

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY051
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Name of Service:	Happy Days
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Address of Service:	Curranes Community Childcare, Scoil Ide, Curranes, Castleisland, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 KW97
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Name of Registered Provider:	Elizabeth Sweeney
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	11/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	N. Reidy
Inspection undertaken by:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.
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

Happy Days is an early years sessional service that is registered as sessional to cater for children aged between 2 years and 6 years. The service currently caters for children aged between 2 years 8 months and 5 years. The service operates between the hours of 9 am and 12 mid-day Monday to Friday inclusive.

Staffing

There are 4 adults employed in the service: - 1 adult works daily in the service, 1 adult is the named relief person, 1 adult is the emergency contact person who is working in the school and the registered provider does not work with the children.

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.

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

A registered provider shall ensure that-

(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

(2) The person in charge confirmed that 4 adults were employed in the service.

(a) 6 validated references were on file from a past employer.

(b) 2 validated references were on file from a source other than a past employer.

(c) A Garda Vetting Disclosure was on file in respect of the 4 adults.

(d) Police Vetting was on file for 1 adult who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of 6 consecutive months.

(4) The adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 5 and at level 8.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) There was 1 adult working with 8 children aged between 2 years 9 months and 5 years attending on a sessional basis. The adult child ratio was correct.

(3) The minimum number of adults was maintained

(8)(c) A named person familiar with the operation of the service working within the building in the national school is available to attend the service to assist the registered provider in the event of an emergency.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The 8 records for each child enrolled in the service were inspected. The records had the required detail as per(a) to (i) inclusive.

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

- The adult caring for the children was kind, caring and respectful towards the children present. She demonstrated an understanding of their various individual needs and was compassionate and understanding for the children that were new to the service and settling in.
- The inspector observed the adult using low soft tones of voice when speaking with the children and positively re-enforcing to the children to "be gentle and kind to our friends and taking turns".
- The children had free movement within the playroom, they were able to access the various toys on the open shelving units and on the floor.
- The mealtime was observed to be relaxed, with children afforded sufficient time to enjoy their food which promoted conversation and interaction among peers.
- Outdoor play areas were provided for the children attending. There was an area directly accessible from the playroom via the fire exit door, the area had an overhead cover, new soft matting underfoot was put in place since the last inspection enclosed with low level fencing and a gate that exited into the spacious school yard. There was a basketball court and a designated area in the large school yard available to the children at alternate times to the children attending the national school.
- The children had unlimited access to 2 toilets located within the room. The inspector observed the adult was available to the children to assist them as needed and reminded the children to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- The adult guided and supported children to manage their own personal care for example washing their hands at the sink in the playroom prior to the mealtime and after playing with playdough and putting on and zipping up their coats prior to going to play outdoors.
- The children were praised and encouraged with their efforts in putting on their coats, identifying their individual school bags and carrying them at departure time from the service.

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

- The food provided was in line with the Healthy Eating Policy of the service. The morning meal consisted of a variety of food provided by the parents of the children attending for example sandwiches, yogurts and a selection of fruit:
- Drinking water was provided throughout the session, the children’s drinks were accessible on a low-level worktop near the sink in the room. The inspector observed the children helping themselves to the drinks throughout the session.
- The children sat on the low-level chairs at the low-level tables for the mealtime and the adult remained with them assisting with opening lunch boxes, food packing and encouraging the children to eat at their own pace.
- The inspector observed the mealtime was not rushed, the children were given ample time to eat, in an atmosphere that was relaxed where conversations ensued between the children and their peers and with the adult caring for them.

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 main entrance door was adequately secured, it prevented unauthorised access into the room and children going out unsupervised.
- The cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of the children on a high-level shelf in the playroom.
- The first aid box was inaccessible to the children, it was stored on a high-level shelf in the playroom.
- Secured gates in the outdoor play areas had keypad locks installed since the last inspection.

Infection Control:

- A fridge was provided for storage of children's perishable food items.
- Warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels were provided at the sinks.
- The children washed their hands prior to eating and after using the toilet.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) A record to document attendance for pre-school children was in place in the service recording the arrival and departure time for each child.

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) The adult working each day in the service and the relief person had current First Aid Responder training and the certifications for same were furnished to the inspector.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was adequately equipped and was maintained on a high-level shelf in the playroom.

(b) The first aid supplies were readily available throughout the hours of operation.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certification for the service was on file.

The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- the contact details for the insurance provider
- the name and address of the service insured.
- the category of insurance cover for the service
- the number of children covered by the insurance was for 22 children.

The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27/03/'24