

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024DR001		
Name of Service:	Play and Learn Childcare and Education		
Address of Service:	Glenamuck Manor, Carrickmines, Dublin 18.		
Eircode:	D18F62P		
Name of Registered Provider:	Allison Farrell		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	24/10/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	41	PM 41
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown, County Dublin.		
Inspection undertaken by:	Olivia Quill and Sarah Quigley		
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	Not applicable		

Description of service

This private childcare facility is one of four services operated by the registered provider in the Dublin and Kildare region. The service is registered to provide full day care for pre-school children and operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 07:30 -18:30. The premises is located in a purpose-built facility at ground floor level in a residential development in Carrickmines Dublin 18. Six care rooms were available and five care rooms were in operation on the day of inspection. Pre-School 2 room was closed. A separate cot room was provided. A designated enclosed outdoor play area is available on the premises which is directly accessed from three care rooms.

Staffing

Eighteen adults are employed in the service. This includes a cook and seventeen childcare staff. The operations Manager was present throughout the inspection. The registered provider does not work in 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

The inspection plan was to assess compliance under the following regulations:

- Regulation 9(1)(a), (b), (2)(a) -(d), (3) and (4) Management and recruitment
- Regulation 11(1) (2), (8) (a) Staffing levels
- Regulation 19 (1)(a)(b) Health welfare and development of child

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of Child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Wobbler 1, Wobbler 2, Butterfly and Toddler rooms and did not include the Pre-School room.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 who was able to deputise as required.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was present at all times during the inspection.

(2) The inspection focused on the recruitment records for all staff employed in the service. In total nineteen files were reviewed including a file for the operations manager as detailed below.

(a) Thirty-one written validated references were available from previous employers for staff employed in the service.

(b) Two written validated references from other sources were available as a second reference for staff who did not have two previous employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for nineteen staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) There were no written validated references available for two staff members and another staff member had only one validated reference on file. The manager will make sure that we request, receive and validate references prior to employee's commencing in the company going forward.

(3) All the required recruitment procedures specified in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to staff being appointed, as detailed under (2)(a).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) The manager has obtained the references for 2 staff members and we have validated them. Another staff member has since finished in the company so we cannot obtain references.

(3) The manager has received and validated the missing references for these staff files. The registered provider has updated the recruitment policy and a checklist has been provided that we must follow to ensure that each of the recruitment procedures are met prior to an employee commencing in the company.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of validated references submitted.

Summary Comment

Supporting evidence was submitted in keeping with the actions submitted. The Regulatory requirement has been met.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were forty-one children attending the service being supervised by fourteen adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) The staff roster demonstrated that a minimum of two adults were 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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a), (b)

The manager reported that all snacks and meals are provided by the service. An external catering company is used to provide the main meal. Children were offered a morning snack of fresh fruit. At lunch time a beef pasta bake was served. Suitable cutlery was provided. Staff were observed sitting with children during the main meal and engaging in conversation, which helped promote a relaxed atmosphere. Drinking water was freely available to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their snack and lunch. Younger children were provided with bibs at mealtime. Children in Wobbler 1 room were encouraged to feed themselves and staff were observed supporting children who needed additional assistance with their meal.

Children's care needs were met promptly. Staff were observed supporting younger children to clean their hands and faces after lunch. Children's nappies were changed regularly or as needed, during this time staff were observed to engage warmly with children. Older children were encouraged and observed to use the toilet independently. There was a designated sleep time for children in the service however, staff reported if children are tired outside these times they are allowed to sleep as required. Suitable rest areas were available in all care rooms to allow children take a break from activities as required.

Transitions within the service were managed appropriately. The transition from playtime to lunch time in the Wobbler 1 and the Toddler room was managed with the use of songs and stories. The atmosphere in the care rooms was observed to be calm. Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children throughout the inspection. The staff provided the children with comfort when they became upset holding them and talking to them in soft tones. Children's choices were respected with children being given the opportunity to choose their own activities during free play.

The staff described how they communicate information to parents daily at drop off and collection times. The service also uses an electronic computer application system to share information with parents about their child throughout the day.

Care rooms were arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included musical instruments, small world toys, dress up areas, construction toys, art materials, rest areas with books and home corners. The care rooms facilitated a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials. The materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms.

The outdoor area was safely secured and well-resourced with a variety of toys and equipment. An artificial grass surface was provided. All children were observed in the outdoor play area. Staff reported children go to the outdoor area at least twice daily.