

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018GY511
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Name of Service:	Happily Ever After
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Address of Service:	Tuam Community Centre, Bishop Street, Tuam, Co. Galway.
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Eircode:	H54 DK03
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Name of Registered Provider:	Claire McGrath, Sara Walsh
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date 1 of Inspection:	27 February 2023
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Date 2 of Inspection:	28 February 2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	65	PM	47
Day 2	AM	64	PM	No.

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Kelly & S. Meehan.
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
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Description of service

The service is located in the urban town of Tuam, Co. Galway. The service operated a full day care service for pre-school children aged between 0 years to 6 years. The service is open daily from 07.30hrs to 18.30hrs.

Staffing

The registered providers were the designated persons in charge and were present throughout the 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/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,23,29, however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 23 and 29.

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.

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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.

Additional Information

On the 16/03/2023, A referral was made to the Fire Safety Officer, in relation to the fire exits that were obstructed on the first day of inspection. An inspection was carried out by the Fire Officer following this referral and actions given to the registered provider.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered providers, staff and children who were present on the days 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.

(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 registered providers were the designated persons in charge and there were named persons who were able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the registered providers were on the premises.

Following a review of the service files and discussion with the registered providers, it was confirmed that there were 19 members of staff employed in the service.

These files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2) (a) There were written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer for adults working in the service.

(b) There were 8 references on files for adults that were supplied by reputable sources.

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- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the staff working in the service.
- (d) Police Vetting disclosures was available for 2 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) All the adults working directly with children had obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.*

Compliance Information

- (1) During the period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.
- On day one of the inspection, there were 65 pre-school children, attending the morning session and 47 pre-school children attending the service in the afternoon.
- On day two of the inspection, there were 64 pre-school children, attending the morning session.
- (2) At 10.30 am on the day of inspection, the following playrooms were in operation.
- Toddlers room, there were 2 adults caring for 9 children aged between 16 months and 24 months.
 - Playschool room, there was 2 adults caring for 8 children ages between 2 and 3 years of age.

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- Baby room, there were 2 adults caring for 5 babies aged less than 12months.
- Ecce 1 , there was 1 adult caring for 8 children aged between 3 years and 4 years of age.
- Ecce 2 , there were 3 adults caring for 14 children aged between 3 years and 4 years of age.
- Naoinra ,there were 2 adults caring for 21 children aged between 3years and 4 years of age.

At 11.00 on the 2nd day of inspection , the following playrooms were in operation.

- Toddlers room, there were 3 adults caring for 10 children aged between 16 months and 24 months.
- Playschool room, there were 2 adults caring for 8 children aged between 2 and 3 years of age.
- Baby room, there were 2 adults caring for 6 babies aged between 10 months and 14 months.
- Ecce 1 , there was 1 adult caring for 8 children aged between 3 years and 4 years of age.
- Ecce 2 , there were 3 adults caring for 14 children aged between 3 years and 4 years of age.
- Naionra ,there were 2 adults caring for 21 children aged between 3years and 4 years of age.

(8)(a) The staff rosters indicated that there were 2 staff members on the premises at all times.

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
- (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

19(1)(a) and (b)

BASIC NEEDS:

ECCE Playroom 1, 2 and Naionra Playroom:

- The snacks supplied by the parents were healthy and nutritious and consisted of sandwiches, crackers, cheese, fresh fruit pieces, yogurts with milk or water available to children when needed. The service supplied the main hot meal of the day which was pasta with a tomato sauce, cheese and broccoli on day 1 of the inspection. Perishable items were stored in the service fridge.

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- Crockery and plates were offered / used during children's snack times and were appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children in the playrooms.
- Children attending the service who were toilet trained, toileted independently or with some assistance or support by adults as required.
- The children in these playrooms who was in nappies had their nappy changed at appropriate times throughout the day. The adults were found to be caring in their interactions at nappy changing with children.
- The children self-care was assisted and encouraged by adults for e.g., to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting, after using a tissue in these 3 playrooms.
- In the playrooms the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couch in designated cosy area and the service also had a sensory room where children could take time out and relax. Children were observed using this room for yoga and relaxation on both days of inspection.
- The playrooms were laid out with visual cues / displays to support each child's individual needs. The service was found to be inclusive of all children attending the service.
- Individual care programmes were developed for individual children and these were observed to implemented in practice during the inspection.
- Staff allow children to sleep or rest when they are tired and not just at designated times, this was observed on the day inspection, when babies were put down to sleep when they tired and staff recognised children's individual cues of tiredness.
- Children had access to the outdoor space on a daily basis. On both days of inspection, each group of children were observed playing in the outdoor space on numerous occasions.
- Staff listened to the voice of the children as they communicate their needs, thoughts and experiences both verbally and nonverbally, this was observed in the baby room, staff members were observed sitting on the floor engaging, playing and comforting the young children.

