

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW176		
Name of Service:	Cocoon Childcare- Blessington		
Address of Service:	Blessington Town Centre, Blessington, Co. Wicklow		
Eircode:	W91 Y403		
Name of Registered Provider:	Barry Cunningham		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	17/08/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	43	PM 42
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow		
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke and S. Quigley		
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

This full day care service was first established in 2008 and is located in the urban setting of Blessington Town Centre in Co. Wicklow. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 0 to six years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 07.30 hrs and 18.30hrs (including a sessional Early Childhood and Education Scheme (ECCE) service from 09.15 hrs to 12.15 hrs for 38 weeks of the year). A school age service is also provided. The premises is a detached purpose-built building with six pre-school rooms, two dedicated sleep rooms, an office, staff room and kitchen. There is a large outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

Sixteen people are employed in the service and there were 13 adults present on the day of inspection. Ten staff members were working directly with the children. The service manager was supernumerary and was available to assist as required and was engaged in facilitating the inspection. Also present on the day of inspection was the operations manager and the relief chef. The registered provider does not work with the pre-school children and was not 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 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 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,*
- (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

There are 16 adults employed in the pre-school service, 14 staff members work directly with the children and there is a fully time chef and relief chef. These files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(1)(a)

The service had a person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)

Written past employer validated references were available in respect of sixteen adults.

(c)

Completed Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for sixteen adults employed.

(d)

International police vetting was available for five adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Fourteen staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent.

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 registered provider ensured that the required written policies procedures and statements specified in schedule 5 were in place in the service.

The following policies and procedures were reviewed.

1. Administration of Medicine.
2. Complaints policy.

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)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)

The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were 10 adults employed and present with 43 children on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were two adults on the premises at all times. This was supported by the staff roster.

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.*

(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

The person in charge ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The person in charge ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

(5)

The person in charge had evidence that all children's records were kept for a period of two years from the time a child commenced in the pre-school 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:

(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.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)

(h)

There were details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis available for inspection.

(i)

There was evidence of staff rosters on a daily basis.

- (j)
There were recorded details of medication administered to a child attending the service with signed parental consent.
- (k)
There were recorded details of all accidents, injuries or incidents involving a child attending the service.
- (3)
The above listed documentation was open to inspection by an authorised person.

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 door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspectors to the service.
- Documentary evidence was available of daily risk assessments being carried out in the service.
- All toys were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- Each care room had access to the outdoor area, which was suitable, safe and secure.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in each pre-school room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- Each pre-school room had access to a sanitary area. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- A foot pedal bin was available in each area for the safe disposal of used paper towels.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after mealtimes.
- Hand washing by adults and children was observed before snacks, after using the toilet and outdoor play.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the pre-school rooms.
- Hand sanitiser gel was available in the pre-school rooms and at prominent points throughout the service.

Administration of Medication:

On the day of inspection, pain reducing medicine was observed being administered to a child. The correct practices were observed for the administration and recording of the medicine given. This was in line with the Administration of Medicines policy of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

In the Junior Wobbler sleep room, the cable from the CD player and a string of decorative lights were within easy reach of two children in their cots. This was brought to the attention of the staff member in the sleep room. This posed an injury risk to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The cot placed closest to the cd player and decorative lights has been moved. Please see photograph attached. The Centre Manager has addressed this safety concern with the staff team and is monitoring the baby sleep room daily to ensure the cots are correctly positioned.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence was submitted with the CAPA response to demonstrate the cd player and decorative lights have been removed.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 23 General Safety has been addressed and will be revised on next inspection.

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)
There was a staff member trained in FAR first aid present and available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)(a)
A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place within the service office. The location of which was noted in each pre-school room.

(b)
The first aid box was available to the children attending the service 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-
(c) an authorised person.

(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)

There was evidence of regular fire drills haven taken place within the service. This was confirmed by staff members when asked about same. The most recent fire drill took place on the 31st of July 2023.

(b)

There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated 17th of August 2023 and the 30th of May 2023 respectively.

(2)(c)

These records were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within each pre-school room and 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 service was adequately insured for 145 children and the policy expires on 31st of January 2024.

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 building appeared to be of a sound and stable structure.
- (b)
The building was found to be safe and secure.
- (d)
The building was clean, well maintained, this was supported by the cleaning schedules present in the pre-school rooms.
- (e)
The building was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities to meet the needs of the children and adults in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (c)
The registered provider did not ensure that the premises was adequately ventilated as evidenced by the following.

On the day of inspection, the temperatures of care rooms in use, located on the righthand side of the premises were not maintained within the required range of 18 to 22 degrees Celsius for habitable rooms.

Between the hours of 11.35 and 12.35 and 12.40 and 13.15 the temperatures of three pre-school rooms ranged between 23.2 and 26 degrees Celsius.

Despite mitigation measures such as opening windows, doors and air-cooling devices being in place, staff failed to reduce the temperature to within the required range at any time during the inspection. The room temperatures remained at 23.2 degrees following mitigation measures.

The ambient outdoor temperature varied between 18 and 22 degrees Celsius.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c)
We have hired industrial air conditioning units for the care rooms. We are currently working on sourcing black out blinds for our ceiling windows. We are awaiting a response from the architect, to provide a window code so that we can order the blinds to minimise heat from direct sunlight entering the room.

Supporting documentation submitted

(c)
Photographic evidence of an invoice for the hire of four air conditioning units and a receipt for the purchase of one air conditioning unit have been submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The above actions, when implemented, will address the non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 29 (c) – Premises. This will be reviewed on next inspection.