

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023MH001
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Name of Service:	Reach For The Stars - The Arches
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Address of Service:	The Arches, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	A85E439
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Name of Registered Provider:	Katarzyna Wlodarska
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	03/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath.
Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray
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

Reach For The Stars - The Arches provides a part-time /sessional service to children from 2 to 6 years. The service operates from 09:00hrs to 13:00hrs and also provides a school age service from 07:30hrs to 08:50hrs and from 13:30hrs to 18:30hrs. The service is purpose built and consists of 1 large care room, reception area, office, kitchen, store room and sanitary facilities. An outdoor space is located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs a designated person in charge and 1 staff member. On the day of inspection 2 relief staff members were present who were familiar with the service.

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 announced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wish to acknowledge the co-operation of the designated 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.

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Ten validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for 5 staff members.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Five childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) On the day of inspection, the correct adult/child ratio was maintained. There were 2 adults providing direct care to 13 children.

(8) (a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Children moved about the room freely engaging in tabletop activities, free play and imaginary role play with lots of conversation and laughter observed.
- Children's individual needs were well supported by the staff members who engaged in play activities with the children which included art and crafts, singing and storytelling. During activities children were offered choices and sought out the staff members for praise, encouragement, and reassurance.
- The themes of the week was "Autumn" and also the children's emerging interest which was "Attending the Doctor" with a nature table with conkers and leaves and imaginary role play to develop these themes.
- Children were observed enjoying outdoor play with their peers on the day of inspection.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Transitions were handled smoothly as the children were aware of routines and daily transitions so that they knew what to expect. The children were given ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- The children all sat around in different groups at lunch time which created a positive atmosphere where children had the opportunity to interact and developing relationships especially the children new to the service. The children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)(b) Cosy areas consisting of mats, soft cushions, 2 children’s armchairs and soft furnishings were available for children to take a break from activities if needed. Four sleep mats were also available if a child needed to lie down.
- (3)(a)The outdoor space was enclosed with walls, wooden fencing with secure gates. The surface area consists of an artificial grass surface.

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

The care rooms had areas of interest with supporting equipment which incorporated natural materials such as nature trays, wooden toys ,kitchen equipment and puzzles, sensorial materials such as rice tray, activity boards along with a large selection of art and crafts.

Equipment in the outdoor area includes mud kitchen, activity tray, construction area and an activity wall with gutters for pouring. Additional equipment can be brought out as needed.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The children brought their own healthy lunch from home with a variety of snacks available in the service for the children staying until 1pm. Children own drinks along with drinking water was available at all times.

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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The play materials and equipment were stored on stable- low level based shelving units. The play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the children.
- The service was secure, as the main entrance door was operated by a buzzer system and the outdoor area was secure by walls, fencing and secure gates with a coded lock. These safety measures prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and unauthorised access to the service.
- The kitchen was located off the reception area and the fire door entering the kitchen was closed throughout the session.
- All emergency doors were found to be clear and unobstructed.
- All cleaning equipment were stored out of reach of children.
- An indoor and outdoor risk assessment was conducted on a daily basis.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis. Tables were cleaned before the children had their lunches.
- Fridges were available in the care room for the refrigeration of perishable items in the children's lunch boxes.

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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 of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 13/09/2023.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment was last serviced in November 2022. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 03/02/2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was 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

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 36 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2023 to the 27/03/2024.