



Name of Service:	Little Joey's Creche
Address and contact details of service:	Dublin Road, Julianstown, Co Meath
TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021MH029SA
Type of Service and age profile:	School Age and Pre-school Service. School Age Service age range: 4-12 years.
Name of Registered Provider:	Theresa Swan
Inspection Date:	2 August 2023
Previous Inspection Date(s):	Not applicable
Inspectors:	C. Whelan, Inspection and Registration Manager. A. Spain, Registration Support Manager.
Registration Status:	Registered School Age Service
Date of Registration:	22 September 2021
Conditions Attached to Registration:	None attached
Additional Information:	The inspection was triggered following a feedback and concern received by the Inspectorate.

Legislation:	Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of School Age Care Services in Ireland, and its role is to promote and monitor the safety and quality of school age care provision in accordance with the following legislation: • The Child and Family Agency Act 2013 Part 12 58 (G). • The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Registration of School Age Services Regulations 2018 (S.I. 575 of 2018). A School Age Care Service is one which caters for children under the age of 15 years enrolled in a school providing primary or post primary education. The service may provide a range of activities that are developmental, educational and recreational in manner, which take place outside of school hours, the primary purpose of which is to care for children where their parents are unavailable. It is the responsibility of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of school age children and the above legislation authorises Tusla to assess compliance with the Regulations.
Inspection Methodology:	The inspection was unannounced to assess compliance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Registration of School Age Services Regulations 2018 (S.I. 575 of 2018) and the Child Care Act 1991, Section 58 as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013. The findings on inspection are based on: • Information obtained through examination of documentation. • Direct observation • Discussion with relevant staff This inspection aims to determine the extent to which service is appropriate for the care, safety and wellbeing of children in accordance with the regulations cited above. 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 corrected the non-compliance and will prevent them 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.
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Description of Service:

Little Joey's Creche is located in a residential area of Julianstown in Co. Meath. The School Age Service cares for children in the age range of 4 to 12 years. The service is operational between the hours of 7.30am and 8.45am, and between 1.30pm and 6.00pm for school age children.

The premises comprises of a dormer standalone building. Rooms in use in the School Age Service include two playrooms and sanitary accommodation for both children and staff at first floor level. There is also access to a kitchen at first floor level. An outdoor play area is provided directly outside of and at the back of the service for use by both the school age and pre-school children.

Staffing:

The registered provider employs six staff members. This includes four staff members, a manager, and a deputy manager who work with the school age children. The manager and deputy manager also oversee the pre-school service. The registered provider works in the kitchen in the service as required.

Acknowledgements:

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the co-operation of the manager, deputy manager, staff, and children who were present on the day of inspection.

Summary of Findings:

On the day of inspection, the service was found to have met regulatory requirements in relation to:

- Regulation 8(1)(a)(b)(c)(2): Vetting disclosures;
- Regulation 9(1): Staffing levels;
- Regulation 11(a): Premises;
- Regulation 12: Insurance.

On the day of inspection, the service was found to have not met regulatory requirements in relation to:

- Regulation 9(2)(4): Staffing levels;
- Health, Safety and Welfare of Children, Child Care Act 1991, Section 58 as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013.

Conclusion and follow-up actions:

The actions submitted by the registered provider in their corrective and preventive action plan addressed the non-compliances identified on inspection.

Regulation 8: Vetting disclosure

Purpose

As the registered provider, you must ensure that an effective management structure is in place, and appropriate people are recruited to ensure the quality and safety of the care provided to the children attending the service.

Core Regulatory Requirements

Does the service have clearly defined governance arrangements and structures?

Regulatory requirement met

(1)(a)(b)

The registered provider had ensured that validated references from a combination of past employers and reputable sources were held on file in respect of all staff members.

(1)(c)

A vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau was held on file in respect of all staff members working in the service.

(2)

The registered provider had ensured that the references and vetting disclosures were obtained and checked prior to when the staff members commenced work in the service.

Regulation 9: Staffing levels

Purpose

Your service must ensure that an adequate number of staff are available at all times during the provision of services to meet the needs of the children attending. At all times, the number of staff within the service will be appropriate to the needs of children, the type of service and the care provided.

Core Regulatory Requirement

Is there an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at all times?

Regulatory requirement met

(1),(2)

An adequate number of staff were available on the day of inspection to meet the needs of the children in attendance. On arrival to the service at 9.15am, 7 children over 6 years old were being cared for by 2 staff members in the “Blue Pod”, and 8 children aged 5 to 12 years old were being cared for by 1 staff member in the Sensory Room.

