

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015WH005 | | | |
| Name of Service: | Dunaree Childcare & Pre-school LTD | | | |
| Address of Service: | 1 Mayfield, Guildford, Tyrellspass, Co. Westmeath | | | |
| Eircode: | N91 ND77 | | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Mairead Hyland | | | |
| Service type: | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional | | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 14/09/2023 | | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 21 | PM | 20 |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. | | | |
| Inspection undertaken by: | C. O' Connor Hughes | | | |
| 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 service provides full day care places to children. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The age range of children attending the service is 0 to 6 years of age. The service operates between the hours of 07:00 – 18:00 on a Monday to Friday basis. The service is registered for a school age service, no children are in attendance currently.

The Early Years' Service is located in a single storey adapted building and provides a toddler room, a pre-school room, a sleep room and a kitchen. Outdoor play areas are attached to front and back of the premises. The service is located in Tyrellspass, Co. Westmeath.

Staffing

There were three adults present including the deputy designated person in charge on the 14 September 2023 working directly with the children. A relief staff member and the registered provider arrived at the service shortly after the inspectors arrival. The registered provider stayed for the duration of the inspection and for the closing meeting.

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.

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 co-operation 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

(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 designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available in the service.

(b)

The deputy designated person in charge and registered provider were present in the service.

The files of six staff members were reviewed and the following was noted.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available from past employers and a reputable source in respect of all adults.

(c)

Garda Vetting disclosures were available in respect of all adults.

(d)

Police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(3)

The procedures in respect (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) were carried out by the registered provider prior to the employment of adults.

(4)

Adults held a major award at Level 5 and 6 in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.
- (2)
There were twenty-one children attending the service supervised directly by four adults. The registered provider prepared the main meal for the children.
- (8)(a)
The staff roster indicated that two adults are on the premises at all times.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1)

A sampling process has been used and ten child records were inspected. Information relating to (a)(b)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)(i) was available in respect of the children attending the service.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) and (k).

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

Parental information was available in respect of Regulation 16 (1)(a) to (g) and shared with parents via a parent handbook at the start of the pre-school term.

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

A copy of the of Part V11A (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No.40 of 2013)) of the Act and Regulations was available for inspection by (a)(b)(c).

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)

Children were observed to engage in various play activities that included free play, dress up and tabletop activities supported by staff. Children were encouraged to be independent while putting on their outdoor clothes while getting ready for outdoor play supported by staff. Regular nappy changing was carried out and as required.

Good communication was observed between the staff member and the child. Young children slept on an individual need's basis in the sleep room. Children's clothes were protected as they wore bibs at mealtimes.

Children enjoyed their dinner, they conversed and interacted with their peers and staff while discussing playing on water slides.

Staff were familiar with each child and their daily routine. Younger children settling in were reassured in a calm and caring manner when they upset. Staff were positive towards children using eye contact while sitting with children, soft language tones and individual names.

Positive praise was given to children on the completion of activities. A verbal handover to parents was observed at collection time. Newsletters are sent to parents with information updates on a monthly basis.

The playrooms were laid out with low level tables and chairs. Toys and equipment were available on low level shelving accessible to children. Dress up, a home area, a rest area with books and construction area were noted in the pre-school room. The toddler room had a rest area, a kitchen and a smaller play area for younger babies.

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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Play equipment was provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, tabletop activities, sand play and a home area.

(b)

A separate sleep room was available for children under two years of age to sleep in as required. A rest area was noted in the pre-school rooms for children to rest and relax.

(3)(a)

The outdoor play areas for children were safe and secure surrounded by fencing. An absorbent surface was in place in the front outdoor play area and a grassed area was noted to the back of the service.

Toys and equipment include a wooden structure with climbing wall and two slides, a kitchen, sand play, bicycles, swings, two slides and a playhouse. All children were observed at outdoor play during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)(a)

The new wooden frame containing two swings in the play area to the front of the service was not secured into the ground which posed a potential risk of injury to a child.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Brackets to stabilise swing to the ground will be put in place. Timeframe 31 October 2023.

Continue to monitor stability of swings following addition of brackets.

Supporting documentation submitted

None

Summary Comment

The non compliance has not been addressed. The Regulatory requirement has not been met.

The registered provider shall submit evidence to the Early Years Inspectorate that the corrective action has been carried out on the 31 October 2023.

