

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022WW001
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Name of Service:	Willow House Childcare
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Address of Service:	Ballinahinch Woods , Ashford, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A67 HW24
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Name of Registered Provider:	Yvonne Tierney
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	13/07/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	28
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Condon
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

The private childcare facility is registered to provide full day care for pre-school children aged 0-6 years. The hours of operation are between 07.00- 19.00 and the service may accommodate a maximum number of 64 children at any one time. The service is located in a two-storey standalone building and comprises of five care rooms, two sleep rooms, sanitary accommodation for both children and adults, a kitchen, staff room, two storage rooms, an office and an entrance hallway. On inspection four of care rooms were in operation. The outdoor play area for the service is sited at the back and side of the premises and car parking is provided at the front of the building.

Staffing

Presently there are eleven staff members in total. This includes the person-in-charge and a relief staff member, both of whom provide additional care of the children during staff breaks.

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 inspections 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.

Acknowledgments

A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child was issued to the registered providers by the Early Years Inspector on 13th July 2023.

The written response received by the Early Years Inspector on 14th July 2023 from the manager on behalf of the registered provider in relation to the immediate action notice was accepted.

Additional Information

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the area supervisor, 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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

Documentation was reviewed in respect of all 11 staff members:

(a)&(b) Two validated written references were available for each staff member.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for 11 adults.

(d) Completed Police vetting was available for four staff members who had lived in another state for a period of at least six consecutive months.

(4) A record was available evidencing that all staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification.

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

. (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) At all times during the inspection an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were twenty-nine children attending the service being supervised by seven adults on the day of inspection. The person-in-charge and a relief staff member were also available to provide additional assistance as needed.

(8)(a) The staff roster demonstrated two adults are on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

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

The inspector observed that staff were attentive to the personal care of the children. The children's nappies were changed routinely and if needed in between. Bibs were provided when eating to protect their clothes from becoming soiled or wet. Their noses, hands and faces were cleaned when they became soiled. Staff used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

Staff sat with the children when eating. They provided them with help when needed whilst supporting their independence. Drinks of water were offered regularly and were always available. Children attending the Baby room had individual routines for food and milk bottles which mirrored their home routines. The babies were held when being bottle-fed with staff making eye contact and speaking to them in a kind manner.

The children attending the Baby room were placed to sleep according to their individual routine or when they displayed signs of tiredness. All children were provided with comfort when being placed to sleep. Staff provided the children with reassurance as they were settling to sleep, talking to them gently and sitting next to them. The children who had soothers were offered these.

Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed them by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. The staff provided the children with comfort when they became upset - holding them and talking to them in soft tones. Individual daily diaries were kept using an app throughout the day to share with parents/guardians to provide for continuation of care.

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 entrance door to the service was electronically controlled by staff members to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access. The manager documented the inspectors' visit to the service in the visitor's book on arrival. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

There was an infection control policy in place. Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Nappy changing practices were consistent with the nappy change procedure for the service. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues. The soiled nappies were removed to the outdoor bins following nappy changes being completed. Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

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. The staff members were familiar with required safe practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored.

Safe Sleep:

Two sleep rooms with a total of eleven cots were in place for children less than 2 years of age and sleep mats were available for all children aged over 2 years requiring sleep. There was an adequate number of cots to provide needs led sleep for young children. Comfortable rest areas were available for the children in the care rooms if they wished to take a break from activities and rest.

Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service. The fire exits were not obstructed.

Outings:

The service does not conduct outings at this time.

Non-Compliance Information

Safe Sleep:

The environmental temperatures in the two sleep rooms used to accommodate sleeping children for a period of the day were not maintained between 16° – 20° Celsius.

1. The temperature in the Baby sleep room was recorded between 23°C – 23.9°C between 11.15am – 14:00hrs. Prior to, and during the period that the sleep room was used to accommodate three children aged nine months- eleven months. On reviewing the written recordings by the staff member temperatures of the Baby Sleep Room it was noted that the temperature was recorded at 20°C at all times while babies were asleep. The thermometers used in the sleep room by the service were recording between 22.2°C -24°C during the same period, as noted by the inspector.

2. The temperature in the Wobbler sleep room was recorded 21.7° at 14.10pm. Prior to and during the period that the sleep room was used to accommodate ten children aged 12 months and 22 months.

Following the last on inspection on 26/09/2022 an immediate action notice was sent regarding the temperatures in the sleep rooms. The corrective and preventive actions undertaken have not prevented the re-occurrence of this non-compliance.

General Safety:

3. The Pre-school room was not maintained between the required temperature of 18° – 22° for the comfort and safety of the pre-school children. At 1pm the temperature of the Pre-school room was 25.5°C. Nine pre-school children aged 2 years and 8 months to five years were attending.

A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child was issued to the registered providers by the Early Years Inspector on 13th July 2023 regarding non-compliances number 1-3 of this regulation. The written response was received on 14th July 2023 from the manager on behalf of the registered provider in relation to the immediate action notice and was accepted.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Safe Sleep and General Safety,

1-3

As immediate action air conditioner system has been installed in all rooms and cot rooms to maintain temperature between 16-20° in sleep rooms and 18° – 22° in care rooms.

Supporting documentation submitted

Safe Sleep:

Confirmation letter from the Mechanical company.

Summary Comment

The corrective action and the evidence received have been reviewed by the inspector. The non-compliances as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 23 have been addressed.

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 was at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. Two staff members had a certificate in First Aid Response, three of which expired in June 2024.

(2) (a) and (b)

A first aid box was safely stored in a conspicuous position and available 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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
- (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 monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had been recorded as undertaken on the 29th of June 2023.
 - (b) A record was available detailing the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms both dated March 2023.
- (4)
- A notice was displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

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

During the inspection all children were supervised by staff members while indoors and outdoors at all times.

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 27th of March 2024. The insurance provides cover for up to 77 children attending for full day care.