At 11.45am, six children remained in the “Blue Pod” with the same two staff members. Seven children remained in the Sensory Room with the same staff member at this time.

All three staff members were rostered to work in the school age service for the day of inspection and for the duration of the children’s attendance in the rooms.

Regulatory requirement not met

(2),(4)

On the day of the inspection, the manager and deputy manager informed the inspectors that for a 10–12 minute period on 5 July 2023, the 19 school age children in attendance were not adequately supervised and that the minimum ratio of 1 adult to 12 children was not maintained. They explained that the school age children had been split across two care rooms during that time and were supervised by one staff member who moved between both rooms. They noted that this temporary inadequate supervision arrangement was a once-off occurrence and happened because of one staff member’s unexpected leave from the service, a miscommunication amongst staff members regarding supervision arrangements, and a decision made by one staff member to split the children across two rooms. They stated the decision was not in line with the service’s supervision policy and this was confirmed on the inspector’s review of the policy. Inadequate supervision arrangements pose risks to the health, safety, and welfare of children.

Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider

(2)(4)

The registered provider advised in their CAPA response that the staff rosters have been reviewed to always ensure the correct staffing levels within the school age service. It was also advised that management will provide relief cover where required and be included in the adult to child ratio until alternative supervision is arranged.

Summary

The measures proposed by the service meet the requirements to ensure compliance with Regulation 9: Staffing level (2)(4).

Regulation 11: Premises**Purpose**

As the registered provider, you must ensure that you provide an outdoor area on the premises and that children can access this on a daily basis. If an outdoor area is not provided you must ensure that children can access an outdoor space on a daily basis.

Core Regulatory Requirement

Is an outdoor area provided to the children on a daily basis?

Regulatory requirement met

(a)

An outdoor play area was provided for staggered use between both the pre-school and school age service at the rear of the premises. The outdoor play area was safely and securely fenced in by concrete walls. High level timber gates were provided on both open gable ends of the premises which were bolted from inside to guard against unauthorised access to the children when playing outdoors. A timber framed shelter with an open Perspex roof and an all-weather ground surface was provided in a section of the outdoor play area to facilitate outdoor play during both inclement and hot weather conditions.

In addition to outdoor play equipment, seating was provided in the outdoor play area for children to engage in table-top activities, sit, and have snacks outdoors.

Regulation 12: Insurance
Purpose As a registered provider, you must ensure that the school age service is adequately insured. Core Regulatory Requirement Has the service obtained adequate insurance for the type of care and number of children attending the service?
Regulatory requirement met
The registered provider had ensured that the service was adequately insured. The service was insured from 18 January 2023 to 17 January 2024 for a maximum of 90 children, for the combined service, at any one time.

Health, Safety and Welfare of children
Child Care Act 1991, Section 58 as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013
Purpose The protection and welfare of the children in your service is paramount, and the children's safety and wellbeing is the priority. As a registered provider, you must be committed to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of children in your care, and to providing a safe environment where they can play, learn and develop. Core Regulatory Requirements Does the service provide appropriate care and attention in a safe environment and meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of children?
Regulatory requirement met
• A staff member was observed to consult and involved the children in planning both the daily and weekly activities to be undertaken in the service. • Staff were observed providing children with a choice of activities and the required materials such as for arts and crafts. Staff were observed using the activities as an opportunity to educate the children on different topics such as about types of animals. • Staff were observed supporting the children's needs such as responding to their requests for information on topics, providing reassurance regarding food choices, praising children for their artwork, and educating children on one child's individual care needs to ensure the child's experience was positive in the group setting.

Regulatory requirement not met
1. On inspection of the register of attendance for children, it was observed that some attendance had not been recorded on various recent dates. There were no attendance entries for 6, 7, and 10-15 July 2023. The manager confirmed the service opened on those dates and that children were in attendance. In addition, children had not been signed out of the service on 5 July 2023. The manager stated that staff were aware they must complete the register of attendance daily and these omissions may have occurred due to human error. Omissions in an attendance register poses risks to the safety and protection of children such as children present in the service being unaccounted for.
Corrective & Preventive Action Response submitted by the Registered Provider
1. The registered provider advised in their CAPA that the attendance book for children will be kept in the front lobby where children enter and leave the building each day to ensure recording of correct attendance times. It was also noted that staff have been advised of the importance of recording each child's attendance. It was further advised that attendance records will be checked by management.
Summary The measures proposed by the registered provider meet the requirements to ensure compliance with the Child Care Act 1991, Section 58 as amended by Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013.

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