

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY216
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	The Orchard Playschool
-------------------------	------------------------

Address of Service:	19 The Orchard, Killester, Dublin 5
----------------------------	-------------------------------------

Eircode:	D05 D613
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Mandy Stephenson
-------------------------------------	------------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date(s) of Inspection:	19/11/2024
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	12
-----------------------------------	----	----

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 and L. Jameson
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable.
---------------------------------	-----------------

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

The Orchard Playschool is a sessional service located in a single storey building to the side of a home in an urban residential area. The service is registered to provide early childhood education and care for up to 15 children from 2-6 years. The service operates from Monday to Friday, 8:45am-12pm for 38 weeks of the year. Eligible children are offered the state funded early childhood care and education (ECCE) scheme.

Staffing

The registered provider employs two staff to work directly with the children in the service and also works in the service. An adult from a local preschool support service is also employed to work in the service with a designated child. There were three adults, including the registered provider, working directly with children on the day of 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

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.

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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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, 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,*
- (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.*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(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)(b) The registered provider ensured there was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required. Both the person in charge and the deputy were on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.
- (2) Conversation with management and staff confirmed there are four adults currently employed in the service including the registered provider and an adult from a local preschool support service. The files of all four staff were reviewed.
 - (a) (b) Eight written and verified references were available in relation to four adults.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all four adults. The service had also adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for one adult who had resided outside of Ireland for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that four adults who worked 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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) The registered provider ensured that adequate staff were working directly with the children in the service and that ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day. On the morning of inspection three staff were caring for 12 children aged 3-5 years.

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.*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured adequate records of the following information were kept.
- (a) Information regarding the name, position, qualifications and experience of staff were maintained in the staff files.
 - (b) –(f) The information required under (b), (c),(d),(e) and (f) were in the parents handbook.
 - (g) Eighteen policies and procedure which the service is required to have under schedule 5 were available for review.
 - (h) Roll books were used to record the daily attendance of the children including times in and out.
 - (i) Staff work set hour each day in line with the ECCE session. Details of this were available in the service.
 - (j) Medication is not routinely administered in the service and as such there were no medication administration records to review however a mechanism to record medication is available if required.
 - (k) An accident record book was available for review however no accidents have occurred which required recording and as such no records were available for review.

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 an adequate supply of suitable materials and equipment were available to the children in the service. The following was observed;

- Defined areas of interest were observed on the day of inspection. Adequate props and supporting equipment, such as real-life objects in the home corner, were available to the children to support engaging, spontaneous play experiences.
- Toys and materials, including a selection of jigsaws and tabletop activities, were accessible on low level shelving which allowed children to access them independently.
- Two child sized armchairs were available alongside a selection of books, providing the children with a comfortable place to rest or engage in quiet activities.
- Child sizes tables and chairs were available for mealtimes and tabletop activities.
- A covered outdoor area provided opportunities for a variety of play experiences including gross motor and sensory play. A section of the outdoor area was surfaced with artificial grass.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- Play equipment included a playhouse, a slide, mud kitchens, a sand box which has a secure covering to restrict access by animals, ride on toys, a planting area and a chalk board wall to encourage mark making.

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

It was observed that the registered provider has taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service including:

General Safety:

- Entry to the service was managed and monitored by staff to restrict entry by unauthorised persons and to prevent children from exiting unsupervised.
- The play equipment and materials observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- Cleaning products were observed to be stored out of reach of children.
- The outdoor play area used by the children was observed to be fully enclosed.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid hand soap and dispensed handtowels were available in the care room and sanitary facilities. Effective hand washing practices were observed on the day of inspection.
- Children lunches which were brought from home and were refrigerated to prevent spoiling of perishable items.
- Lidded pedal operated bins were used in the care room and sanitary facilities

Fire Safety:

- The emergency fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The changing mat in the sanitary facility was observed to be ripped, exposing the internal foam. This poses an infection control risk as the mat cannot be cleaned effectively.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The old changing mat was discarded and replaced with a brand new one. The service will regularly inspect the changing mat for any defects and replace it as needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photo of new changing mat.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) Staff greet children at the door to the service and record their attendance in the roll book.

(3) (a) The door to the service was locked at all times. The outside gate is secured with a lock once the children are present in the service each day which prevents unauthorised persons accessing the area without knowledge of the staff.

Non-Compliance Information

(3) (b) A visitor record book was not available in the service on the day of inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(3) (b) We have added the visitor book information on to our role book. We will ensure we record all visitor details in the visitor/role book.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photo of the visitor book

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 24.

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 firefighting 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) A record of monthly fire drills was available in the service. The most recent fire drill took place on 14th November 2024.
- (b) A record of the maintenance of smoke alarms was available in the service and showed that the smoke detection system was last serviced on 25th September 2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed throughout the service in communal areas and care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) (b) A record which showed the maintenance of the firefighting equipment in the service was not available for review on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) (b) Our fire extinguishers were serviced on the 27th of November 2024, the certificate is now displayed in the school. We have set a reminder in our calendar for fire equipment service expiry.

Supporting documentation submitted

Fire extinguisher maintenance certificate and evidence of calendar reminder.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 26.