

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH193
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Name of Service:	The Hive Childcare
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Address of Service:	Summerhill, Summerhill, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	A83 YD81
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Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Daly
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	20/02/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	50	PM	39
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Family Resource Centre, Common's Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham & D Murray
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

The Hive Childcare, (Summerhill Childcare Centre CLG) is an established childcare facility located within the local community in Summerhill Co. Meath. The childcare service provides full day care, part time and a sessional service to children aged from 0 to 6 years. The service operates from 07:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday. The building is purpose build single story facility and consists of. 5 care rooms namely, the Nursery room (which was closed on the day of inspection), the 1-2 room, the 2-3 room, preschool room 1, and preschool room 2, office, kitchen, sanitary facilities (nappy changing area), and sleep rooms. Additionally, the outdoor play area was located to the side of the building.

Staffing

There are thirteen staff members employed in the service which includes the manager, assistant manager, additionally, 9 childcare staff providing direct care to children, cook and a cleaner. A student was also present on the day of inspection.

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.

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 inspectors wish 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.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(c) A clear management structure was displayed in the entrance hallway in the service.

There are thirteen staff members employed in the service, which includes the manager, assistant manager, nine child care practitioners, a cook and a cleaner. A student was also present on the day of inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Twenty-eight validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 14 adults which were within the 3-year timeframe as required by the Regulatory notice.

(d) Police vetting was available for 2 staff members had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The 11 childcare staff members who provided direct care to the children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6) (a) Two staff members were employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model

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

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed:

- **Nursery Room:** closed on the day of inspection.
- **The 1 to 2 Room:** there were 7 pre-school children aged between 1 year and 2 years, all children were attending on a full day care basis, being cared for by 2 staff members. A student was also present in this room.

- **The 2 to 3 Room:** there were 9 children aged 2 years to 3 years, all children were attended for full day care, being cared for by 2 staff members.
- **Preschool Room 1:** there were 19 children aged 2 years 8 months to 4 years, 15 children were attending for full day care basis, being cared for by 2 staff members.
- **Preschool Room 2:** there were 15 children aged 2 years 8 months to 4 years, 8 children were attending for full day care basis, being cared for by 2 staff members.

(8)(a) On the day of inspection, based upon a review of the staff roster and staff attendance times reported to the inspectors at least 2 adults were on the premises at all times.

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

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- The adults spoke to all children in a positive way and listened attentively to each child. In the 1 to 2 room and 2 to 3 room any children who were settling in or who became upset were nurtured and cuddled until they settled. The children showed confidence around the staff members and sought out staff members for reassurance, comfort, and support.
- Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions observed. The older children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.

- Children were observed enjoying meaningful, sustained play with tabletop activities, art and crafts and free playing with lots of conversation and laughter observed. Transitions were handled smoothly with staff giving the children ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- The staff members sat and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required whilst encouraging conversation and extending interactions.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning with all children observed enjoying outdoor play with their peers on the day of inspection.
- Children in the 1 to 2 room were placed to sleep in the designated sleep room following their dinner. Children in the 2 to 3 room were placed to sleep on stackable beds in the care room.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed on “The Family Tree’ in the care rooms.
- Staff members used an electronic device to update parents on the children’s progress throughout the day.

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-
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (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, or
 - (b) Where no such space is provided, the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis to a suitable outdoor space.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) Cosy areas consisting of mats, cushions and soft furnishings were available in all care rooms should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. Three adjoining cot rooms were available for the younger age group who required sleep. One cot room had 7 cots available, the second room had 3 cots available, and the third room had 5 cots available with a total of 15 cots in the service. The older children requiring sleep were accommodated on stackable beds on the floor in the 2 to 3 care room.

(3)(a) The outdoor area to the side of the service was enclosed by walls and railings with a secure gate which had a press button release along with a high bolt. The surface area consisted of grass.

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

- Play materials and play equipment in all care rooms were visible and easily accessible to the children on open shelving at their height which supported children to have choices in selecting materials and equipment to play with. Tables and chairs in each room were appropriate to the age and stage of development of pre-school children attending the specific care rooms. The care rooms were well resourced and had areas of interest with supporting equipment which incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts and a range of suitable toys.
- Play equipment in the outdoor spaces included small slide, tyres, mud and plastic kitchen, wooden play house with swings, small partially sheltered area, wooden play hut and ride on tricycles. A storage shed was available for the storage of additional equipment.

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 to the service has a lobby area and within this area is the entrance door to the pre-school premises which was secured with an electronic keypad security system.
- Safe storage was available for the cleaning agents and equipment used in the service.
- The person in charge ensured that complete and accurate daily records of attendance were kept for all children, adults, and visitors to the service.
- Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.
- The external outdoor play areas were secured.

Infection Control:

- A supply of cleaning agents stored out of reach of children were available in the service.
- There was liquid soap at the wash hand basins to facilitate hygienic hand washing for children and adults. Paper towels were provided in the dispensers in all the sanitary areas used by the children and adults to facilitate hygienic hand drying.
- There was 2 designated nappy changing rooms available and nappy changing procedures were carried out in an appropriate manner.

Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service.

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) Records demonstrated that the date and time of attendance and departure in respect of each pre-school child is recorded on a daily basis.

(3)(a) All persons were approved by an employee prior to entry to the pre-school.

(b) Visitors are announced and approved by an authorised staff member on arrival, the visitors' details are entered into 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) The service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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.*
- (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) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 15/02/2024.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment was last serviced on the 02/10/23. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 24/11/2023.
- (4) Procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 75 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28th March 2023 to the 27th March 2024.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

Non-Compliance Information

(c) The nappy changing area in the 1 to 2 room had a strong unpleasant odour as the mechanical ventilation was not working. Also, the mechanical ventilation was not working in the nappy changing area beside the nursery room and in the children's sanitary facilities throughout the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Corrective Action

Details of mechanical ventilation not working was reported to senior maintenance team, inspection was carried out and maintenance team immediately reported to electrician for assessment. Electrician came to the service the following week to carry out an inspection of mechanical ventilation and agreed replacement was needed along with replacement timer.

Preventive Action

Broken mechanical ventilation replaced and repaired along with replacement timer switch.

Supporting documentation submitted

Invoice from the Electrician of fans replaced received by the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the noncompliance in Regulation 29.