

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH070		
Name of Service:	Periwinkles Pre School		
Address of Service:	Callystown National School, Callystown, Clogherhead, Co. Louth		
Eircode:	A92 P981		
Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Coates		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	13/09/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM No.
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre, Castleblayney Co. Monaghan		
Inspection undertaken by:	M.Flood		
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	Click or tap here to enter text.		

Description of service

Perwinkles Pre-school is a privately owned service that has been in operation since 2014. It provides sessional care and education to pre-school children aged 2 - 6 years.

This service operates from a pre-fabricated building on the grounds of Callystown National School in the coastal town of Clogherhead in Co. Louth. The premises consists of a playroom with adjoining sanitary facilities, an outdoor play area and the service also has access to the activities hall in the main school building. There is onsite parking for drop off and collection.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 2 staff who work directly with the pre-school children on a daily basis. The Registered provider and 1 staff member provide relief in the service as required. One additional adult attends the service on a regular basis in a volunteer capacity.

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 and safety*. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 20, 25 and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 23 These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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, 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
- (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 and named deputy person to deputise as required. The person in charge and deputy person were on the premises when the inspector arrived on the premises and was present throughout the inspection. The registered provider arrived on the premises after 12.00pm and was present in the service for the remainder of the inspection.

(2)(a) & (b) There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for each of the 4 members of staff which included the registered provider.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda vetting disclosure was available for each member of staff in the service including the registered provider and one adult who attends the service on a voluntary basis.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that each member of staff, who works directly with the pre-school children held at least the minimum required level 5 on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications. One adult who attends the service on a voluntary basis does not work directly with the preschool children therefore does not require a childcare qualification at this time.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)&(b)

One adult who attends the service on a regular basis as a volunteer, did not have two written and validated references available on file.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented on the day of inspection, international police vetting was not available for one adult who attends the service on a regular basis as a volunteer.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective action

The registered provider stated the following:

- 2 valid references sought, verified, and filed.
- International police vetting sought and filed.

Preventive action

Ensuring full compliance for Regulation 9 for all future employees and volunteers.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Documentary evidence of 2 written and validated references.
- Documentary evidence of a processed international police vetting.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliance in relation to Regulation 9 (2) (a)(b) have been addressed. However, while it is acknowledged that documentary evidence of the international police vetting has been submitted no official translation has been received by the inspectorate. As such Regulation 9 (2)(d) remains non-compliant.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) On the day of inspection when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service at 10.10am there were two adults working directly with the 16 preschool children in attendance. The registered provider arrived on the premises at 12:00pm approximately and was present for the remainder of the inspection.

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.*
 - (b) details of the class 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 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.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) all documents and records relating to references and Garda and police vetting obtained under Regulation 9(2) are retained for a period of 5 years from the date on which the person to whom the document or record relates commences working in the service, and

(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends 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) Information including each staff member's experience and training records were maintained within the staff files for the 4 staff files that were reviewed on the premises.

(b) - (f) The information specified in sub-sections (b) to (f) in this regulation were on display in the service or documented in the policy and procedures documents which were available in the care room.

(g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10.

(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.

(k) Documented records were available of accidents or incidents that occurred on the premises.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(j) Not all medication administration forms maintained in the service were complete. A number of forms were not signed by the child's parent or guardian to document that, before leaving the service, they had been informed

and were aware of what medication was given to their child during the course of the day and at what time. Examples of this practice included forms maintained in relation to medication administered in the service on 09/03/2023, 07/03/2023 and 06/12/2022.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(1)(j)

Corrective Action

Medication forms dated 07/03/2023,09/03/2023 have been updated by the parent by means of a signature confirming their awareness of partially documented medication report. 06/12/2022 could not be updated as child no longer attends the service.

Preventive Action

Ensuring before leaving the service the parent has been informed of the time plus the type and amount of medication their child has been given throughout the course of the day and to ensure the parent has signed this document.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliances have been addressed. Implementation of the corrective and preventative actions will require assessment at the next inspection.

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.

(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) A suitable comfortable rest area was available in the care room, with soft mats and cushions provided, should a child need to rest or take a break from activities during the day.

(4) The enclosed outdoor play area is located to the side of the premises. The area is fenced and gated and has an artificial grass surface, with a partially covered area for use in 'all weather'. A variety of toys and equipment were available to support areas of development including ride on equipment, a wooden playhouse, a mud kitchen, a flower garden, a sand table/picnic table and a wall mounted blackboard. While the children were not observed to access this area during the inspection, they did get a change of environment to the activities hall in the main school building. In the activities hall the children were observed to engage in a variety of activities including running games and physical exercises.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection:

General Safety:

1. A free-standing television was observed on a shelving unit in the care room area and is a potential injury risk if knocked over or pulled by a child.
2. Two large white toy storage units were unsecured and are a potential injury risk if pulled or toppled over.

Infection Control:

3. One staff member did not wear a disposable apron or gloves during a nappy changing procedure. Polythene gloves were subsequently observed in use by the staff member which are unsuitable for use during 'toileting' as per best practice guidance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

General Safety

1. Free standing T.V. removed from shelf and stored correctly in a slide drawer unit on the floor.
2. 2 white toy storage units now secured to the walls by means of brackets.

Ensuring the adequate steps have been taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment is safe.

Infection Control

1. Regulation 23 highlighted at staff meeting with particular emphasis on correct attire when changing a child. Polythene gloves removed and latex free surgical gloves in place.

Ensuring a supply of disposable aprons and correct gloves are available at all times and a refresh of policies and procedures at staff meetings to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children in our care.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic evidence
- Minutes of staff meeting

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliances have been addressed. Implementation of the corrective and preventative actions will require assessment at the next inspection.

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 for children was at all times available to the children attending the service. Documentary evidence was available of a First Aid Responder (FAR) qualification for one adult in the service and detailed 02/2025 as the due expiry date. The registered provider informed the inspector that a 2nd member of staff with an up to date FAR qualification was also available to provide relief if required.

(2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was available in the service and was stored in conspicuous location where it is easily accessible in the event of an emergency.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was in place for up to 22 children until the 27/03/2024.