

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW157
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Name of Service:	Pixies Pre-School
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Address of Service:	162A Fernhill, Arklow, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	Y14 HN90
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Name of Registered Provider:	Catherine Morris
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona Condon
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

This sessional service is in a residential area in Arklow town, County Wicklow. It is purpose built and located at the rear of the registered provider's home. There were 19 children present on the day of inspection. The service is registered as a part-time service which can accommodate a maximum of 44 children. Presently it is open from Monday to Friday between 09.00am and 13.30pm hours for 38 weeks of the year and provides care and education to children aged between two and a half years and five years of age. There are two care rooms in operation, namely The Oak room upstairs and the Elm room downstairs. A large outdoor area is available to the children at the front of the building.

Staffing

There are four staff employed one of whom is the registered provider.

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 and safety. 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 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

(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

(2)

Files for four adults were reviewed.

(a)(b) Eight written and validated references were available for four adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for four adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as no staff member had been employed outside the state for a period of more than six months as an adult.

(4)

The four adults employed held major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at National Framework for 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.*
- (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 four adults present working directly with nineteen pre-school children throughout the period of the inspection.
- (3) The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the morning.

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.

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

Twelve files were examined.

The records required in writing in relation to (a)-(i) above was kept for each child. The children's files were located in a secure place in the service.

(3)(c) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) (a)-(i) was open to inspection on the premises by the inspector.

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)

Basic Needs of Infants and Children

- A healthy nutritious snack in line with the healthy eating policy of the service was enjoyed by the children on the day of inspection. Staff sat with the children while eating and assisted them when needed.
- The children attending both rooms appeared relaxed and contented in the pre-school.
- Drinking water was available for the children throughout the day.
- The children used the toilet independently and assistance given if required. One child, who required to have a nappy, was changed in privacy and the staff member engaged warmly with him during this time.

- A rest area was available in both rooms and was used by the children at intervals during the session.
- The Elm room had access to a covered outdoor area off their room. For intervals during the morning free movement of children was noted between indoors and outdoors with the children choosing what toy/equipment they wished. Each room had access to a larger outdoor area also where age-appropriate toys and equipment was available.

Supporting Relationships around Children

- The adults present were observed showing warmth and sensitivity towards all of the children in their care.
- There was evidence that the service worked in partnership with parents. It was stated that a verbal handover on the child's day occurred at collection time for each child. The service also communicated using alternative means such as email, texting and phoning. Parent-teacher meetings were held routinely.

Physical and Material Environment

- The play resources available to the children were accessible, organised and stored on low level shelving which allowed the children to select and replace items and materials of interest.
- There was an adequate amount of age-appropriate furniture and equipment available in the rooms. Equipment included Montessori equipment, construction, toy animals, puzzles and a library.
- There was evidence of the children's artwork on display in the rooms.
- An outdoor area partly covered with rubberised tiles and partly with cement was available at the front of the service. Both groups availed of outdoor play. Play equipment included balance beams, a slide, climbing equipment, rocking horse, sand play and a mud kitchen.

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 entrance gate and the entrance door were secure. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor and outdoor equipment and environment.

Infection Control:

The staff member supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues and paper towels. Sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels for handwashing. Written cleaning schedules were on display for the room environment and sanitary area which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The staff members were familiar with required safe practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored.

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) On the day of inspection, the four adults present had a current certificate in adult in First Aid Response and were immediately available to the pre-school children.

(2)

- (a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school room.
- (b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending 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 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 record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 11/11/2024.
- (b) Written records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms, dated August 2024 and March 2024 respectively.
- (4) Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in both rooms and in the hallway of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

All the children were supervised at all times during the inspection.