

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY152
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Name of Service:	NCR Childcare
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Address of Service:	466 North Circular Road, Dublin 1
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Eircode:	D01 P529
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nora Walsh
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	08/10/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	3
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Finnegan Hayes
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

NCR childcare is a privately operated service located in a purposely converted area at basement level of a Georgian house in a residential area in North Dublin. The service is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 22 children aged 2-6 years. The service provides a part -time session daily from 8:30am-1:30pm and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme with a morning and afternoon session daily 8:30am-11:30am and 12:15pm-3:15pm. The service is comprised of two care rooms, one of which is closed for use at the moment. A fully enclosed outdoor area is available onsite to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider employs three staff to work directly with the children in the service and also works in the service herself. Two staff were present in the service on the morning of the inspection including the registered provider.

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, safety and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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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, 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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,*

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(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise when required.
 - (b) Discussion with the registered provider and staff showed that the designated person in charge or the deputy was rostered to be on the premises during the opening hours of the service.
- (2) Discussion with the registered provider and a review of the staff information wall showed that there are currently four adults employed in the service including the registered provider. The files of all staff members were reviewed as part of the inspection.
- (a) (b) Six written and verified references were available for three adults currently employed in the service.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for four adults employed in the service. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that four staff members who work directly with the children held 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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Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) (b) Two written and verified references were not available for review in relation to one adult.
 - (d) Police vetting was not available in relation to one adult who lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of more than six months as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2) (a)(b) The two outstanding references have been obtained and validated. Ensure references are obtained in advance of the staff member's start date.
- (d) Police Vetting Certificate is obtained for the staff member. Deputy/manager will ensure police vetting is obtained in advance of the staff's start date.

Supporting documentation submitted

References and police vetting documents were reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (2) There were 7 preschool children being cared for by two adults on the day of inspection. Ratios were maintained throughout the day.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee was available in the staff files.
- (b) Details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services were available in the service Tusla registration certificate which was displayed in the service.
- (c) (d)(e) The statement of purpose and function detailed the adult:child ratios, type of care or programme provided, and the facilities available in the service.
- (f) Government funding programme information was displayed in the service entrance which detailed the opening hours and fees of the service.
- (g) The policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10 were available electronically in the service.
- (h) A daily attendance book was available to record the children's attendance.
- (i) Information on staff rosters was available for review.

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Non-Compliance Information

- (j) A sample of two medication administration records containing three administrations were reviewed. The required details were not completed on any of the records sampled including;
- One record which detailed one administration did not contain the child's surname, date of birth, name of the medication to be administered, dosage or the time to be given.
 - One record which detailed two administrations did not contain the name of the medication to be administered, dosage or time at which the medication should be given.
- (k) A sample of eleven accident and incident records were reviewed. The required details were not completed on nine of the records sampled including;
- Six records did not contain the date of birth of the child.
 - Three records did not contain the surname of the child.
 - Two records did not contain the signature of the service manager.
 - Two records did not contain the signature of the parent acknowledging they had been told of the accident.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (j) All staff have been shown and made aware of the necessity to complete all sections of the form when administering medication to a child as set out in our policy and procedure. A staff colleague will cross check with the staff member to ensure that all sections of the medication administration form are fully completed as set out in the policy and procedure.
- (k) The Accident and Incident records have been updated with all relevant information. Staff have been shown and made fully aware of the necessity to complete all sections of the Accident and Incident records fully.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the update medication administration policy and a sample of the accident and incident records completed were reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 16.

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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

The registered provider ensured that there was adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service including;

- A range of toys and equipment was available at the children's level and organised into clearly defined play areas.
- Materials were grouped appropriately to support and encourage spontaneous play experiences.
- A cosy area was available for children to rest and read a book.
- A dark quiet space was available for children to take a break from activities and provided opportunities for self-regulation.
- A secure outdoor play area was available, and a shed area provided opportunities for outdoor play in inclement weather.

