

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LM031
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Name of Service:	Dowra Childcare Service Company Ltd
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Address of Service:	Dowra Resource Centre, Dowra, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	N41 X8Y9
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carol Durkin
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	21/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello
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

Dowra Childcare Service is a not-for-profit sessional day care service which is located in a resource centre in Dowra, Co Cavan. Care and education is currently being provided to children aged between two and six years and the operating hours are from Monday to Friday between 09:30 and 13:00. The service has an enclosed outdoor area to the side of the property.

Staffing

On the day of inspection there was three adults employed in the service and an additional adult employed through a community employment scheme.

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, 25, 26, 28 and 32. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation(s) 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 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).

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) (a) (b).

The records of all four adults employed in the service were reviewed.

Eight written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all four adults employed in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for all four adults employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was available for the two adults employed in the service that had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

All four adults employed in the service and working directly with the preschool children hold a qualification at level 5 or above on the National Qualification Framework or an equivalent 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.

(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)
There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service. There were four adults working directly with 18 children in the morning of the unannounced inspection.
- (3)
The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent 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*
- (1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

Physical and Material Environment:

The care room was laid out to facilitate a range of experiences for the preschool child. Arts and crafts and sensory tables provided opportunities for sensory development and imagination. Fine motor skills development was supported using jigsaws, puzzles and building blocks. Opportunities for imaginary and role play were provided in the home corner and dress up area as well as construction area and farm animal areas. All equipment was stored on open shelving at children's heights so that choice can be facilitated. Children moved freely from one interest area to the next directing their own sense of play. A second room used by the preschool children allowed for dance and self-expression in the morning as furniture was moved to allow for movement. Later in the day this room was used for storytelling and circle time.

The outdoor play area provided an alternative change of environment for the children. There was a large wooden climbing frame and slide in one area providing opportunities for gross motor skills development. Cars, bikes, trikes and tractors were provided and there was ample space for movement. A roofed area equipped with mud kitchens, playhouses and various resources allowed for outdoor play in inclement weather. A sensory garden was also provided with opportunities for growing vegetables and flowers in the preschool.

Supporting Relationships:

Staff members were observed to be respectful, gentle, and kind in their interactions towards the children in their care. During mealtimes the staff members sat at the table and engaged in social conversation with children promoting a relaxed atmosphere. The staff members sat at the children's level when supporting them with various tasks. Hugs and cuddles were observed to be given as required throughout the day. Family pictures were displayed on the friendship tree, highlighting the importance of family and home.

Basic Needs:

The children brought in their snack's from home in line with the service healthy eating policy. On the day of inspection lunches provided included a variety of chopped fruit, sandwiches with fillings of ham, salad and cheese, yoghurts, cheese and crackers and breadsticks. Drinking water was available throughout the session.

Children who were toileting independently were prompted to do so and supervised from a distance. Suitable facilities were available for those children who were not toilet trained.

Programme of Activities:

There was evidence of the curriculum throughout the service with the Aistear goal planning displayed on the wall of the care room. The children's recent artwork decorated the care room walls. On the day of inspection, a music teacher facilitated a session in the large hall in the resource building.

This music session created opportunities for movement and self-expression while also providing new skills. The children participated in singing songs, playing the drums and dancing. The person in charge informed the inspector that this music session takes place weekly.

Circle time and storytelling scheduled prior to going home provided opportunities for language development and imagination for the preschool children

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 door was locked on the unannounced arrival of the inspector to the service.
- The outdoor perimeter consisted of high-level block walls, which prevented unauthorised persons entering the premises or children leaving unsupervised.
- All cleaning products were stored on high shelving out of the reach of the preschool children.
- General waste was disposed of in foot operated pedal bins.
- Tables and floors were observed to be cleaned after messy play and before snack times.
- Materials and resources in the preschool were observed to be clean and in a good state of repair.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were provided for effective hand hygiene. Child friendly hand wash posters were displayed above the sinks at children's eye level.
- Hand hygiene was observed after messy play, using the toilet and prior to snack times.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff were knowledgeable with the required medication policy and consent required for administration of medication to a preschool child.

Safe Sleep:

- A rest area was available for children both inside and outdoors if children required a rest or to opt out of an activity.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were unobstructed throughout the service.
- The fire assembly point was clearly signposted to the front of the building.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The nappy disposable bin in the nappy changing room was not the required foot operated pedal bin.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The old diaper bin was removed and replaced with a foot operated pedal bin.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The information supplied by the person acting on behalf of the registered provider in relation to the non-compliance found in relation to regulation 23 has been reviewed and accepted by the inspectorate. This regulation is now compliant.

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)

Two adults employed in the service and available to the preschool children at all times were trained in the required First Aid Responder.

(2) (a) (b)

The registered provider ensured that a fully stocked first aid box was available on the premises and available to the preschool children if required.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The registered provider ensured a record of the monthly fire drills were available for inspection. The most recent fire evacuation drill took place on the 15.03.2024.
 - (b) A record of the number and type of firefighting equipment was displayed on the notice board in the care room with the most recent maintenance date of October 2023.
- (2)
- The registered provider ensured that all information is displayed clearly on the notice board for inspection by a parent, employee or authorised person.
- (3)

The person in charge is aware of the requirements to retain the necessary information for a period of 5 years.

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The preschool service had adequate insurance for 24 children in a sessional service with a renewal date of the 27.03.2024.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(1) *A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

(2) *A registered provider shall ensure that-*

- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
- (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*

(3) *A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-*

- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
- (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1)

The service had a complaints policy in place with the required procedures to be followed outlined.

(2) (a) (b)

The person in charge informed the inspector that they have received no complaints. On interview the person in charge was aware of the requirement to record the complaint and the procedures required to be followed.

(3) (a) (b)

On interview the person in charge was knowledgeable regarding the procedures to be followed if a complaint is received and the requirement to retain this information for inspection by an authorised person.