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

A menu plan was in place depicting the main meals given to children on a daily basis. The service provides breakfast and the main meal to children attending on a full day care basis. At 10.15 children enjoyed healthy snacks consisting of fruit, yoghurt and sandwiches with water to drink.

At 12:10 the main meal of mince stew, carrots and potato was offered to children. A second helping was enjoyed by children in the pre-school room. A choice of water or milk was offered to the children.

Parents provide snacks and drinks for the children attending on a full day care and sessional basis.

A fridge is available for the storage of perishable foods.

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 service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within the service. An intercom system is in use for parents and visitors to access the service. The keys to the front door were located out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. The nappy changing procedure observed was carried out as per the services' nappy changing procedure.

Administration of Medication:

No medicine was given at the time of the inspection. A temperature reducing medication was available if a child presented with a high temperature. The medication was stored correctly in the service.

Safe Sleep:

Physical checks were carried out on sleeping children in the toddler sleep room. A sleep log was recorded noting the colour, position and breathing of the sleeping child. The temperature of the room was recorded at 19 degrees Celsius by the service's thermometer. A sleep monitor was in place in the toddler room to observe children while sleeping.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were free from obstruction. A fire assembly point was noted to the front of the service.

Outing:

A risk assessment was available for the annual outing that had taken place from the service in 2022.

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 staff members were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)
A first Aid box was available located near the kitchen in the service.

(b)
A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school 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.

(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 for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 6 September 2023.

(b)
A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The smoke alarms and firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced on the 10 August 2022 and 21 November 2022 respectively.

(4)
A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2024.

Additional regulation inspected

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (a)
The premises consists of a single storey building which appeared to be stable in structure.
- (b)
The main entrance door to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. The inspector signed the visitor book on arrival at the service. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.
- (c)
Openable windows provided both natural light and ventilation in the pre-school rooms. Wall vents were in place. The environmental room temperatures recorded were approximately 18.8 °C. The light fittings were covered and fully operational to provide adequate artificial light to the rooms.
- (d)
The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. Evidence was available that indicated that the premises was rodent proofed on the 13 September 2023.
- (e)
Suitable sanitary accommodation was available for the number of children in attendance. A separate staff toilet is available in the service. The sanitary accommodation that included the nappy changing area was ventilated by openable windows. The sanitary accommodation was stocked with a sufficient supply of liquid soap and a hand dryer. The water temperature at the wash hand basins was recorded at 35.8°C.
Foot operated pedal bins were available in the pre-school room for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Non-Compliance Information

(d)

1. The highchair seat in the toddler room was torn at the base and required replacing.
2. The cover of the baby chair in the toddler room required cleaning.
3. The couch cover in the rest area in the pre-school room was stained and required replacement.
4. The splashback at the back of the sinks in the sanitary accommodation required painting.
5. Small holes were noted in the walls of the sanitary accommodation that required repair and painting.
6. Patchy areas in the walls were noted in the corridor area near the sanitary accommodation that required painting.
7. The fencing in the outdoor play area at the back of the service was in disrepair and required painting.
8. The foot operated pedal bin was not working in the sanitary accommodation.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(d)

1. Highchair has been replaced.
Ensure highchairs are in good working order.
2. Baby chair in toddler room has been removed.
Ensure all equipment in the toddler room is clean.
3. New rest area seating has been provided.
Use new rest area seating and monitor for stains.
4. Walls surrounding sanitary accommodation has been repaired and painted.
Monitor area for requirement for repair and upkeep.
- 5&6. Patchy areas in the walls in the corridor will be repaired. Timeframe 31 October 2023.
Monitor for and action maintenance and upkeep jobs.
7. Fencing in the outdoor area of the service will be painted once weather permits. Timeframe Springtime.
Ongoing maintenance of outdoor space when weather permits.
8. Bin replaced in sanitary accommodation with new foot pedal operated bin.

Ensure broken objects are replaced in a timely manner.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

(d)

The non compliance has been addressed in respect of point 1,2,3,4,8. The Regulatory requirement was met.

The non compliance has not been addressed in respect of point 5,6 and 7. The Regulatory requirement has not been met.

The registered provider shall submit evidence in respect of point 5,6 and 7 to the Early Years Inspectorate that the corrective actions has been carried out on the 31 October 2023.