

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL194
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Name of Service:	Little Treasures Playgroup
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Address of Service:	11 Lily's Way, Ongar Green, Clonee, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D15 R671
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sandra Prendergast
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	31/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. McDonnell
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

A sessional service, for children aged 2-5 years old, is provided at Little Treasure's Playgroup. The service operates a morning session from 9.15am to 12.15pm and an afternoon session from 12.30 to 3.30pm from Monday to Friday.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service on a daily basis alongside one other staff member. The registered provider and staff member have been working together in the service since 2008. No new staff members have been employed since the last inspection on 13 February 2020.

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 in the morning session operated by the service. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 – 9 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), 9(3), 9(4), 9(6), 19(a), 20, 21 and 25. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 – Health, Welfare and Development of a Child, Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and Play, Regulation 21 – Equipment and Materials and

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Regulation 25 – First Aid Regulation 11- staffing levels was assessed during the morning session in operation on the day of inspection.

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, person in charge and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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.*

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(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.

(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

(2)(a) Not applicable as all references required were from a source other than a previous employer.

(b) The registered provider had two written references in place from a source other than a previous employer. There were two written and validated references from a source other than a previous employer available for the staff member working the service.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the registered provider and staff member.

(d) On the inspector’s review of the files there was documentation to show that the registered provider or staff member did not require international police vetting.

(4) There was evidence that the registered provider and staff member who worked directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 on the National Qualifications Framework.

(6A) The registered provider was employed to work under the Access and Inclusion Model.

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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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

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

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of staff working with the children at all times.

(2) The inspector observed that there were 2 adults working with the 10 children, aged 2-5 years old, on the day of inspection.

(8)(c) Not applicable as the service is not operated as a single-handed service.

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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

(1)(a) The inspector observed that staff were familiar with the individual needs and preferences of the children. A keyworker system was in place and individual plans, as required, were available and staff were aware of goals and strengths of children. The staff discussed regular communication that supported children's development with parents, guardians and other allied health professionals and this was documented in the service. The inspector reviewed a sample of individual learning journals, some of which included the graduation of children who were leaving for primary school. The staff discussed, and a display in the service showed, that staff were supporting children in the transition to local schools. The inspector also observed that displays were used to support children's involvement within the service, for example there were visual timetables available.

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

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

(b) Where no such space is provided, the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis to a suitable outdoor space.

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Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The inspector observed that there was space for children to play independently and with others. On the inspector's arrival some children were at the table completing puzzles and jigsaws whilst another child was completing a larger jigsaw on the floor. There were low level shelves with baskets that children could independently access items from. During the inspection children took part in making and playing with dough. Whilst most were engaged with the activity there was room for children to play independently in other areas of the room.
- (b) A rest area, which contained a large floor cushion was available in the room.
- (3) An outdoor play area was provided to the rear of the property. An area of the outdoor play space was covered with a canopy.

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 inspector observed that equipment was easily accessible to the children. The small equipment which supported the large play kitchen, dolls houses and garages was easily accessible to the children as they took items and returned items independently to low level storage containers and baskets. A range of books were available in the room and they were in good condition.
- There was a sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate. There were adult chairs to support staff members in sitting and interacting with the children.
- A range of materials were available to the children. Children had access to a range of art materials and an easel. During the activity with the dough all children were provided with an apron and accessories such as cutters and rollers to support their imagination at this time. The children also had access to water and sand for sensory play.

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- The service had a separate range of equipment for outdoor play. Two large outdoor containers contained a kitchen with accessories such as pots, pans, scales and play food. Buggies, babies, large cars and soft mats were also available. Benches were provided should children wish to sit and rest whilst outside.

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 had documentation in place which demonstrated that the registered provider and staff member had current certification in First Aid Responder training.
- (2) A first aid box was available in the care room. This was easily accessible to the adults in the room and safely stored to be inaccessible to the children.