

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2024FL003 |
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| Name of Service: | Roots and Wings on the Green |
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| Address of Service: | 39 Beresford Crescent, Donabate, Dublin, Co. Dublin |
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| Eircode: | K36 K3H7 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Nicokla Cullen |
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| Service type: | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional |
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| Date(s) of Inspection: | 23/10/2024 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 37 | PM | 37 |
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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6. |
| Inspection undertaken by: | S. Cully & G. Fagan |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable |
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Description of service

Roots and Wings on the Green is the fourth early years service owned and operated by the registered provider, all located in County Dublin. Roots and Wings on the Green provides full daycare, part time daycare and sessional preschool to children between the ages of 1 and 6 years. Although the registered hours of operation are 7.30am to 6.30pm, the hours of care available to children is currently 7.30am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday. This service also participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for 38 weeks of the year. The service is conducted from a recently constructed purpose-built 2-storey premises located in a residential area. There are 5 care rooms, namely the Cocoon room 1 and 2 and the Caterpillar room on the ground floor, and the Butterfly room 4 and 5 on the first floor. The Butterfly room 5 was not in operation at the time of the inspection. A sleep room is located on the ground floor between the Cocoon room 1 and Cocoon room 2. Ancillary accommodation includes sanitary facilities on both floors, a kitchen on the ground floor and an office and a staff room located on the first floor. A fully enclosed outdoor play area is located to the rear and to the front of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs an area manager and deputy manager to oversee the daily operational management of the service supported by a team of 10 core staff members including a cook who prepares and cooks all of the children’s meals in the onsite kitchen. A staff member from the registered provider’s other full day care service was present and working in the service in a relief capacity on the day of the inspection. The registered provider was also present for the duration of the inspection.

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

As this was an initial inspection since registration, 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 Regulations 9, 11 and 19.

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 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.

(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 area manager was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise as required.

(b) The area manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived announced to the service. The registered provider was also present for the duration of the inspection.

The files for 13 staff members and the registered provider were reviewed.

(2) (a)&(b) Two validated written references were available for the registered provider and 13 staff members whose files were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 14 adults whose files were reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for 3 staff members who had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the registered provider and 12 staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with the children in the service, including the area manager and the deputy manager, held an appropriate childcare qualification at level 5 or higher 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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived announced and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In the Cocoon 1 room there were 5 children aged 13 months to 1 year 11 months attending on a full day care basis, being cared for by 1 staff members. A second staff member was available in a relief capacity to support care and supervision during sleep times across both Cocoon room 1 and Cocoon room 2.
- In the Cocoon 2 room there were 9 children aged between 13 months and 1 year 8 months, all attending on a full day care basis, being cared for by 2 staff members.
- In the Caterpillar room there were 10 children aged between 2 years 1 month to 2 years 8 months being cared for by 3 staff members.
- In the Butterfly 1 room there were 13 children aged 2 years 9 months to 3 years 6 months being cared for by 2 staff members.
- The Butterfly 2 room is not in operation until the required staffing levels have been established.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present in the service at all times verified by staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained at the service.

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,

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

Basic needs:

- Throughout the care rooms the staff were observed warmly engaging with the children, providing responsive care and facilitating their play activities. Appropriate tones of voice and use of language was observed at all times. The staff provided comfort and reassurance to children when needed and responded to children's requests for activities or comfort in a timely manner. As a result, the children appeared comfortable and content in their learning and care spaces.
- Child led sleep practices were facilitated in the Cocoon rooms, with younger children being facilitated to have morning naps while other children slept after lunch. Children under 15 months had access to a standard cot, while children between 15 – 24 months slept on cocoon beds with appropriate mattresses as required under Tusla safe sleep guidelines. Sleep plans were in place for all children under 24 months

availing of a cocoon bed. Children over 24 months who required sleep were facilitated to do so on stackable floor beds. All care rooms had space and resources for children to casually rest and relax during the day such as child sized armchairs, sofas, rugs, soft mats and cushions.

- Mealtimes were observed to be a relaxed and social experience with children given plenty of time to enjoy their meals. Staff members were observed sitting with the children engaging them in conversation whilst encouraging them or supporting them to eat. The staff members in the Cocoon rooms and Caterpillar room sat in front of the children who required assistance with eating. Meals and snacks were provided for the children by the onsite chef at regular intervals throughout the day. Sliced fresh fruit and breadsticks were available for morning snack, pasta bolognese was served for lunch and ham and cheese sandwiches and crudités was planned for afternoon tea. Drinking water was available to the children at all times.
- Nappy changing was carried out at scheduled times and more frequently as needed. Staff members used this an opportunity to chat or sing to the children during the procedure. The children who were toilet trained were encouraged to use the toilet independently with discreet support and supervision provided as required.
- Self-care stations were set up in the Caterpillar and Butterfly rooms which consisted of a mirror, tissues, and wipes to support children to meet their own personal care needs. The early years practitioners also met children’s personal care needs by providing bibs for mealtimes, cleaning faces and hands and ensuring they were dressed appropriately for outdoor play.
- The early years practitioners were responsive to opportunities that supported children’s positive social development and behaviour, facilitating children to negotiate together to resolve minor issues and offering appropriate solutions when needed.
- On the day of inspection all children in the service availed of time outdoors. Appropriate outdoor was available so that all children regardless of age or stage could participate in outdoor play and activities.

Supporting relationships around children:

- There was a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the service. The service operates an Open-Door policy, where parents are welcome inside the service for drop off or collection or other times if required. A daily record of children’s routines including meals, sleep times, activities and general well-being are recorded and shared with parents. Each child has a ‘Learning Journal’ where their learning and developmental experiences are captured for parents and children to review.

- In each room, children had access to the rooms 'Family photobook' where they could look at the family photos from home and of their peers. Children were observed engaging with the books and being supported by the practitioners to repeat names or talk about their family. This practice supports the children and families in feeling a sense of identity and belonging within the service.
- The service supports children to connect with their local community by bringing children on local walks. A 6-seater buggy was available so that younger children can be brought on daily walks in the local areas.
- The management and staff team communicated well together throughout the inspection to support a smooth daily routine and consistency of care for children.

Physical and material environment:

- Each care room consisted of clearly defined and labelled interest areas to facilitate meaningful self-directed play and extend children's learning. These interest areas included well developed home corners, construction corners, art and craft stations, sensory play stations, small world play, reading areas, and tabletop activity areas. There was a wide range of natural, open ended and sensorial materials in each care room and in the outdoor space which encourages creativity, imagination, and sensory development. The care rooms also were decorated with soft furnishings such as fairy lights, plants and flowers and drapery which create inviting and comfortable spaces for children to spend time in.
- The Cocoon room 1 and Cocoon room 2 provided ample floor space and equipment such as ball pits, tunnels and climbing frames to support younger children to move freely and actively while indoors.
- Materials and resources were well organised and stored on low level shelving which support children's independent choices, allowing them to find materials with ease and put away their equipment during clean up time.
- Each care room had appropriately sized furniture in relation to the age and stage of the children attending the care room.
- The outdoor area to the rear of the premises was covered in artificial grass and had a range of resources and equipment available for children as well as a large shed to store unused items.
- There was a well-resourced outdoor kitchen area, teepee, wooden bridges and climbing frames, tyres and building blocks, outdoor easel, water play activities and ride on toys. There was also two climbing apparatus.
- A second enclosed play area was available at the front of the service, accessible via the Caterpillar room, and had equipment including a wooden shop, sensory table, outdoor kitchen, tyres, balls, animals and a water tank for water play.