

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020KE001			
Name of Service:	Kildare Village Little Stars			
Address of Service:	3 Cunnaberry House, Oak Tree, Tully Road, Kildare Town, Co. Kildare			
Eircode:	R51W264			
Name of Registered Provider:	Katarzyna Wlodarska			
Service type:	Full Day			
Dates of Inspection:	14/02/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM	22
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre, Ballymore Eustace Road Naas, Co. Kildare W91 X38W			
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Maher and T. Duignan			
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	N/A
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Description of service

Kildare Village Little Stars provides full day-care, part-time care and sessional care to pre-school children aged 2 - 6 years of age. The service operates from 7:30am – 18:30 hours Monday to Friday and is located on the ground floor of a small apartment complex in Kildare town. There are three care rooms, a kitchen, staff room and small office, an outdoor area was located at the rear of the property.

Staffing

There were eleven adults present on the day of inspection of which seven staff were working directly with the children. The person in charge was supernumerary and available to provide assistance to the care rooms if required and the cook was also present. The area manager arrived to the service at 11:55am and one further staff member commenced work at 11:30am.

The registered provider was not present for 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, 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.

Additional Information

1. A written referral to the Fire Officer for guidance in relation to a fire safety concern was issued on 16 February 2024.
2. A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health Welfare and Safety of Child in respect of an identified risk to pre-school children, was issued to the registered provider on 16 February 2024.
3. A written response with was submitted 16 February 2024 from the area manager outlining the measures that had been taken to ensure the safety of children in the service. Further photographic information was submitted 19 February 2024 from the person in charge; the response to both was accepted.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, area manager, 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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)

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

(b) The named person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

Twelve staff records were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer reference were available in respect of eleven adults employed in the service whose records were reviewed.

(c)
Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes 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 was available for four adults who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)
Eleven adults employed and working directly with the children held qualifications in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)
Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer reference were not available in respect of one adult employed in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Two references have been received and are on file for one person.
Garda vetting was applied for on the 15/02/2024.

Preventive Action

The register provider alongside the manager will ensure that references are verified prior to a new employee's commencing in the service. and will ensure garda vetting is always up to date.

A checklist has been created to ensure garda vetting for current employees is checked regularly.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documents x 2

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 9(2),(a)(b) has been met following review by the inspectorate of the submitted documents.

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 were 26 children attending the service being supervised directly by 7 adults.
- (2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day as specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6.
- (8)(a)
There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the inspection.

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

There was a good variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys, materials and equipment available for the children to use and play with during the day. Low level open shelving units displaying the pre-school materials and equipment ensured the resources were freely available and easily accessible to the children at all times in the pre-school rooms. Child sized couches provided a comfortable quiet space for the children to rest, take a break or read a book during the day and low-level beds with appropriately stored bed linen were available for the children to have a period of sleep when attending on a part time and full day care basis.

Child sized tables and chairs were maintained in good condition and ensured the children could sit comfortably for tabletop activities and when eating their meals and snacks.

The outdoor play area had areas of interest to prompt the children’s imagination and there was equipment to encourage a variety of gross motor activities.

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 was secure and controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school service.

Daily indoor room and outdoor risk assessments were completed and maintained to ensure safe play and work environments for the children and staff.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

The premises were observed maintained in a clean and hygienic condition and cleaning schedules were completed for all room environments.

Hand washing routines were well established, and children washed their hands before all meals and snacks, after toilet use and nappy changing; this was consistent with the hand washing practices observed during the inspection.

Thermostatically controlled hot water was supplied at all sinks and liquid soap and paper hand towel was provided for hygienic handwashing and drying. Gloves, plastic aprons and nappy sacks were available for hygienic nappy changing practices. Foot pedal operated bins were available throughout the service for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. Medication was stored safely in the service.

Safe Sleep:

Children aged 2 years slept at a designated time on low level beds arranged in Rising Stars room. The staff members stated to the inspector they were familiar with current best practice guidelines in relation to sleeping children in the service.

Fire Safety:

Staff advised the inspectors they were aware of the evacuation routes to be taken in an emergency and regular fire drills were practiced.

Outing:

Outings take place from the service; staff advised an outings policy was in place to guide practice and parental consent is sought.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for one staff member; however, this vetting disclosure 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:

One staff member, engaged in nappy changing duties, was observed not to use the foot pedal of the nappy bin to dispose of the soiled nappy following each of the three nappy changes observed and instead used her hand to lift the lid each time; this was inadequate for infection control purposes and posed a risk of cross infection.

Fire Safety:

The gated fire escape route at the side of the premises was secured with a padlock, the key to open the padlock was located in Shining Stars pre-school room; this had the potential to impede the safe evacuation of staff and children to immediately clear the premises in the event of an emergency situation occurring.

A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health Welfare and Safety of Child in respect of an identified risk to pre-school children, was issued to the registered provider on 16 February 2024.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

General Safety:

Corrective Action:

Garda vetting was applied for on the 15/02/2024.

Preventive Action:

The register provider alongside the manager will ensure garda vetting is always up to date.

A checklist has been created to ensure garda vetting for current employees is checked regularly.

Infection Control:

Corrective Action:

Training was carried out with the team in relation to nappy changing and infection control.

Preventive Action:

The registered provider alongside the manager will observe nappy changing practice to ensure infection control is adhered to all the time.

Fire Safety:

Corrective Action:

Slip locks were put on the gate on Monday the 19th of February 2023.

Preventive Action:

The registered provider alongside the manager will ensure that the pad lock is removed each morning, and while that garden is in use, a staff member are monitoring the gate.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Document x 2

Infection Control:

Document x 1

Fire Safety:

Photographs x 2

Summary Comment

Following review by the inspectorate of the supporting evidence and the timely response with immediate safety measures implemented following the immediate action notice issued following inspection, the submission of the required updated document, and further supporting documentation, the requirement for Regulation 23 has been met.

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.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The person in charge ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in each care room.

(2)

Not applicable as this was not a drop-in centre.

(3)(a)(b)

The person in charge ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.

(4)

The person in charge confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period of time.

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 Response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2)(a)
The first aid equipment was safely stored in conspicuous positions in the service.
- (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes for children were available to the children attending 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 firefighting 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

- A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was on 26 January 2024.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were last serviced 14 July 2023 and 8 December 2023 respectively.
- (4)
A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was 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

Children were observed being supervised at all times throughout the inspection by the staff caring for them both indoors in their care rooms, in the sanitary areas and in the outdoor play area.

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 45 children.