

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024DR003
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Name of Service:	Chatterbox Preschool & The After School Club
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Address of Service:	Block C, Beech Park, Cabinteely, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D18 EKP4
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Name of Registered Provider:	Kerrylee Hempenstall
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	27/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Floor 7, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
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Inspection undertaken by:	Fiona Carty
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Chatterbox Preschool and the Afterschool Club is a sessional and school age service located in a residential area in Cabinteely, Dublin 18. Children attend the service from Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 12.00pm for 38 weeks of the year. The service offers a play-based curriculum to children aged between 3 years to 6 years.

The service is located in a two storey purpose built building on the ground floor of an apartment building. There are three care rooms available in the service however, only one was in use for the care and education of children on the day of inspection. There is associated sanitary accommodation and a garden at the front of the premises for outdoor play.

Staffing

On the day of inspection there were three staff present working directly with the 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 announced and focused on the area of governance and health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 – Staffing Levels

Regulation 19 – Health, welfare and development of the child.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 wishes 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

(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

The inspection focussed on the recruitment of all staff to the service:

(1)

(a)(b) The service has a designated person in charge and a person to deputise when required. The designated person in charge is present at all times.

(2)

(a) Six validated past employer references were available for inspection in respect of three employees.

(c) Garda vetting records were available for all staff.

(d) International Police vetting was available for one person who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months.

(4) Records were available detailing that all staff members had achieved the required level of qualification at a minimum level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children throughout the inspection.

(3) The adult to child ratio was always maintained during the inspection. Three adults facilitated the programme of care and education for ten pre-school children.

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 service promoted healthy eating as per their policy. Drinks were always available to children and located in a dedicated water station in the room. The parents or guardians of the children provided lunch for the children which was observed to be healthy and had a variety of food including pasta, fruit and sandwiches.

The children were encouraged to be self caring, suitable to their age and stage of development. Staff were observed to encourage each child to be independent and offer assistance when required. Children were encouraged to develop independent life skills such as using the toilet, washing their hands and taking care of their belongings.

Conversations between staff and children took place and other forms of communication such as gesturing was used as some children did not speak English. The staff demonstrated sensitivity and warmth in their interactions with children and soft tones and gentle language was observed to be used during all interactions with staff and children in the care room.

Settling in and transitions were made as smooth as possible within the service. Minor disputes were handled using positive behaviour strategies as per the service policy.

The care room had a range of play based materials and interest areas that allowed the children to explore and use their imagination. All materials were visible and accessible on low level shelving, a variety of tabletop activities were available for children to choose whenever they wished. A book corner and a rest area were located in the care room which included a range of books with various topics which will help support children's language development. On the morning of the inspection a number of children were engaged in messy play with gloop staff sat with the children and scaffolded their learning by talking to the children during the activity. Children's artwork was displayed on walls and included recent winter themed artwork.

The outdoor area contained artificial grass and had a climbing frame with a slide. There was a football net and balls available to the children.

The children accessed the outdoor area on the morning of the inspection.