

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016DR015
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Name of Service:	The Nest School
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Address of Service:	Waverly Hill, Waverly, Blacklion, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 K573
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lynda Browne
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	58	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Condon & O Quill
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

The childcare service provides sessional and part-time care service to pre-school children who are currently aged between three to five years. The service currently operates between the hours of 08:30 and 14.00 on a Monday to Friday basis. The service is also registered to operate an additional service from 14:00-17:00 daily, which will open in September 2024. The service is located in a purpose-built two storey premises, which is in a residential area in Greystones village, County Wicklow. There are four care rooms and an additional “break-out room” in use to care for the children while indoors. There is also, an office, staff room and a storeroom located on the ground floor. There is a wraparound outdoor area at the rear, front and side of the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment.

Staffing

There are a total of 11 staff members employed to provide direct care to the children. In addition, the manager is available to provide additional care in the rooms when needed. The registered provider is not present on a daily basis.

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 inspectors wish 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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2)
- Documentation was reviewed in respect of all 13 adults:
- (a)&(b) Twenty-six validated written references were available.
- (c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for thirteen staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International Police vetting was available for four staff members who had lived in another state for a period longer than six consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) A record was available evidencing that all staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification.

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) At all times during the inspection an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were fifty-eight children attending the service being supervised by eleven adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) The staff roster demonstrated two adults are on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

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-

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f) (i)

Fifteen files were examined.

In relation to the files examined, the record required in writing in relation to (a)-(f) and (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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(g) & (h)

In relation to (g) above the required information was not available in seven of the children's files examined. In relation to (h) above the required information was not available in four of the children's files examined.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action:

I have created a checklist for all classes with the required information headings for each child. The manager has asked the teachers to check each child's record and flag any gaps in the information. This is currently being undertaken.

Contacted our software system provider to ask them to make all the registration fields mandatory for parents to complete. This will be completed prior to the child's attendance in the service. In September all staff will be given a hard copy of each child's file to check and ensure that all information required is completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of amended childcare records with all information necessary completed.

Copy of email correspondence with the software provider.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 15.

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. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. The large outdoor area was secured with high metal fencing and a wall.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues. 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.

Outing:

The Registered Provider confirmed that no outings are undertaken at this time.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Child A: This child had a medical condition which requires emergency medication in the form of two injections to be available immediately if needed. Only one injection was available on site. The second injection had expired with an expiry date of February 2024. This may cause a weakening of the effectiveness of this medication if it was needed.
2. Child B: A care plan was available for this child, however the information available was insufficient and could lead to a delay in treatment in the event of an emergency.
3. Child C: It is acknowledged that medication was available in the service for this child. However, no care plan was available for this child who had a specific medical condition.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Two new injections for Child A have been provided both with an expiry date 06/25.

The manager has inputted expiry dates of all medication to outlook calendar setting a reminder one month prior to expiry to ask parents for new medication.

2. A more detailed care plan is now in place for child B.
3. A detailed care plan for child C is now in place.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of 2 injections supplied for Child A

Copy of more detailed care plans for child B and C.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified in inspection in relation to Regulation 23.

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)

The registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid was at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. Four staff members had current certificates in First Aid Response.

(2)(a) and (b)

A first aid box was safely stored in a conspicuous position 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 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)

(b) Records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms dated August 2023 and March 2024 respectively.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were displayed in a conspicuous position in all of the care rooms and in the hallway of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

Fire Safety:

(a) A written record of fire drills was available, however it was not up to date. The last fire drill recorded was carried out on 27th of February 2024. This could potentially put the safety of children at risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The May 24 fire drill was undertaken the day after the inspection. A calendar alert is in place to ensure one takes place every month.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of record of fire drill dated 14/05/2024.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 26.

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 children were supervised by staff at all times during the inspection.