

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018FL506
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Name of Service:	Mini Manners Pre-School
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Address of Service:	34 Whitestown Avenue, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D15 KD9P
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Name of Registered Provider:	John Byrne
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	23/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	Clíondhna Kerrigan and Stella Murray
Title:	Early Years Inspector and Inspection Registration Manager

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

Mini Manners provides a sessional preschool service for children aged between 2 and 6 years of age. It is open Monday to Friday during the hours of 09:30 to 12:30, 38 weeks of the year.

The preschool is located on the ground floor of a residential house, there is a large care room with 2 sanitary areas, an enclosed outdoor space to the rear of the premises. The care room can be divided with a partition for small group activities depending on the requirements of the children.

Staffing

Three care staff are employed to work directly with the children. The registered provider does not work with the preschool 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 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 examination of compliance under the following Regulations:

- Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment – (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(3)(4)
- Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(3)(8) (c)
- Regulation 19(a)
- Regulation 23
- Regulation 25(1)(2)(a)(b)
- Regulation 28

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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 has a designated person in charge and a named person who can deputise as required,
- (b) The designated person in charge was present at all times throughout the inspection

(2)

- (a) There were 6 references from past employers available for the 3 staff who work directly with the children.

- (b) References from 2 reputable sources were available for the registered provider, who does not work with the children.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 4 members of staff and the registered provider. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes for 1 staff member as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report
- (d) Police vetting records were not required as none of the adults lived abroad.
- (3) All references and Garda vetting procedures were completed prior to any staff member being allowed access or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) Each employee working directly with the children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Qualification Framework.

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) On the day of Inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service. There were 3 adults working with 13 children aged from 2.8 years to 3.5 years of age.
- (3) On the day of Inspection, the adult to child ratio was maintained at all times.

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) Each child's learning, development and wellbeing was facilitated within the preschool as evidenced by the following ways.

Basic needs:

- The children appeared content and had opportunities to explore and develop play during the inspection. For example: 2 children began role playing 'Doctor', staff encouraged development of play by engaging themselves in the role play bringing other children into the mix in an inclusive and seamless manner, encouraging a sense of belonging and inclusivity. The daily routine was well structured with time allocated for Outdoor play.
- The staff spoke to the children in respectful child centred manner, it is noted that the inspection took place at the beginning of the school year however staff were able to discuss each child's individual preferences and needs.
- The service had a Healthy Eating Policy which was reflected in the children's own snacks and drinks which were brought from home, these included sandwiches, fruit and yogurts. Mealtimes was a relaxed and social event with staff sitting and eating with the children.
- Children were supported in toilet use depending on their individual needs. Toilet accidents were dealt with in a prompt and dignified manner.

Supporting Relationships

- During interactions observed staff demonstrated warmth and kindness towards the children by calling them by their names and using positive language.
- The preschool had well established relationships between the families attending the preschool, with many of the children attending having siblings who previously attended the service.
- The preschool communicates with parents via a mobile application whilst also taking opportunities at pick up times/ drop off times to discuss the children's day.

- The children sat at low levelled tables for eating and playing both of which were relaxed and unhurried events promoting socialisation skills.

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

- The care room was an inviting space for play and exploration, there was designated areas of interest including a home area (pots, pans, kitchenware, food boxes found at home), construction area (sensory play, jigsaws, small plastic construction blocks), real world play area.
- The furniture in the room was adequately maintained and clean, they were of a low level and appropriate for the age range of the children attending. Tables available were of differing sizes and shapes, inviting play with various numbers of children throughout the space. There was sufficient numbers of tables and chairs for children attending the service
- All toys and materials in the care room were appropriate to the age and development of the children attending the service. They were stored at eye level and clearly labelled.
- The enclosed outdoor area had a variety of gross motor enhancing activities of which the children could use freely, whilst supervised. These consisted of a slide, a wall mounted tyre swing and wooden V-shaped climbing frame. There was a wooden wigwam and, mud kitchen allowing for development of home play. Soft padded artificial grass was underfoot with wooden sleepers bordering the edges of the outdoor space. There were small pockets of greenery in which the children were observed touching and exploring evolving their sensory play There was a low-level picnic bench for rest.

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:

- Upon arrival the Inspectors noted that the main door to the service was fully secured. Access was granted via a doorbell system in which a staff member allowed access, ensuring restricted access was maintained and children were prevented from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The outdoor area was accessed via the care room, it was fully enclosed and secure.
- Hazardous materials were stored out of reach of children,

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition throughout. Up to date cleaning schedules were noted on the walls throughout the service.
- Sanitary areas were available to the children, with changing mats available as needed. It was noted that no nappy changing occurred on the day of inspection.
- Handwashing was carried out both prior and after activities or as required, this was undertaken in a well organised relaxed manner. Liquid soap and thermostatically controlled warm water were available to the children.
- Toilet roll was hygienically stored and in easy reach of the children, preventing cross contamination.
- Lidded bins were in use throughout the service ensure appropriate disposal of waste.
- Food brought in from home was refrigerated in each child's lunch box/bag, reducing the risk of bacteria growth.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not given at the time of inspection; staff were able to safely outline the procedure for administration of medication if required. Anti febrile medication was stored safely out of reach of the children.

Fire Safety:

- Staff members were familiar with the fire evacuation procedures. Smoke alarms and emergency lighting was evident throughout the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for 3 members of staff. However, 1 of these vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Infection Control:

2. Cloth hand towels were in use by children within the sanitary area, this is unhygienic and poses a risk of cross contamination of disease as they were not single use.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Renewal of Garda Vetting has been completed for the staff member in question. The person in charge has been tasked with reviewing all Garda Vetting renewals and has assured they will be applied for in time going forward.

Infection Control:

2. Single use paper towel dispensing units are now available to children within the sanitary areas.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Renewed Garda Vetting disclosure.

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of paper towel dispensing units within the sanitary area.

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 23 the actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified.

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) Persons were trained in First Aid to include First Aid Response (FAR) were immediately available to children attending the service.

(2) (a) (b) Two first aid boxes were safely stored in 2 easily accessible and conspicuous positions on the premises and is readily available to children attending the pre-school service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider has ensured that the premises is adequately insured to include the maximum number of children who can attend the service at one time with an expiry date of 27th of March 2025.