

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015OY064 | | | |
| Name of Service: | Little Angels Childcare Limited | | | |
| Address of Service: | 19 Carrig Aoibhinn, Carrickhall Close, Edenderry, Co. Offaly | | | |
| Eircode: | R45 HV25 | | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Aisling Cully | | | |
| Service type: | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | | | |
| Date(s) of Inspection: | 02/08/2023 | | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 21 | PM | 19 |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly | | | |
| Inspection undertaken by: | D .Molloy. | | | |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable |
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Description of service

This is a privately owned and operated full day care, which provides service for children aged one year to six years, located in a housing estate in the town of Edenderry, Co. Offaly.

The service operates daily, Monday to Friday and has been operational since 2014. The service is registered to cater for up to 99 preschool children. The service operates from 07.00 -18.15 with three sessions running each day from 09.00am – 12.30pm.

The service operates from a purpose-built single-story building which is used for the sole purpose of operating an early years' service.

Access to the playschool is gained through the main door at the front of the premises. The services external boundaries are defined by a wall.

The service consists of, an entrance hall and lobby, an office, a kitchen, a storeroom, five playrooms, two designated sleep rooms, eight toilets, and wash hand basins and two nappy changing facilities.

A secure outdoor play area is provided to the back of the premises which is accessed directly from the hallway.

Parking and set down is available outside of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider was present and facilitated the inspection. There were seven staff working with the preschool children in the service on the day of inspection. Two staff members work with children availing of afterschool care.

Staff working in the service had qualifications ranging from level 5 to level 7 on the National Qualifications Framework for Early Years Childhood Care and Education.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 - Health, welfare, and development of child and Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures of pre-school service.

The scope of the inspection included Playroom 2, the sanitary accommodation, nappy changing facilities, and the outdoor play facility.

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, 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.

(5) Paragraph (4) shall apply-

- (a) on or after 31 December 2016 in respect of pre-school services registered on or before 30 June 2016, and
- (b) on or after the date of registration in respect of all other pre-school services.

(6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who-

(a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and

(b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date.

(6A) is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.
- (b) The registered provider and the designated person in charge were present during the inspection. The person in charge facilitated the inspection and the roster showed that at all times the person in charge was present during the opening hours of the service.
- (2)
- All staff files were reviewed on site on the day of inspection.
- (a) (b) Validated references from staff members’ past employers, in particular the most recent employer were available for review. Validated references from reputable sources were available for review.
- (c) A vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of all-staff members was available for review.
- (d) Police vetting from other police authorities was available as was required for one staff member.

(3)
Required vetting had been carried out prior to staff member being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4)
All employees held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5-7 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(6)(a)(b)
Not applicable as no employee had signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016, to the effect that they intended to retire from employment in a pre-school service.

(6A)
No employee was working with children under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) on the day.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures, and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

A site-specific book of policies was available in the service and staff had received training in service policies and had access to copies of these policies. The policies reviewed on site on the day included:

- Policy on Administration of Medication
- Policy on Safe Sleep
- Fire Safety Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Policy on Behaviour Management

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.*
- (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) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection. The registered provider ensured that there were sufficient adults working directly with the children and records showed that the adult child ratio was upheld in the service.
- (3)
- The registered provider had ensured that the adult child ratio was correctly maintained throughout the inspection and records showed that sufficient adults were rostered to work in the service each day.
- (8)
- (a) The roster showed that at least 2 adults are on the premises at all times .

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker, or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

The registered provider had ensured that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations was available on the premises and could be viewed by

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker, or contractor, and
- (c) an authorised person.

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

Independence and social interaction were encouraged. Children were supported to be self-caring in keeping with their stages of development and take care of their personal belongings. The children were offered choice throughout their time in the service, this was reflected in the availability of toys and equipment which were arranged in a child friendly manner and could be easily accessed and the self-selected.

Children were encouraged to play together and invite others to play with them . It was observed that some children chose to relax in the cosy corner provided for their use.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

Staff remained constant, with the same staff in the service each day which supported continuity of care and provided opportunity for children to form relationships with the staff. It was observed that the children appeared comfortable in the company of staff and a warm relaxed atmosphere was noted.

PHYISCAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

The service was cheerfully decorated and painted in fresh colours. Childrens art work was displayed along the hall wall and these creations, modelled from the famous painting “Starry Night” reflected the children’s illuminated interpretations of the masterpiece.

Staff were actively engaged in rearranging and updating play rooms that were not in use on the day of inspection in preparation for the new playschool term.

Three outdoor areas were provided to the rear of the premises with different surfaces including a grass area and all-weather soft surfacing. Wooden equipment included climbing, swinging, and sliding equipment were available and it was noted that children played with the outdoor kitchen and the toy shop in the sheltered play area . Two sheltered areas were in place to protect children from rain .

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 registered provider maintained documentary evidence that an indoor and outdoor of environmental risk assessments carried out in the service daily.

Cleaning, sanitising products and equipment were stored in a designated locked cupboard out of reach of children.

The heating system was checked and maintained by a professional person. The registered provider had recently purchased a new air conditioning system for the service for use in hot weather.

A system of pest control was in place to safeguard against pests.

Infection Control:

Staff were familiar with the infection control policy. The service was clean, and it was observed that staff members were engaged in cleaning through the session and at the end of the session. Children were observed washing their hands regularly and adults were observed offering assistance if necessary.

The service was well ventilated with openable windows and air purification system was in place.

Administration of Medication:

A site-specific medication management policy was available in the service.

Staff were familiar with policy and practice in relation to safe administration of medication.

No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

Two designated sleeping rooms were provided which were located within easy access of the playrooms, one room attached to the toddler room and the other was located to the front next to the office. Temperatures were monitored in the rooms, and both were well ventilated.

The staff were informed of the safe sleep policy of the service and were aware of the safe sleep practices outlined in the sleeping policy.

Sleeping children were monitored and a record of sleep checks were maintained. It was observed that children were sleeping in both sleep rooms during the inspection.

Soft seating and cosy rest corners were available in the playrooms.

Fire Safety:

The fire exits were unobstructed.

A notice of the fire assembly point was on display to show fire assembly point to the back of the service.

Outing:

The registered provider stated no outing were undertaken from the service.

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 firefighting 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

A written record was available of the fire drills carried out in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as being carried out on 03 July 2023 .

(b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available. The fire alarms were serviced on June 07, 2023, and the firefighting equipment was also checked on that date.

(2)

The record was available and open to parents, guardians, employees, and the authorised person.

(3)

The person in charge stated that records were retained for a period of 5 years after creation.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the premises.

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

The person in charge and four other staff members had up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and were available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible location on the premises and staff brought a first aid box out to the play facility when children were playing outside.

(b) The first aid box was readily available in the service at all times

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of up-to-date insurance cover for the number of children attending the service was available in the service.

The insurance certificate was valid until March 2024.

Part IX - Inspection and Enforcement

Regulation 33 – Furnishing of information to agency

A registered provider shall furnish the Agency with such information as the Agency may reasonably require for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations and the information shall be in such form, if any, as may be specified by the Agency.

Compliance Information

The registered provider facilitated the inspection and provided access to all information as was required for completion of the inspection.