

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020DS004
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Name of Service:	Blue Stars Early Years Service
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Address of Service:	Dundrum Methodist Church, Ballinteer Road, Dundrum, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D16 WK27
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Name of Registered Provider:	Annalisse Cedano
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date(s) of Inspection:	20/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	6	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty
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

Blue Stars Early Years Service is registered to provide part-time care to children aged 3 to 6 years and is one of two services run by the registered provider. The service operates from one room within the ground floor of Dundrum Methodist Church in Dundrum, Dublin 14. One care room with associated sanitary accommodation and an outdoor area which is located at the rear of the building is available to the service. The service provides part time service from 9:00am to 1.00pm and 1.30pm to 5.30pm Monday to Friday. The service specifically caters for children with autism.

Staffing

The service employs four staff members to work directly with the children, on the day of inspection all four staff members were present. The registered provider arrived subsequent to the 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, information and records, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16 19, 23, 25 and 26. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 and 16, Information and Records. ...

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 children, registered provider, person in charge and staff 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.

(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

This regulation was assessed in relation to all staff who were employed in the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Of the sixteen references required fourteen written and validated references were available from a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults.

(d) International Police vetting was available for seven staff members who had lived outside of the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(4) Records were available detailing the required qualifications or equivalent for all new staff members.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

One reference was not suitable for one staff member, an alternative source of reference is required.

(3) The procedures outlined in Regulation (2)(a), (b), (c) and (d) were not carried out prior to all staff members commencing employment in the service. Two references for two staff members had not been adequately validated prior to them beginning work in the service. International Police vetting had also not been sought for one staff member who had lived in two separate States abroad for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

We have validated the reference that was missing and gathered the police vetting missing for the staff member. However, one of the references from Dubai according to the staff member is impossible to obtain as it is necessary to travel to the country to get it. This staff member is registered with the Teaching Council which checks all police clearances, and they made an exception with this specific clearance from Dubai because of the impossibility of getting it.

We will check with the candidate during recruitment that they have all police vettings from all countries that they have lived longer than 6 months as adults.

We will check that the 2 references are both from previous jobs and are checked and validated previous employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

International Police vetting and a reference was submitted for review.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documentation have been reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 9.

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) There was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service. On the day of inspection there were four adults working directly with six pre-school children.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times during the 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 five records were reviewed by the inspector.

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating from (a) to (i) of the above Regulation for all of the records reviewed.

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;

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

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A written record was available in each of the care rooms detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
- (i) A staff roster was available which adequately reflected the staff compliment and break times for the day of inspection.
- (j) Written records of the administration of medication were available. A sample reviewed on the day of inspection documented all necessary details including details of medication and signatures of parents and staff members.
- (k) Written records of accidents and incidents which occurred in the service were available on the day of inspection. A sample reviewed documented necessary details including the child's name, details of the accident or incident and signatures of 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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection.

Staff reported that lunch and snacks are provided daily by the parents or guardians of the children in attendance. Children's drinks were available to them in the care rooms at all times. Staff members sat and assisted the children during lunch time creating a relaxed and sociable atmosphere. The children could access their lunch at anytime throughout the morning when they were hungry.

The staff used the PECS system to aid with communication and transitions to different activities. All of the individual care needs of the children were met due to the very high ratio in place and the service had a key worker system in place which ensured the care provided to each child was consistent in its approach.

The play experiences in the service were observed to be child-led. Staff were observed supporting the children's learning, sitting and engaging with the children and using prompts to extend play experiences. Staff demonstrated kindness and warmth during interactions observed by the inspectors. Comfort was offered to children promptly when required and the children appeared happy and content throughout the inspection.

Rest areas were available in the care rooms so children could take time away from the group or rest if required

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

The inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. The registered provider had taken measures to ensure the indoor and outdoor play environments were safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products, medications, and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. Staff stated appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy.

Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of both temperature reducing and prescribed medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff adequately detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspector. Documentation was available to record such administration if required, a sample of this documentation was reviewed by the inspector and was appropriate. A detailed care plan was in place for a child who required emergency medication.

Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Two children's hands were not washed prior to eating. It is acknowledged that subsequent to this observation all children washed their hands prior to eating.
2. During the observation of a nappy change it was noted that the staff member re-dressed the child with soiled gloves, this is at variance with the Nappy Changing Policy in the service.
3. There was an open bin in the sanitary accommodation which poses a risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. When students request food out of the snack times, one member of staff will assure the child wash their hands before using the visual schedule FIRST-THEN.
2. Update all staff members all steps of the nappy changing procedure.
3. Ensure all bins have pedals, get one extra bin with pedal.

Supervise nappy changing once a month and ask the staff members about how the procedure should be done, especially with new staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documents submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have met the requirements of Regulation 23.

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) A person trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a)(b) The first aid box was stored in a conspicuous location within the service. A first aid box was always available to the adults and children in the 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 written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last drill had been recorded as undertaken on 24th October 2023.

(b) Records were available detailing the maintenance of the fire detection system in the service. The last date of maintenance recorded was 28th March 2023. The fire fighting equipment was last serviced on the 30th June 2023.