

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WW101
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Name of Service:	Acorns Playschool - Greystones
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Address of Service:	Eire Og, Greystones GAA Club, Mill Road, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 AW93
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Name of Registered Provider:	Margaret O'Brien
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona Condon
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

Acorns Playschool is a sessional service which is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age. The service operates from an adapted room located in a GAA club building. The service comprises of one large preschool room, an adjoining storage room and sanitary accommodation. The adults also have access to a kitchen area in the building. The outdoor area is located at the rear of the premises. An indoor hall is available for use in inclement weather.

Staffing

There were three adults present on the day of inspection and all three adults were working directly with the pre-school children, one of whom was the registered provider. The registered provider was engaged in facilitating the inspection so but also worked directly with the children during this time.

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 and safety. 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-

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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(s) 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*

(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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Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge of operating the service and another adult was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider 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 total of three staff files were reviewed.

(a) & (b)

Six written and validated references were available for three adults.

(c)

The required Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the three adults employed.

(d)

Police Vetting was available for adult employed had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months as an adult.

(4)

Two adults employed held major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at National Framework for Qualifications and the third adult held a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

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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*

Compliance Information

- (1) Throughout the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the pre-school children.
- (3) The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection. On inspection there were three adults providing direct care to eighteen pre-school children.

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;*

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(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i) Eighteen files were examined by the Inspector.

In relation to the files examined, the record required in writing in relation to (a)-(i) above was kept for each child. Each child's file was located in a secure place in their care room.

(3) (c) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) (a)-(i) was open to inspection on the premises by the inspectors.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

On arrival of the inspector all children were happily engaged in activities, playing together, in groups, in pairs and some individually while being supervised by three adults. During the session staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed them by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. Children were encouraged to be independent and were given support, guidance and encouragement as required. The staff provided the children with comfort when they became upset - holding them and talking to them in soft tones and then gently distracting the child and guiding them back to an activity.

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The Inspector observed that staff were attentive to the personal care of the children. Staff assisted children in the bathroom used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

Drinks of water were offered regularly. Snack time was a sociable occasion with all children encouraged to eat their snack which was prepared by their parents and take part in conversation regarding their day.

All children were given the opportunity to play outdoors. Staff interacted with the children encouraging turn-taking and giving them an opportunity to try a variety of equipment/toys safely.

Transitions were handled well by staff with notice given prior to change and children actively helping to facilitate the change.

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 perimeter of outdoor play area had a high fencing. The main entrance to the premises was secured.
- All cleaning products were stored out of the reach of children.
- The doors to the kitchen area and the hallway were locked at all times.

Infection Control:

- There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available in the sanitary areas.
- Pedal operated bins were available for the safe disposal of used paper towels in the sanitary area and in the care room.
- Table cleaning was observed before snack time.
- Hand washing by the adult and children was observed after using the toilet and before lunch.

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Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. Written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child.
- Temperature reducing medication was available, in date and stored safely.

Outings:

The registered provider stated that no outings are undertaken from the service.

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)

Two adults trained in First Aid Response was present and immediately available to the pre-school children.

(2)

(a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school room.

(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children.

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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) A record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 21/09/2023.
- (b)
- A record was available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarm, both dated 26th July 2023.
- (4)
- Notices were displayed in conspicuous positions, detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

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

All children were supervised by the staff members at all times during the inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27th of March 2024. The insurance provides cover for up to 22 children attending for sessional care.