

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015LK009

Name of Service: All About Kids Ltd

Address of Service: 8-10 Coonagh Court, Doon, Co. Limerick

Eircode: V94 V029

Name of Registered Provider: Michelle Carmody

Service type: Full Day

Date of Inspection: 19/11/2024

No of pre-school children:	AM	62	PM	58
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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 childcare service provides sessional and full day education and care to preschool children aged 1 - 6 years of age. The service operates from a purpose-built building located in a residential area of Doon, Co Limerick.

There are 4 care rooms in operation, Wobbler room (1-2 yrs.), Toddler room (2 - 3yrs), Pre-school room 1(3 - 4 yrs.) and Pre-school room 2 (4- 5 yrs.). There are two sleep rooms for children aged less than 2 years.

The service has an outdoor play area located at the back of the premises.

The service operates from 07.30hrs to 18.00hrs.

Staffing

There were 13 adults including the deputy manager present in the service and working with the children. These adults all hold an award in Early Childhood Care & Education ranging from levels 5 to 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. The registered provider does not work in the service.

Additional adults are employed to work in the kitchen and for cleaning duties in the premises.

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.

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, 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all staff members employed to work at the facility.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources such as colleges and schools.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed to work at the service. All vetting disclosures were dated within the last 3 years.

(d) Police vetting was available for 2 staff who had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of time in excess of 6 months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such 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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there were 62 pre-school children and 12 adults on the premises working directly with the children. The adult child ratio was correct.

(2) The person in charge ensured that the minimum ratios of adults to children were correct.

There were 14 preschool children (1-2) and 3 staff in the Wobbler Room.

There were 16 preschool children (2-3) and 3 staff in the Toddler Room.

There were 16 preschool children (3-4) and 3 staff in Preschool Room 1.

There were 16 preschool children (3-5) and 3 staff in Preschool Room 2.

A designated person was available to prepare, cook and serve food to all children attending the service.

The person in charge the manager was present and available to cover in a playroom if required.

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

BASIC NEEDS:

Healthy eating was promoted within the service. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were prepared fresh by kitchen staff each day and were served at regular intervals to the children in their individual rooms. The weekly menu plan was emailed to all parents and was displayed on the main entrance door. On day a beef mince stew with mash potatoes was served. Healthy snacks were served at regular intervals between meals.

A rolling snack break was in practice in Preschool 2 for the mid-morning and staff reported that it was working well for the children. It offered self-independence, encouraging the children to choose when to eat and the amount of food to eat. The younger children's drinks were removed from their bags on arrival to the service and were stored within easy reach of the children throughout the day. Jugs of water with cups were available for the older children.

Sanitary accommodation was located close to each room in the service. Nappy changing facilities were provided near the Wobbler and Toddler rooms. Easily accessible, waist high, changing units were available. Steps for older children to access the units were provided. All toiletries for the children were safely stored and clearly labelled and were located within easy reach of the change unit. Nappy changing policies were clearly displayed on the wall close to the change mats.

Sanitary accommodation for the older children was located next to each of the pre-school rooms. Children using the facilities could be supervised at all times by sight or by sound for short intervals while using the toilets.

There were 2 separate sleep rooms available with a sufficient number of standard cots accessible at all times to the children in the Wobbler room. Low level sleep beds were used in the sleep room off the Toddler room for sleep periods. Children were closely observed during all sleep periods and all sleep checks were electronically recorded.

Relaxation areas were provided in all rooms of the creche with comfortable seating, soft floor mats, blankets and cushions accessible. These rest areas provided cosy spaces for children to relax and take time out and away from active play areas when tired. Staff throughout the service encouraged quiet periods during the day to facilitate

The children had regular change of environment. They spend long periods of time outdoors. A sheltered space outside facilitated the younger children to get outdoors in all weather conditions.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS :

The same staff worked in each room each day at the service. This helped to create a sense of belonging, connectedness and well-being for the children. Staff were observed working in partnership with parents and were responsive and sensitive in the provision of information to parents. Detailed information of each child's day was communicated electronically throughout each day. Where children were deemed to have any additional need, detailed care programs were available for these children.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service operated from a purposely designed building. Throughout each room of the service the physical layout was designed to be stimulating, challenging and interesting for children.

The rooms accommodating the younger children had lots of soft floor coverings to facilitate floor play activities such as crawling, rolling and sitting. Low level wash hand basins facilitated regular handwashing for the children. Low level tables and chairs were used for tabletop activities and for dining at mealtimes. Accessible open shelving was used to store and display all equipment. Family pictures were displayed at children's eye level. In the Preschool Rooms small world spaces, construction areas, home corners, imaginative play areas and messy play areas were noted in all rooms. Lots of low-level shelving was in place with children having easy access to all play materials. Children in all areas had daily access to outdoor play space every day. Sheltered areas outside permitted children to have uninhibited access to the outdoors regardless of weather conditions

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.

Non-Compliance Information

1. A couch in Preschool room 2 and in Wobblers playroom were worn and in a poor state of repair.
2. There was no natural and open-ended play materials in the outdoor play area for the children's play.
3. There was no appropriate seating in the outdoor area for the staff and children to sit and have some quiet time and for the children to sit with their friends.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The manager has stated in the response that:

1.3.

An order has been placed to replace the worn couch in the Pre-school 2 and Wobbler room and also an order has been placed to add adult and child seating outdoors. The service will ensure all seating (couches) in all rooms are in good condition and replace immediately when needed.

2.

The sensory tables have been filled with open-ended materials in the outdoor play for children's play.

The service will ensure sensory play is available to children at all times during their outdoor play.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Receipts for equipment ordered and photograph of the bench ordered for the outdoor area.

Photographs of the trays in the outdoor area filled with sensory materials such as sand and coloured rice.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials points 1,2,and 3.

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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) All pre-school child who attended the service on the day were recorded on the attendance register and it included their time of arrival and their time of departure.

(a) No persons could enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee other than the following:

(i) A pre-school child.

(ii) A person dropping or collecting a child.

(iii) An employee.

(iv) An unpaid worker.

(b) A daily record in writing was kept of the entry on the premises of any such person on the visitors' book.

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 seven staff members on hand who had up to date first aid responder training.

(2)(a) The registered provider ensured that a suitable equipped first aid box for children was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the preschool.