

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018DS505
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Name of Service:	Once Upon A Time
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Address of Service:	Ballymount Retail Centre, Ballymount Little, Ballymount, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D24H5NP
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Name of Registered Provider:	AnneMarie McCormack, David McCormack
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	30/04/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	68	PM	64
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Carysfort house, Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	L. Magee & M. Redmond
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

Once Upon a Time Ballymount was established in 2018 and is privately operated. The service is registered to provide Full Day Care for children aged between one to six years of age. The hours of operation are from 7.30am until 6.30pm, Monday to Friday. This ground floor premises is purposely adapted and located in Ballymount retail business park, Dublin 24. There are five care rooms: Wobbler room 1, Wobbler room 2, Toddler room, Pre-Montessori and Montessori room. A separate sleep room was provided. An outdoor play area is available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There were seventeen adults present on the day of inspection, sixteen of these adults including the designated person in charge were working directly with the children. Additionally on the day of inspection, one of the area managers arrived at 10.40am, the head office director and training and development manager arrived at 11.40am to aid the inspection and provided extra support to the care rooms as required. The registered providers do not work directly with the children.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required:

The inspection plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

- Regulation 9 Management and recruitment
- Regulation 11 Staffing levels
- Regulation 22 Food and Drink
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9, 11, 22 and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Wobbler room 1, Wobbler room 2, Toddler room and Pre-Montessori.

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 area director, area manager, training and development manager, 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

(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

(2). The files of all 22 staff were reviewed as part of the inspection process and for the purpose of assessing compliance with this regulation.

These 22 files were reviewed on the day of the inspection as evidenced below;

- (a) Thirty-nine validated references were available from past employers.
- (b) Five validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) All adults working directly with children had a vetting disclosure dated within the previous 3 years.
- (d) Police vetting was available for all adults who had lived outside the state for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) Fourteen adults employed to work directly with pre-school children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at a minimum of Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth (DCEDIY) to be equivalent. Four adults who did not have the required qualification had a Letter of Qualification Recognition which had been issued by the DCEDIY.

Non-Compliance Information

(9)

(4) Evidence of qualifications were not available on the staff files for three members of staff.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Staff who were unqualified but were enrolled in an Early Childhood Care and Education course were removed from the setting and will be able to apply for a job when they receive their qualifications. The recruitment manager and manager of the setting will ensure all new staff are fully qualified before working in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

The service recently recruited three new members of staff. Qualifications for these adults were submitted but could not be accepted to support this non-compliance as the inspector had not reviewed their full staff file.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met as the unqualified staff have been removed from the service.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the service. There were sixteen adults working directly with sixty eight children on the day of inspection.

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

On the day of inspection, it was evident that the healthy eating policy was being implemented in the service. All children can avail of breakfast, lunch, a snack and dinner on a daily basis. Water was available to all children during the day and with their meals. Extra food was offered to the children. An alternative meal was available for children who did not want the food offered. Bibs were provided to protect children's clothing. Staff sat with the children while they ate their meals which encouraged a social positive environment.

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 secured to prevent unauthorised access or children exiting unsupervised. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children. Window blind cords were secured. Toys and play equipment observed in use by children on the day of inspection were safe and in working order.

Infection Control:

Children's hands were washed before eating and after outdoor play. The adults were observed practising good hygiene practices including washing their hands after cleaning children's noses, handwashing before serving food to children and cleaning tables and chairs before and after children ate from them. Foot pedal bins were used appropriately by adults and older children.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

The fire door going into Wobbler 2 was propped open with a chair during sleep time on the day of inspection. Fire doors should be closed at all times in order to prevent fire and harmful fumes spreading to other areas of the building.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The door was closed. All staff were informed to keep the door closed at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documentation was submitted to support this non-compliance.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the service support the non-compliance. The regulatory requirement has been met.