

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017KE508
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Name of Service:	Sticky Fingers Childcare Centre
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Address of Service:	St. David's, Dublin Road, Naas, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W91X566
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Name of Registered Provider:	Michele Cassidy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	11/01/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	55	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre Child and Family Agency Ballymore Eustace Road Naas Co. Kildare, W91X38W
Inspection undertaken by:	F.Maher
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	N/A
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Description of service

Sticky Fingers Childcare Centre is a private sessional service which is located in a former primary school in Naas town. Four pre-school rooms, a kitchen, office and staff room are provided, three play areas, one at the front and two play areas at the rear are also available for the children.

Sessional care and education is provided to children from 2-6 years of age. Opening hours are from 09:00am-12:00pm for 38 weeks of the pre-school year.

The service is registered to provide school aged childcare.

Staffing

There were twenty two people employed in the service, this included the registered provider, person in charge, eight pre-school staff, one cleaner, one cook, two support staff and eight staff members responsible for school aged care. Seven childcare staff were working directly with the pre-school children 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 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

(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)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

The records of twenty two staff members employed and/or present in the service including the registered provider were reviewed.

(2)(a),(b)

Forty four written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source, in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of twenty two adults employed in the service.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all employed staff members.

(d) Police vetting was available for three staff member who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Five members of staff employed and who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework and the qualifications for two staff members were recognised on the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), list of recognised qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(d)

Police vetting was not available for two staff members who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Documentary evidence was not available of a full award in Early Childhood Care and Education for one staff member working directly with the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Application for duplicate qualification transcript completed and outstanding police vetting received.

Preventive Action

All documentation will be on file for future inspections.

Supporting documentation submitted

Police vetting Documents x 2.

Qualification certificate application document x 1.

Summary Comment

Following review of the submitted documents by the inspectorate, the requirement for Regulation 9(2)(d), (4) has been 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.

(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 55 children attending the service being supervised directly by 7 staff members.

(3)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day as specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(a)
The four pre-school rooms provided were large and bright with plenty of space and well equipped for the children to move about, work and play during their time spent in the service. Three outdoor play areas were available with plenty of defined areas to provide fun and play including gross motor activities for the children. All children availed of outdoor play on the day of inspection.

(b)
Suitable comfortable rest areas were available in each of the four pre-school rooms should a child wish to take a break from activities for some quiet time, rest or read a book. Soft floor mats with soft cushions, in a designated space away from the general room activities provided this quiet area for the children in each room.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Each pre-school room was observed to have age appropriate tables and chairs that children could sit comfortably when engaged in tabletop activities and when eating their snack. Each room had low level shelving and resource units that enabled the children to easily access toys, materials and equipment as needed. Interest areas including, home/kitchen corners, construction, small world and dress up were well resourced with materials and props to encourage the children to use the areas and to self-direct their play, learning and imagination.

Plenty of art and craft materials were available and accessible including materials for cutting, gluing and sticking, paint, paper and play dough. Sand and water was also freely available in each room.

The outdoor play spaces were equipped with a large mud kitchen, sand and water play, seating, a climbing frame and plenty of ride on equipment, one area was covered to provide shelter during inclement weather.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and parents provided the morning snack for their child. Foods provided included sandwiches with various healthy fillings, fresh fruit pieces, crackers, cheese, fromage frais and yoghurts. Children had their own drinks of either water or fruit juice and fresh drinking water was available in the pre-school rooms. Staff members ensured all food provided was nutritious and suitable and during conversation with staff members, they advised they were very observant of any food provided that had the potential risk of choking and immediately halved or cut food into smaller pieces. The staff members also advised they encouraged healthy eating practices with the children and planned an area of the curriculum around healthy foods/eating.

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 door to the service had an electromagnetic keypad locking system and the side gates were both secured with keypad locks, these were controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school rooms. The person in charge documented the inspectors visit to the service in the visitor's book on arrival.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. Daily room risk assessments were carried out and documentary evidence was available in each pre-school room.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towel, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established and observed.

Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues, paper towel and waste.

Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments 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. During conversations with the staff members, they advised they were aware of the procedures to be followed to administer medicine safely to a child if required while attending the service. Medical care plans were in place for any child with a specific medical need or food allergy.

Fire Safety:

Staff advised that regular fire drills take place and all fire exits on the premises were easily recognisable and unobstructed.

Outing:

Outings do not take place from the service, this was confirmed by the person in charge.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(2) Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained for each pre-school room.

(2)
Not applicable as this was not a drop in service.

(3) (a),(b)
The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.

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 on site trained in paediatric first aid and immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)
The first aid equipment was safely stored, in conspicuous positions in each pre-school room.
(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available to the children attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
There were no person(s) with up to date first aid responder (FAR) training in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Far training has been booked for dates in February 2024.

Preventive Action

These certificates will be on file for future inspections.

Supporting documentation submitted

Document x1 with far training dates booked and paid in advance for 19/20/26/27 February 2024.

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 25 has been met and will be reviewed at the time of the next inspection.

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 written record was available of fire drills which were completed monthly in the service, the last recorded fire drill took place 13 December 2023.

(b)

A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire detection system in the premises and were last serviced November 2023 and 2 January 2024 respectively.

(4)

Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in 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

The children were observed being supervised at all times by the staff throughout the morning, this included both indoors and in the outdoor play area, during tabletop activities, hand washing and snack time.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2024. The insurance provided cover for 90 children.