

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK082
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Happy Faces Creche
-------------------------	--------------------

Address of Service:	Deel Manor Estate, Askeaton, Co. Limerick
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	V94 X952
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Julie London
-------------------------------------	--------------

Service type:	Full Day
----------------------	----------

Date of Inspection:	14/03/2024
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	62	PM	45
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Happy Faces Creche is a private full day service located in the town of Askeaton Co Limerick.

The service provides full day care, part-time and sessional care Monday-Friday from 07.00hrs to 18.00hrs.

There are 77 pre-school children presently registered to attend the service.

A school aged service is operated in the afternoon from the service.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge who has responsibility for managing the service each day. There are 22 staff employed to work in the service .

On the day the registered provider and 14 staff were working directly with the children at the service. Each staff including the registered provider working with the children had achieved an award in Childhood Care and Education.

There were additional 4 staff involved in cleaning, kitchen duties and caring for the school aged children and there were staff on leave.

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, 19, 23, and 24; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. 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 wishes 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.*
- (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) The registered provider was present and available on the day of the inspection. A named person who could deputise was also available.
- (b) The staff roster indicated that the designated person in charge or the deputy were rostered to work each day at the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.
- (2)(a) All staff files were reviewed. There were two written and validated references available for all staff members employed to work at the service.
- (b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources such as previous schools and colleges.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for each staff working at the service.
- (d) Police vetting was available for 2 staff member who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive 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.

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)

The service operated 6 playrooms from 07.00am to 18.00hrs. On the day of the inspection there were 62 pre-school children present with 13 staff members and the registered provider for the morning sessions and 45 preschool children and 10 staff members present for the afternoon sessions. Overall, in the service the adult child ratio was compliant with the requirements of Regulation 11.

An additional 4 staff were available for cleaning and kitchen duties and the care of school aged children.

(2)

At all times the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

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:

A healthy eating policy was available at the service. Breakfast was offered to the children each morning on arrival. Parents provided healthy snacks for children morning and evening breaks. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator until required. The service provided a hot dinner each day. On the day of the inspection children had a beef stew with mash potatoes and vegetable for dinner. Children had access to their own drinks at mealtimes.

Staff were observed sitting with children while eating, making mealtimes a social occasion.

Nappy changing facilities and toilets were located close to each preschool room. This facilitated safe supervision of children at all times. A change of clothes was available for all children if needed. Outdoor jackets and footwear were available for all children to use in wet weather.

The children under 2 years of age had access to two separate sleep rooms on the ground floor. The cots were shared but each child had their own individual linen. The cots were cleaned and linen changed for the children sharing a cot. Children were checked every 10 minutes, and all checks were documented in writing. The older children had access to a cot bed with their own sheet and blanket.

Large soft couches had been added to all rooms . This allowed staff sit comfortably when holding and feeding children. These also provided a quiet area for children to rest and relax when tired.

There was a large outdoor area to the rear of the service and children do get out most days weather permitting. Children were supervised at all times while outdoors. The older children and most of the younger children got the opportunity to be outdoors at some stage throughout the day.

As it was raining the younger children did not get outdoor .

Supporting Relationships around Children

Details of each child's day, how they slept, what they had at mealtimes and their play activities were shared with parents when they came to pick up their child. Childrens bags containing their personal belongings were stored on clearly labelled coat hooks with children's name and picture displayed. This helped children develop their self-caring skills and become more independent. Regular staff meetings took place at the service toys.

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 entrance door to the building was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and preventing people gaining unauthorised access to the premises. A buzzer system was used to gain access to the facility.

All emergency exits and fire doors were unobstructed.

All blind cords were secured on tension hooks and made safe in all rooms.

Suitable handrails were provided on staircases and children were supervised at all times when using the stairs.

All highchairs were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.

No flexes or cables were located within reach of children.

Safe Sleep:

There was evidence of the policy on safe sleep being implemented. Staff knew the requirements of the policy and had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on sleep requirements for all children who slept at the service. The children under 2 years of aged slept in a cot and no child was observed sleeping in a bouncer.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for all staff members. However, on review of these vetting disclosures there was one not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'. It is acknowledged that the renewal Garda vetting was applied for on the 15th of March 2024.

Infection Control:

2. Hygienic nappy changing practices were not observed to help prevent cross infection between children and children and between children and staff and this was at variance with the nappy changing policy for the service.
 - Two staff did not wash their hands prior to each nappy change. This increased the risk of cross infection. Hand washing was observed being done only when the staff had finished the nappy changing for all the children.
 - Aprons and gloves were not removed by staff following each nappy changing. Two staff were observed returning to their playrooms with the child without having removed them. This increased the risk of cross infection.
 - Childrens hands were not observed to be washed after they had their nappies changed and before children had their dinner. This increased the risk of infection.
 - There was no nappy changing policy displayed in the upstairs nappy changing unit to guide and inform staff on the nappy changing procedures.
3. It was observed that children soothers were left in their cots after their sleep the previous day. The staff said they had omitted to remove from the cots to wash and disinfect them prior to being using again by the children. This posed a risk of cross infection.
4. There were large, lidded and pedal operated bins attached to the wall in all the playroom for the disposable of waste. However children were unable to use the pedal to open these bins as they were positioned too high for the children. Instead the children used their hands to open the bin. This increased the risk of cross infection for staff and children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action: The registered provider has stated in the response that:

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting renewal was received for the one adult .

Infection Control:

2. All staff responsible for nappy changing have completed a course on nappy changing with a reputable company. An updated nappy changing policy is now on display in all required areas. There will be regular staff meeting to update staff on any required changes.
3. All the children soothers are sterilised overnight. At the staff meetings the staff and management will ensure these policies are reviewed regularly and any changes relayed to the staff.
4. Smaller pedal operated bins have been purchased for the playroom.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copy of Garda vetting submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Infection:

Photographic evidence was submitted to Early Years Inspectorate in relation to infection control.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 23, points General Safety and Infection Control.

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

(3) (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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
The 7 children attending the Baby room were not checked in on the 14th of March in the attendance book by the staff. When the attendance book was viewed it was noted that these children were not checked out on the evening of 13th of March. This posed a risk to the children in the event of an emergency. This was identified on the previous inspection dated the 27th of April 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

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

The attendance book is now maintained when each child arrives to and depart from the service.
Staff were advised of the importance of maintaining up to date and accurate attendance records

Supporting documentation submitted

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was reviewed and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 24, point (1)
This will be assessed at the next inspection.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Non-Compliance Information

- (d).
- 1.The outdoor covering in play area was damaged and large sheets of this damaged hard plastic were positioned against a wall in the outdoor area and were accessible to the children which posed a safety risk. The registered provider stated that she was in consultation with a company to have these replaced and new covering to be erected.
 2. Doors, skirting boards and walls in the upstairs playrooms and corridor were in need of maintenance. The registered provider stated that this work is to be completed over the summer.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

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

- (d)
- 1.The hard plastic sheets in the outdoor area have been removed from the service. The service has received two quotes for the construction of an new overhead shelter in the outdoor area.
 2. This work is scheduled for the summer.

Supporting documentation submitted

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was reviewed and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 29 point (d) 1 and 2. This will be assessed at the next inspection.