

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH034
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Name of Service:	Happy Dayz Creche
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Address of Service:	Sandy Lane, Blackrock, Blackrock, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A91 V832
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Name of Registered Provider:	Deborah McCrea
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	27/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Child Wellbeing Centre, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan
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Inspection undertaken by:	M. Flood
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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 Dayz is a privately owned service in operation in its current location since January 2005. The service is currently registered to cater for a maximum of 25 pre-school children and provides Sessional, Part-time and Full Day Care services to pre-school children from 3 years to 6 years of age.

The service is located in a residential area in Blackrock, Co. Louth. The premises is a purposely developed dwelling with 1 large playroom in operation with an adjoining small area the 'Library Room' which is used for reading and quiet time. The service has an outdoor play area in the garden to the rear of the premises where children have access to play equipment. Ancillary accommodation consists of sanitary accommodation, a kitchen area and hallway which incorporates the office.

Staffing

The service employs 4 staff including the Registered Provider

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16,20, 21,22 and 25. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16.

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 would like to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 service had a designated person in charge who is also the registered provider and a named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.

(2) There were 4 staff files presented for inspection and the following were reviewed:

(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for each member of staff.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda vetting disclosure was available for each of the 4 staff members.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented on the day of inspection, international police vetting was not required at this time

(4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that the 4 members of staff, who work directly with the pre-school children held at least the minimum required level 5 Childcare Qualification.

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) 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) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) On the day of inspection when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service the main care room and adjoining sensory room were in operation. There were 24 preschool children aged 3-4years present with 4 staff members.

(8)(a) Following a review of the available documentation e.g. staff rotas and children's attendance records, the information provided demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times

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:

(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;

(g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;

(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.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) A record in writing was maintained of the name, position, qualification and experience for each of the 4 staff members employed in the service.

(g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10. These were provided both in hard copy and in electronic format on the premises.

(h) Details of children's daily attendance including arrival and departure times were recorded in attendance records within the service.

(i) An up-to-date weekly staff roster was available, and staff attendance and departure records were maintained on a daily basis. No medication was administered during the inspection.

(j) Following a review of a sample of medication administration forms maintained in the service, these were found to be complete.

(k) While no accident or incidents were observed during the inspection, documented records were available of accidents or incidents that had previously occurred on the premises.

The sample of incident and accident records reviewed were complete and included a signature of the child's parents indicating that had been informed about the incident and the signature of registered provider or deputy person in charge.

(3) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection as requested by the inspectors.

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-

(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)(b) There was a soft comfortable area available in the 'Library Room' which consisted of mats, and cushions where a child could sit and relax or take a break from an activity. In this room there was also a variety of books on display and sensory lighting was also available. Although no child slept during the inspection, there were daybeds for the children who were all aged over 2 years to sleep on if required.

(3) The pre-school children accessed the outdoor area which is located to the rear of the premises. The area is enclosed and is accessed via the patio door in the playroom. A partially covered area with a loose stone surface is available and contains a number of play kitchens and equipment. A variety of toys and equipment are also provided in the open area which is paved and also has an area with artificial grass. A variety of toys and equipment that promoted all areas of development were available including; water trays, one of which had rocks and the children were observed to play a fishing game, a variety of seating, toy kitchens, ride on equipment, 2 plastic playhouses, a basketball hoop and ball and a plastic climbing train. The children were also observed to engage in games such as hopscotch and they were supported by the staff to draw the squares and numbers on the paving stones with chalk

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 Playroom Room was a well-resourced room with a number of defined interest areas and tables and chairs that were suitable for the age of the children in attendance. Toys and equipment were stored on open, low-level shelving with corresponding photographs to support the children select and choose their chosen area of interest. Each area was supported with a variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment e.g. A sectioned off home corner that included a kitchen, dolls with dolls house, clothing and buggies and a hairdressing station with supporting equipment. This area also had soft cushions and seating. The open playroom had a large variety of toys and equipment that supported many areas of development including Montessori equipment, fine motor, and manipulative toys such as Jigsaws, pegboards, threading spools, a variety of wooden and plastic blocks, a dress up display, farm equipment, trains and tracks and a variety of art materials and equipment. The Sensory room is directly off the main playroom and is used by the children to take a break from activities or to rest and read a book.

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

When questioned the staff reported that a variety of breakfast cereals and milk are available for the children who require breakfast in the morning. Snacks and lunches are provided by the parents for the children attending the service on a sessional and full day care basis. Meals that are also provided by the parents are reheated in the service as required. A refrigerator is available in the kitchen area for the appropriate storage of perishable items. Potable drinking water is available in the service and the children also have their own drinks bottles.

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 registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid (First Aid Responder) was always available to the pre-school children. This was evidenced by the availability of up to date First Aid Responder certification for 2 staff members.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and while safely stored is available to the children attending the service at all times.