

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019DY009
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Name of Service:	Footprints Early Years
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Address of Service:	IPC Centre, Bulfin Road, Inchicore, Dublin 8, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	DO8 T9T7
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Name of Registered Provider:	Racheal Govan
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	06/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	8
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla. The Child and Family Agency Loughlinstown Health Centre Loughlinstown Drive County Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

Footprints Early Years service was established in October 2019 and is privately operated. It is one of three services owned by the registered provider in the Dublin region. The early years service is registered to provide sessional and part-time education and care for pre-school children from 2 to 6 years. The early years service is located in the community sports centre Inchicore Dublin 8. One care room is available for the children within the centre. The service operates Monday to Friday and offers sessional care from 09:30 to 12:30 and part-time care from 09:00 until 13:30. An outdoor play area is available for the children to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

In total eight staff are employed in the service including an area support manager and the registered provider. On the day of inspection five staff were present including the designated person in charge. The registered provider and area support manager arrived during the inspection and remained on the premises until the closing meeting.

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 plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9(1)(a), (b), (2)(a) - (d) and (4) Management and recruitment

Regulation 11(1), (2) Staffing levels

Regulation 15(1) (a)- (i) Record of a Pre-School Child

Regulation 16(1)(h)-(k) Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 (1)(a) – Health Welfare and Development of Child

Regulation 25 (1), (2)(a) & (b) – Fire Aid

Regulation 26(1), (2)(a), (b) & (4) – Fire Safety

However, on inspection additional non-compliance was identified under Regulation 8 (1) Notification of change in circumstances.

The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations 15 (1)(a) - (i) and 16(1) (h)-(k)

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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person who could deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present at all times during the inspection.

(2) Eight staff files were reviewed as part of the inspection process. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

- (a), (b) Of the sixteen validated, written references that were required, fifteen were available from a past employer and one was available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for eight staff employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable. The staff employed in the service had not lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4) Records were available evidencing that all staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications 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.

(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.

Compliance Information

(1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for part-time day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twelve children attending the service being supervised by four adults on the day of inspection.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of ten records were reviewed for children who were attending the service. The records reviewed contained the following information:

- (a) The name and date of birth of each child.
- (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) There was an area on the registration form where the date when a child would cease to attend the service will be recorded.
- (d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents were recorded and information where parents can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service were also available.
- (e) There was authorisation for the collection of the child.
- (f) The record available supported the recording of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child.
- (g) The name and telephone number of each child's medical practitioner was recorded.
- (h) A record of immunisations received was recorded.
- (i) There was written consent for appropriate medical treatment of a child in the event of an emergency.

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
- (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;
 - (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Details of attendance of each child was recorded at the time of arrival and departure.
 - (i) The staff roster was available.
 - (j) Documentation was available to demonstrate that signed parental consent was required prior to administering medication to a pre-school child.
 - (k) A sample of accident and incidents records were reviewed. The forms were completely correctly and signed by parents and staff.

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 well-being was facilitated within the daily routine of the service. Children were given the opportunity for free play at a designated time. During this time children chose the activity they wished to engage with, and staff were observed to support their choice. Group activities included a painting exercise and additional guidance was provided by staff. There was a calm atmosphere in the service. Children were familiar with their care givers and the daily routine. Staff interacted warmly with the children in their care and they demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care. Staff report they communicate daily with parents as they bring and collect their children from the service.

The care rooms were suitably equipped with designated areas of interest. Toys and equipment were easily accessible from low level shelving provided.

Lunchtime was relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience. Staff sat with the children, engaged in conversation and helped them as needed. Children who wore nappies had them changed as required. Children were supervised washing their hands after outdoor play and prior to eating. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently. All children were given the opportunity for outdoor play and they were observed to enjoy this time together.

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 was evidence to demonstrate that staff had paediatric first aid and four staff employed in the service had completed First aid Responder training and the certificates available were valid until the 27 March 2025. These staff were immediately available to the children attending the pre-school.

(2)

(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box available.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the service 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)

(a) There was a record available of fire drills which had taken place in the premises; the last recorded fire drill was on the 24 October 2024.

(b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment had been serviced on the 19 August 2024 and the Smoke alarm was serviced on the 26 August 2024.

(4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was clearly displayed in the service.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not notify the Agency of a change to the designated person in charge.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A change of circumstance was submitted. The service received an email confirming the change was approved. Ensure that a change of circumstance form is submitted before the person that will be in charge.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of email confirming change in circumstance approved.

Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions submitted. The Regulatory requirement has been met.