

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021LH001
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Name of Service:	Periwinkles Preschool
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Address of Service:	Scoil Naomh Feichín, Termonfeckin, Newtown, Termonfeckin, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A92 YN15
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Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Coates
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	26/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Flood
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

Periwinkles Preschool is a privately owned service that commenced operation in 2021. The service provides sessional care and education to pre-school children aged from 3 to 6 years of age and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service caters for a maximum of 44 children and operates from 09:00-12:00 each weekday.

The service is located within Scoil Naomh Feichin primary school in the coastal village of Termonfeckin, Co .Louth. The premises consists of 2 care rooms namely; Room 1 (The Starfish Room) and Room 2 (The Turtles Room) each with adjoining sanitary areas. There is access to an enclosed outdoor area on the grounds of the school. Off road parking for drop offs and collections is directly outside the school building

Staffing

The Registered Provider and seven childcare staff are employed to work directly 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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 25, 26, and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation(s) within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess records under regulation 16.

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 would like 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
- (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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named deputy person to deputise as required. The deputy person was on the premises when the inspector arrived and was present throughout the inspection. The registered provider and designated person in charge arrived on the premises at 11:00.

(c) When questioned staff were familiar with the management structure within the service and the roles and responsibilities of the various staff members.

(2) Eight staff files were reviewed including files for the registered provider and seven childcare staff. The following vetting documents were available:

(a) & (b) There were 2 written and validated references available for 6 staff members and the registered provider. One staff member had 1 written and validated reference available.

(c) A processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for all 8 members of staff. The registered provider adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that eight members of staff, including the registered provider who work directly with the preschool children held at least the minimum required level 5 childcare qualification on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) One staff member did not have a 2nd written and validated reference available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

A second written and validated reference is now on file in compliance with Regulation 9.

Ensure staff files are kept up to date - Monthly checklist to be carried out by acting manager.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence and confirmation of validation

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance. Based on this information the non-compliance under Regulation 9 has been addressed.

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 staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced at 10:25 and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed on arrival:

- In Room 1 (The Starfish Room) there were 18 preschool children aged 2 to 3 years being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In Room 2 (The Turtles Room) there were 15 pre-school children aged 3 to 4 years being cared for by 2 staff members.

The registered provider and designated person in charge arrived on the premises at approximately 11:00. The registered provider was present for a short period of time in the service and the designated person in charge was on the premises for the remainder of the inspection.

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 of the arrival and departure times for the children attending the service on a daily basis. Each room recorded their own attendance on the attendance books.

(i) Documentary evidence was available of the weekly staff roster which was reflective of the staff present in the service.

(j) No medication was administered during the inspection. The 6 medication records reviewed were complete and detailed all required information including; parental signatures to indicate that they had been informed, 2 staff signatures and information pertaining to the time and dose of medication were also recorded.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(k) In a sample of 11 accident and incident records reviewed, 5 out of the 11 records were incomplete and did not contain the required information. Three records did not include a parental signature to indicate that they had been informed about the incident and 3 forms did not include a staff or manager signature indicating that they had reviewed the information.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(k) Accident and incident report forms have been signed by manager and brought up to date. Signatures have been acquired from parents with children still attending the service.

Management will ensure all documentation relating to accident and incident reports are completed as per regulations and best practice guidelines.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance. Based on this information the non-compliance under Regulation 16 has been addressed. Implementation and sustainment of the corrective and preventive actions will be assessed at the next inspection.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection:

General Safety:

1. The maintenance records available for the firefighting equipment on the premises detailed 08/2023 as the last maintenance check. This is outside the best practice guidelines which recommends that all firefighting equipment must be maintained at intervals not exceeding 12 months.

Infection Control:

2. The polythene gloves observed in use for nappy changing were unsuitable as per best practice guidance.
3. The nappy changing mats observed in use in the service were in a defective condition and unsuitable for use.
4. The bins observed in use in the sanitary areas of both rooms were unsuitable, as the pedal operating function was broken, and they were not sealed and lined as is required for the appropriate disposal of nappies.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Fire extinguishers serviced by registered Fire & Safety Consultant on 23/10/2024. Ensure Fire equipment is serviced within best practise guidelines of 12 months.
2. Latex free non powdered gloves are in place for use of nappy changing
3. Nappy changing mats have been replaced
4. Pedals bins have been replaced and liners inserted in each one.

Non-compliances in this area will be discussed at next scheduled staff meeting ensuring future compliance in line with regulation 23 for all staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliances under Regulation 23 have been addressed. Implementation and sustainment of the corrective and preventive actions will be assessed at the next inspection.

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) The registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid for children was at all times available to the children attending the service. Documentary evidence was available of an up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) qualification for two adults in the service.

(2)(a) and (b) The first aid boxes available in each of the care rooms, were stored in a conspicuous location where they were easily accessible in the event of an emergency.

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

(1)(a) A record was maintained of the monthly fire drills which had been completed in the service. The last recorded on 20/09/24.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated the 08/2023 and 20/09/2024 respectively.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentary evidence was available of an up-to-date insurance certificate. Adequate cover was available for up to 44 preschool children attending the service on a sessional basis. The expiry date detailed was 27/03/2025.