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 service entrance was secured throughout the day and staff were observed to attend the door to allow visitors access. This prevented unauthorised persons entering the building without the knowledge of staff.
- The door was fitted with a thumb turn lock at adult height which prevented children leaving the service unsupervised.
- Toys and equipment were maintained in good condition free from hazards.
- A low handrail was available on the steps up to the play space in the outdoor area.
- Wheely bins were adequately secured inaccessible to the children in the outdoor area.

Infection Control:

- Dispensed soap and paper handtowels were available to support adequate hand hygiene.

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- Handwashing was completed regularly throughout the day after outdoor play and before mealtimes in line with the service policy.
- Pedal operated bins were available for disposal of contaminated items such as used tissues.
- Food which was brought from home was refrigerated to prevent spoiling of perishable items.
- A window was open in the care room allowing fresh air to circulate.

Fire Safety:

- Staff were aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency
- Fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Outing:

- Risk assessments and parental permission were available in relation to “forest school” outings which the service is undertaking to local parks two days per week during this term.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for two staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice ‘EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting’.
2. Water at one sink in the children’s sanitary area was not thermostatically controlled and the water was recorded to be 43.7°C which posed a potential risk of scalding. Water should be thermostatically controlled at no more than 43°C.

Infection Control:

3. The nappy changing unit did not provide an easy to clean surface and was observed to be stained and marked on the day of inspection. This posed an infection control risk.
4. Stagnant water was observed in a storage tray in the children’s play area during the time children were present. Stagnant water posed a risk as it can harbour harmful bacteria.

Fire Safety:

5. Attendance records were not completed in a timely manner and did not clearly reflect the children present in the service at all times on the morning of the inspection for example at 10:26am eight children were recorded as being present in the roll book; one child had left the service at 9:41am and two had left the service at 10am. Staff were observed to retrospectively complete the times of departure at 11:11am. Accurate attendance records are required at all times to ensure the safe evacuation of children in the event of a fire emergency.

- The records showed that a fire drill was not conducted during the month of September 2024. A note was observed to say this was not completed as children were settling into the service. Monthly fire drills are required to ensure staff and children are aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency this is especially important when new children arrive in the service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- Renewed Garda Vetting certificates are in place for the two staff members. In accordance with the 'EYI RN12.3 Renewal Of Garda Vetting' existing staff and management will renew their Garda Vetting every three years.
- The children's hand-wash sinks are installed with mixer taps to minimise the risk of scald. The boiler thermostat and timer has been adjusted to the appropriate level. Tap water temperature checks will be taken with thermometer regularly to ensure it does not exceed 43 degrees.

Infection Control:

- The nappy changing unit has been painted with a satin finish paint for wood to provide an easy to clean surface. Ensure sanitary furniture have easy to clean surface at all times
- The stagnant water was disposed of immediately and the container washed thoroughly. Staff have been made aware of the bacterial risk of leaving water/rainwater sit in a container and have been instructed to empty and wash the containers daily.
- Staff consistently record attendance in a timely manner, however on the day of inspection staff deviated from their normal practice. Staff have been reminded of the importance of keeping timely attendance records at all times.

Fire Safety:

- Our first Fire Drill of 2024-25 was completed on 03/10/2024, within 28 days/1month following our reopening on 04/09/2024. We carried out a second Fire Drill on 14/10/2024. We will adhere to our Fire Safety Policy and Procedure of carrying out regular monthly fire drills.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of updated Garda vetting disclosures, changing table and fire drill records were reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff trained in First Aid Response (FAR) were present in the service during the opening hours; one staff member present on the day of inspection held up to date FAR certification.
- (2) (a)(b) The registered provider ensured that a suitably equipped first aid box was available in the care room accessible to staff and out of reach of the children.

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) The registered provider ensured that the following records were maintained;
- (a) A record of monthly fire drills showed that the last fire drill had taken place on 3rd October 2024.
 - (b) A record of servicing and maintenance for the firefighting equipment showed that the firefighting equipment was last serviced in August 2024 while the smoke alarms were serviced on the 3rd October 2024.
- (4) Notices detailing the steps to take in the event of a fire were displayed in the entrance area of the service.