

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015WW243

Name of Service: Attracta's Childcare

Address of Service: Hillcrest, Lugduff, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow

Eircode: Y14 YT21

Name of Registered Provider: Attracta Duffy

Service type: Childminders

Date of Inspection: 9 November 2022

No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family agency 1 st Floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke
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

Attracta's Childcare was first established in 2018. It is located in the rural townland of Tinahely Co. Wicklow and is run from the childminders home. It is a privately owned childminding facility and is registered to provide care and education to children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age. The childminder operates 2 sessional services each day Monday to Friday. The first session is from 09.15am to 12.15 pm and the second from 12.45pm to 03.45pm and participates in the Early childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for 38 weeks of the year.

Staffing

The childminder works directly with the children from her own home. She operates a single-handed service and has an emergency contact person available if required.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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.

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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 childminder and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

(6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who-

- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and*
- (b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date.*

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(6A) is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The service has a designated person in charge i.e. the childminder. The service remains closed when the childminder is unavailable.

(b)

The childminder was on the premises at the time of arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)

Written references were available from past employers in respect of the childminder and the emergency contact.

(b)

Not applicable as the references for the childminder and the emergency contact were from past employers.

(c)

The required Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the childminder and the emergency contact.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no adult had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.

(4)

The childminder held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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(6)(a)(b)

Not applicable.

(6)(A)

Not applicable.

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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.

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

(b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and

Compliance Information

(1)
Throughout the inspection there was an adult working directly with the children attending the Childminding service.

(8)(b)
The childminder had a person available, if necessary, to attend the service to assist in the event of an emergency.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

- (a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,*
- (b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and*
- (c) there is a working telephone on the premises.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

There were five children present in the care of the childminder on the day of inspection.

(b)

There were no children under 15 months attending the childminding service.

(c)

There was a working mobile phone on the premises.

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Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a-i)

The childminder ensured that a record in writing was kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the childminding service containing the required list of particulars (a-i).

(3)(c)

The inspector was able to access and review these records on the day of inspection.

(4)

The childminder could demonstrate that they kept the records of a child for 2 years from when the child left the service.

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Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1)(h)

There was evidence in writing that the attendance records for children in the service had been completed.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(h)

On the day of inspection, children had not been signed IN on the attendance record and children attending the afternoon session, had not been signed OUT on the previous day.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(h)

All children will be signed in as soon as they arrive, and the roll book will be brought outdoors in the morning so it can be signed immediately.

Supporting documentation submitted

None needed

Summary Comment

If the corrective action is implemented, it will address the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 16 (1)(h). This will be reviewed on next inspection.

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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-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and specified in paragraph (4), the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable.

(2) A registered provider-

(a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, or shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The children attending the childminding service always has access to suitable rest area in a designated area within the childminders home This consisted of a large, long sofa with a large soft blanket and mats.

Children had freedom of movement within the inside and outside areas.

(2)(a)

Children had daily access to a suitable, safe and secure outdoor area, which had a variety of age-appropriate toys available to the children.

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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

On the day of inspection there was tables and chairs suitable for the age range of the children attending the childminding service both inside and outside. There was also a good range of age-appropriate toys and materials for the children to use.

Examples of suitable equipment included paints, crayons, blackboard and chalk, books, bricks, jigsaws and dress up clothes. Toys were clean and in good condition. All toys were easily accessible and were available to the children continually during the inspection.

The outdoor area is predominantly used by the children attending the childminding service, but if the weather becomes inclement, they can go back inside at any time.

All children attending the childminding service were wearing suitable outdoor attire.

The outdoor facility in the service, was an enclosed area to the side and back of the premises. The ground had a large, grassed area and there were a wide variety of interest areas to challenge and extend the play and imagination of the children. These included a planting area, a fairy garden, water play and tarmacked area with toy traffic lights. Tractors, balance bikes and push bikes were among the toys available for the children to use.

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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

All food and drinks for the children were provided by the parents on the day of inspection, all the children's food was found to be suitable and in keeping with the childminders Healthy Eating Policy. All small fruits like grapes had been cut by parents before attending the service.

There was food available to a child if they were still hungry after their snack.

Water was available to the children throughout the morning. There was a fridge in the outdoor area to store children's lunches.

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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 gate to the service was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the childminding service.
- All cleaning products were stored out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route in the childminders was clearly marked and free from obstruction.
- There was a large, bolted gate located to the side of the premises and this was the only direct access point to the outdoor area.

Infection Control:

- The childminder had a sanitary area. This consisted of one toilet and one sink. The childminder does not take children who are not toilet trained.
- There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available in the sanitary area. A foot pedal bin was available in the sanitary area for the safe disposal of used paper towels.
- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.
- Hand washing by the childminder and children was observed before snack time.
- Personal protective equipment such as disposable aprons, gloves and face masks was available if required.
- An isolation space was available if needed.
- The Cleaning sheets in the childminding service had been up-dated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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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)

An adult trained in FAR first aid for children was present and immediately available to the children.

(2)(a)

The first aid bag for children was stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the childminder's kitchen.

(b)

At all times the first aid bag was available to the children attending the childminding service.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

While there was a suitably equipped first aid bag for children, the contents contained in the bag had all expired and needed replacing.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A new first aid bag and contents have been purchased and the contents will be checked on a regular basis to ensure all products are in date.

Supporting documentation submitted

A receipt for the purchase of a new first aid bag and contents was submitted.

Summary Comment

The photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider, will address the non-compliance identified in Regulation 25 – First Aid (2). This will be reviewed on next inspection.

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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)
- There was evidence that regular fire drills haven taken place within the service. The last fire drill took place on the 17th of October 2022.
- (4)
- There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire clearly displayed in the childminders indoor area.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b)
- There was no maintenance record of firefighting equipment or smoke alarms on the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The smoke detection system has been tested and a new fire extinguisher has been purchased. It has been noted when the next inspection date for both is due.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted by the registered provider to support the CAPA.

Summary Comment

The photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider, has addressed the non-compliances identified in Regulation 26– Fire safety measures (1)(b). This will be reviewed on next inspection.

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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

The childminder demonstrated they could provide adequate supervision of the children attending the childminding service during the inspection.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The childminder had adequate insurance for the Childminding service covering 5 children attending in 2 sessional services and expired on 19th May 2023.