

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD009
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Name of Service:	Birchwood Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Birchwood House, Ballytruckle Road, Waterford.
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Eircode:	X91 HK85
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Name of Registered Provider:	Olivia O'Hanlon
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	11 November 2022
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No of pre-school children:	AM	1	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City.
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Ryan
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

The service is located in Waterford City and is part of a direct provision center. The service opened in 2006. The premises used is an old church building on the grounds of what was formally a convent. The service consists of one large early years room with sanitary accommodation, nappy changing facilities and a designated food preparation area. There is a secure outdoor play area adjacent to the premises. The opening hours of the service are from 09:30 to 12:30 hours Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Additionally, the service offers an afterschool programme for school aged children living in the center.

Staffing

The registered provider is the manager of the reception center. The service employs two childcare workers who have qualifications at a minimum level 5 and above in Early 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 regulations 9,11,19,22,25, and 26.

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, and the child 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) The manager was the designated person in charge. The service also had a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) At all times during the inspection the manager was on the premises.

(2)
There was no change in the staff since the last inspection. All staff files were compliant on review at the last inspection.

(4)
There was evidence that both staff employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework. There was evidence of continuous professional development and qualification certificates on file.

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

The service had all of the policies, procedures and statements required under Schedule 5 of the Childcare act 1991 (early Years Services) Regulations 2016. Many of the policies and procedures had been updated. The policies, procedures and statements that were required to be available for parents were accessible in a designated folder on the premises. It was documented that staff were involved in the recent review.

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 inspection there was 1 child, aged 3 being cared for by 2 staff. The manager reported that 5 children aged 3 to 5 years of age were enrolled to start before Christmas.

(2)
The staff: child ratios exceeded the requirement for the Childcare (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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,

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations and discussions with staff reflect the children's experience within the service.

Supporting relationships:

The service was a designated child centered play space located in a building, situated between two main buildings of the direct provision center. The service provided the younger children the opportunity for a break away from the communal living environment and gave parents personal time and space.

The staff were observed to be caring and patient in all their interactions with the child on the day of the inspection. The atmosphere was nurturing and caring. In conversation with the staff the inspector observed an understanding and empathy for the families experiences on arrival to Ireland. There was a good rapport observed between the two staff and a commitment to teamwork was evident.

Physical and material environment:

The playroom was warm, safe and spacious, and laid out to accommodate the needs of the children. Areas of interest included: A cubie house and home corner with a sink, cooker, fridge, tea sets, mops, brushes, dustpan, ironing boards and a toy iron. A small world play area, complete with an ample supply of match box size cars/trucks and tractors on play mats was observed. A messy play area with a sand box and a plumbed sink for easy access to water play. A reading area with large soft washable mats and cushions.

Outdoor environment

A designated grassed surface play area was secured with timber fencing. The play space had a timber activity unit with swings of various heights and a slide. This area was enjoyed by all the children in the center. The overall grounds of the center had green spaces and gardens with mature trees that provided for nature walks.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

All the food for the children was supplied daily from the direct provision center. A safe secure food preparation area was available in the service with toaster, kettle, and storage units.

Food included the provision of breakfast if needed. The snack consisted of bananas and milk or water to drink. The staff member was observed to sit and eat with the child.

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)

Five of the staff employed to work in the service had current First Aid Responder Training for children. The registered provider stated that at least four people trained in first aid were available at all times during the operational hours of the service.

(2)

(a) There was a first aid box on the in each childcare room wall mounted in an easily accessible position in each kitchenette area.

(b) Both first aid boxes were suitably equipped and available at all times.

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

- (1)
- (a) A record in writing of fire drills indicated that the last fire drill took place on the premises 27 September 2022.
 - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were maintained. It was recorded that fire equipment was last serviced on 9 September 2022 and smoke alarms were last serviced on 19 October 2022.
- (4)
- The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the childcare room.