

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015WX114 | | |
| Name of Service: | Rainbow Childcare at Tara Villa | | |
| Address of Service: | Barntown, Barntown, Co. Wexford | | |
| Eircode: | Y35 W583 | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Kate Lowney | | |
| Service type: | Full Day | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 08/02/2024 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 37 | PM 9 |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspector Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford. | | |
| Inspection undertaken by: | C. 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 | | |

Description of service

Rainbow Childcare at Tara Villa operates as a full day care preschool service. The service is located outside Wexford town and caters for children aged between 1 and 6 years of age. The service is located in a house used solely for the purpose of the children. The service consists of an entrance hall, three playrooms, a kitchen, children and staff toilets. There is a large, secured garden and play area outside.

Staffing

The service employs eight staff to work with the preschool children attending the service. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. The childcare manager is the designated person in charge and assists across the rooms as needed. All the staff working directly with children in the service held the minimum of level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and 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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulations:

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and Recruitment,
Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels,

Regulation 19 (a) Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,
Regulation 25 First aid,
Regulation 26 Fire Safety and
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 9 February 2024. There was one staff member working directly with the children who did not have evidence available on file that Garda vetting was in place. The registered provider submitted the Garda vetting on 16 February 2024 in respect of the one staff member to the office of the early years inspector.

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

(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)(b)

On the day of the inspection there was a designated person in charge of the service.

(2) The staff files for eight staff working directly with children were reviewed on the day.

(a)(b)

There were nine validated references for five employees were kept in each staff members file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for seven staff working in the service.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were available on file for the staff who had lived outside the state for more than six consecutive months.

(4)
Certificates of qualifications for all staff members working directly with the preschool children were available on file.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) The registered provider failed to take all necessary steps to ensure that some of the staff recruited were suitable for their roles as demonstrated by the following findings:

(a)(b)

Two written and validated references were not on file for three staff members. One written and validated reference was not on file for one staff member.

(c)

Garda vetting was not available on file for one staff member working with the children. An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Vetting and references are available and on file for all members of staff. Regular monthly checks on the staff folder will ensure all vetting is in date. Some references had been misfiled and the new manager now has a new filing system to ensure the regulation is being followed.

Supporting documentation submitted

References, Garda vetting disclosures submitted.

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

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)

Throughout the period of the inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children attending the service.

(2)

In the morning:

- **Busy Bees room:** There were 19 children in the care of 3 staff. (All aged between 3 and 5 years).
- **Funny Frogs room:** There were 15 children in the care of 2 staff. (All aged between 2 and 4 years).
- **Happy Hippos room:** There were 3 children in the care of 1 staff. (2 aged between 1 and 2 years and 1 aged between 2 and 3 years).

In the afternoon:

- **Busy Bees room:** There were no preschool children.
- **Funny Frogs room:** There were 7 children in the care of 1 staff. (all aged between 2 and 3 years).
- **Happy Hippos room:** There were 2 children in the care of 1 staff. (1 aged between 1 and 2 and 1 aged between 2 and 3 years).

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)

The following observations and discussions with staff reflected the children's experience within the service focusing on the areas of basic needs and supporting relationships on the day of inspection.

The routine of the children in the happy hippos room was led by the needs of the child. Children's sleep routine was based around their home pattern and nappies were attended to regularly throughout the day. A child who became upset was cuddled and comforted by the staff member. Children had freedom of movement within the room with the staff member fully engaged in play down on the floor with the children.

In the busy bees and funny frogs rooms the children's artwork, birthday walls and family photos were displayed. Both rooms were bright and clean and well-lit by natural light. Children had access to sufficient toys and materials, which were located on low level shelves around the room.

The transitions between activities were calm and smooth, showing that the children were familiar with their daily routines and well settled in the service. Minor episodes were managed calmly, and children were cuddled and comforted when needed. The children ate their snacks in the rooms, with the snack time relaxed and unrushed. The staff helped the children to tidy up and get ready for their next activity. The staff spoke with parents daily at drop off and collection time, with the service also maintaining a communication diary. Children had access to three outdoor play areas, and wellies and wet gear were available.

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 two entrance doors to the preschool were secured. The outdoor play area was fully enclosed. Cleaning products were stored out of reach and inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

Children washed their hands before eating and were supervised with toileting as needed. Soothers were washed and sterilised daily.

Safe Sleep:

The service had a designated sleep room, located within the happy hippos room with cots to meet the needs and ages of young children. Sleep mattresses were available for older children to sleep. Individual bed linen was available, which was changed between children as needed. In the funny frogs room, young children were settled to sleep on sleep beds in the room after dinner. Children who did not wish to sleep were provided with alternative activity.

Staff who spoke with the inspector, were aware of safe sleep practices for example, how often a sleeping child is physically checked, recording of the observations such as colour, position and breathing rate and the optimum sleep room temperature. The staff stated they remain in the rooms with the children till they settled to sleep and carried out physical sleep checks every 10 minutes as per the service policy on safe sleep.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1.
There was no warm water available for hand washing in the busy bees toilets and happy hippos nappy changing area.
2.
There were inconsistencies observed in nappy changing practices. For example, not all children had their hands washed after nappy changing and the nappy changing mat was not cleaned after some nappy changes.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The timer for the hot water tank servicing the two areas is now working correctly. Staff have been re-trained regarding nappy changing procedure and signs in the nappy change area remind them to wash hands and the changing mat after each nappy change. Spot checks on the availability of hot water are carried out and the timer can be accessed if the hot water runs out.

Supporting documentation submitted.

No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response was satisfactory to meet the requirements of the regulation.

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 were staff trained in first aid for children available to the children attending the preschool service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

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)(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were serviced. The last maintenance carried out in the service was recorded as having taken place in September 2023.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Monthly fire drills had not been carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill was carried out in September 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Fire drills are again carried out on a monthly basis. A new fire officer has been appointed. A date is marked on the calendar to ensure the fire drills are carried out each month.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the monthly fire drill completed for March.

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available to demonstrate that insurance was in place.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

The service playrooms were clean and well maintained.

Non-Compliance Information

1.
There was evidence of a black substance that had the appearance of mould along the side entrance door, wall, floor and all along by the fridge in the entrance hall.
2.
The entrance hall was cluttered and used for storage.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The black substance has been removed. This area has been added to the cleaning schedule to ensure no such buildup occurs again. The hallways have been cleared. A sign is in place to remind the team not to use the area for storage.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of cleaned doorway and cleared hallways.

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.