children's toilet area with antibacterial soap and paper hand towels. Foot pedal bins were available at various locations on the premises. Suitable cleaning chemicals for disinfection purposes were provided for the playroom and sanitary accommodation.

Administration of medication:

There was a written policy and protocol available for the administration of prescribed medications within the service. A high shelf and a suitable secure box were provided for the safe storage of prescribed medicines in the kitchen if required for the children.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

The system in place for allocation and rotation of sleeping facilities was not evident on the day of inspection, and the labelling used to define the allocation of these cots was not available. Children's cot allocation was at risk of being mixed up.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The registered provider stated in the CAPA response on the 21 March 2024 that the cots used for sleep rotation were now labelled (as per photographs submitted on the 26 February 2024) with the names of the children that had use of the cots.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted on the 26th of February of laminated signage displayed over each cot that was used on a rotational basis.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was appropriate to address the non- compliance under Regulation 23 infection control. The implementation will be reviewed on the next inspection.