

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2016WW009 |
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| Name of Service: | Castle Kidz |
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| Address of Service: | Newcastle Parish Centre, Church Lane, Newcastle, Co. Wicklow |
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| Eircode: | A63 X782 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Rev. Ross Styles |
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| Service type: | Sessional |
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| Date of Inspection: | 09/01/2024 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 9 | 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable |
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Description of service

This sessional service operates in a purpose-built premises which is adjacent to a parish centre in a rural area in County Wicklow. The service is registered to open from Monday to Friday between 09.00am and 12.30pm, and currently provides care and education to children aged between two years and six months to five years of age. The service has one care room and a sanitary area. The outdoor area is available to the children at the rear of the premises. This service is registered to care for a maximum of 16 pre-school children at one time.

Staffing

There are two adults employed who work directly with the children. The registered provider does not have daily access to the children but has an administrative role.

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

(1)(b) The designated person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b) Written and validated past employer references were available in respect of the two adults employed in the service.

(2)(c) Completed Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for two adults employed by the service.

(2)(d) International Police vetting was available for one adult employed who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The two adults held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on Level 5 and Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) International Police vetting was not available for a second adult employed who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Police vetting was provided by the staff member concerned and is now in her file. International vetting will be sought, where relevant, for any future staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of staff member's Police vetting.

Summary Comment

The response from the Registered Provider and the evidence submitted have been considered by the Inspector. The non-compliance in relation to Regulation 9 has been addressed.

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 two adults present working directly with nine pre-school children on the day 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)

Ten files were examined.

In relation to the files examined, the record 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 inspectors.

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;

Compliance Information

(1)

(h) A record was available of each child's attendance with their time of arrival and departure stated.

(i) The staff roster was available and reflected the staff members who were present during the inspection.

(j) A record was available regarding parental consent for the administration of medication in each child's registration form. A method to record medication administration was in place.

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 care room had defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included a home corner, construction toys, dress up, art materials, chalkboards and a library area beside the rest areas. A selection of materials was observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving provided which enabled children to select and replace items and materials of interest. The inspector observed children moving freely, exploring their environment, playing, and engaging with each other and the adults.

At snack time the adults sat with the children who were given their lunch provided by their parents. The staff assisted the children when needed and encouraged conversation. Plenty of time was given to each child to finish their snack.

Staff attended to children's care needs. were observed to help younger children to clean their noses. The children were supported to use the toilet independently while being supervised by staff. Staff were observed to engage warmly with children in their care encouraging children who were settling to partake in activities and taking time to explain and encourage them.

Information was also shared with parents at drop off and collection times.

All children spent time outdoors. A range of equipment suitable to all age groups was available and included a play kitchen, ride-on toys, sand play, water play, chalk board, planting area and a picnic table.

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. A visitor's book was available in the hallway on arrival. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

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.

Fire Safety:

Fire exits were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

At snack time two children had grapes to eat, provided by their parents. The grapes were not cut lengthways which posed a risk of choking. The staff members present did not cut the grapes until asked to do so by the inspector.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Lunch boxes are now checked prior to snack time and any uncut grapes are dealt with. All parents have been informed about the need to cut up grapes in packed lunches.

Our Healthy Eating policy has been amended to reflect the need to be particularly careful with grapes and young children. Our handbook has also been updated. All staff members are aware of the importance of food safety.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copy of amended Healthy Eating policy and amended handbook.

Summary Comment

The response from the Registered Provider and the evidence submitted have been considered by the Inspector. The non-compliance in relation to Regulation 23 has been addressed.

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) An adult trained in First Aid Response was present and 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.

2(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 7th of December 2023
- (1)(b) Records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of fire- fighting equipment and smoke alarms dated November 2023.
- (4) Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

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

At all times during the inspection the pre-school children were supervised.