

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023CC004
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Name of Service:	Amy's Childcare
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Address of Service:	49 Fort Hill Moneygourney, Douglas, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	T12 W5RT
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Name of Registered Provider:	Amy Barry
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Service type:	Childminder
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Date(s) of Inspection:	26/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Office, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork
Inspection undertaken by:	C Stokes
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	N/A
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Description of service

Amy's Childcare is a registered childminding service operating from 9 am to 6pm daily from Monday to Friday. The service has a garden playroom separate to the main dwelling house for children. Children have meals and use the toilet facilities in the childminders home. Children also have access to a private, fully enclosed courtyard garden.

Staffing

The childminder works single-handedly with the children and has an emergency contact person available during the hours of operation.

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. 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.

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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 childminder 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,

(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.

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Compliance Information

- (1) The childminder was the person in charge and had an emergency second person available.
- (2)(a/b) Two references were available in respect of the childminder and two validated references were available for the emergency second person from past employers and other sources.
- (2)(c) A completed record of Garda vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau was available for the childminder, second person and adult in the home. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (2)(d) Police vetting was not required as no adults had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period exceeding 6 months.
- (4) A certificate of a major award in Early Childhood care and education at the equivalent of QQI level 5 on the National Qualification framework was on file for the childminder.

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) The childminder worked directly with the 5 children on the day of inspection.
- (8, b) The childminder ensured that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide emergency assistance was available.

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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

BASIC NEEDS:

- Meals and snacks were at frequent and appropriate intervals throughout the day. Children had access to their water bottles at all times.
- The children were supported appropriately by the childminder to use the toilet and most of the children were in nappies and were changed regularly.
- There was a cosy corner in the library area to provide for the children's need for rest during the day with a floor bed available for sleep. In addition, for relaxation, there was a large sofa for children to sit and relax on in the window of the playroom. No cots were in place as the childminder had no child under 12 months of age.
- There was a calm and positive approach to managing behaviour and transitions in the setting with cheerful tidy-up times and flagging of what the next activity/task was, for example, hand washing before snack.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The registered childminder advised the inspector that the service operated in partnership with parents, with daily verbal feedback at handover times and an open-door approach.
- The childminder also had an online communication application to link with parents.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The indoor environment of the garden playroom was spacious and bright and laid out in defined interest areas, including home corner, book area, arts and crafts, construction etc. There was open-shelving available in the playrooms with play materials and items laid out so that the children could identify and access them easily and independently.
- A sofa made for a comfortable and cozy area to sit and relax for the children, in addition there were child sized tables and chairs and a booster seat.
- A courtyard garden with toys, seating and blankets was available to facilitate outdoor play and movement.

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- The children had choice around where to have their lunch, in the playroom, outside or in the kitchen. This practice facilitated both free choice and mobility during the day.

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) The registered childminder ensured a record of the fire drills were maintained monthly. The most recent fire drill was dated 12 March 2024.
- (b) The fire extinguishers and smoke alarm were recently installed in Autumn 2023 and were not due to be serviced.
- (4) The notice of fire evacuation was on display at the exit door of the playroom.