Non-Compliance Information

1. A balance of adult and child led activities were not observed on the days of inspection in the Naionra playroom. Activities were adult led and gave children limited opportunities to make their own choices.
2. In the Naionra playroom on the morning of day 1, children were observed being asked individually to go and select different items in Irish for example, colours, objects and animals. When a child got the answer wrong, the response from the staff member was "Mi cheart", the child had to make another attempt to

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get the right answer. This atmosphere was not encouraging or an enriching experience for the children. A number of children had a few attempts before they got the answer correct, it is unclear if they understood the concept or just guessed the answer.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1& 2.

The staff will ensure that there is a balance between child centred and adult based activities during each session. Staff have taken more notes on their activities and will complete courses in the coming months to assist them.

Evidence Submitted

No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified, however no evidence has been submitted to support these actions. These will be reviewed on next inspection.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. There were trailing leads and a heavy object stored on a shelving unit that was directly above a sleeping child. The inspector asked the staff member to remove the items from the shelf as it posed a risk as falling onto a sleeping child.
2. There was no door on the entrance to the staff room , children could have access to staff's personal items and household electrical items that may pose a risk to the children attending.
3. There were no restricted openings on the windows in the first-floor window of the library. This was rectified by the 2nd day of inspection.
4. There was a window from a first-floor corridor leading to an external fire exit ,that did not have a means to restrict the opening, children could access the fire exit and this posed a safety risk to the children.

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- The children had access to the adult toilet and cleaning detergent was stored on the floor which may present as a safety risk for children, these were removed by the 2nd day of inspection.

Infection Control:

- Staff in the Playschool room cleaned the children hands using wipes, this is not a suitable means of hand washing and may pose a risk of cross infection. The inspector brought this to the attention of the staff members and they brought the children to a nearby sanitary area to clean their hands under running water.
- Broken foot pedal bins were observed in the ECCE 1,2 and Naionra playrooms and may pose a risk of cross infection for a preschool child.
- The adult chair in the Toddler room requires covering, as there were a number of areas that had exposed foam, making hygienic cleaning difficult.
- There was no adult hand washing sink in the nappy changing area attached to the Toddler room, which posed a risk of cross infection. This was highlighted in a previous inspection report (22/09/2022).
- The nappy disposal units in the nappy changing areas were not appropriate as they were hand operated as opposed to foot pedalled, this posed a risk of cross infection.
- There were unlabelled nappy cream and powder in the nappy changing area used by the playschool children, which may pose a risk as cross infection. These creams were removed by day 2 of the inspection.
- There was no means to sterilise baby bottles and baby soothers in the Baby room, which may pose a risk of cross infection.
- There was no running cold and thermostatically controlled hot water in the baby room ,where food is been reheated in the microwave for the young child attending.

Fire Safety.

- As a result of the recent construction work a number of hazards(construction material) were left on the floor and the corridor, which caused an obstruction of the fire exits, this posed a risk to both staff and children attending the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- All heavy objects have been removed and all leads encased in “trunking” on the walls. The service will not be storing anything heavy on the shelves and will be checking regularly.

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2. A new door is being measured and specially fitted. When this is fitted it will be kept closed so children will not have access to staff belongings.
3. Restricted opening devices had been fitted by day 2 of the inspection.
4. Following review by the Fire Officer it was agreed that a restricting opening device could be fitted to this window and this has been fitted.
5. All cleaning products will be stored out of reach of children and a daily check will take place to ensure this.
6. All children will be brought to the nearest wash hand basin to wash their hands under running water.
7. New foot operated bins have ordered.
8. A new chair has been purchased.
9. All sinks in the nappy changing area have been completed.
10. New nappy bins have been purchased.
11. All sanitary areas will be checked, and any product not labelled will be removed or disposed of.
12. A new sterilising unit has been purchased.
13. Have seek advice from EHO in relation to installing sink for adult hand washing.
14. All fire exits will be checked daily to ensure they are clear of all obstruction.

Evidence Submitted

Photographs of changes and purchases.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider will address 13 of the 14 the non-compliances identified, the regulatory requirement has not been achieved.

However, point 13 remains outstanding as there is no running cold and thermostatically controlled hot water in the baby room.

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Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Non- Compliance Information

(e)The new sanitary area on the first floor opposite the Naionra playroom was unfinished:

1. The walls and door were unpainted.
2. There was no skirting board in the sanitary area.
3. There was exposed piping on the wall, under the sink and in the sanitary area.
4. There was a service duct in the ceiling that required covering.

General area.

5. A number of interior wall areas had patches of peeling paint and marks where a putty like adhesive was used to stick poster/pictures and required repair. This was highlighted in a previous report (22/09/22)
6. The service made alternation in the Toddler room and in the Baby rooms, these two areas remained unfinished. Walls and timber work remained unpainted and a hand washing sinks was not working in the Toddler room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- 1-4. All the walls and doors have been painted in the sanitary area, skirting has been applied and pipes boxed off. The service duct has been covered.
5. All walls are currently being stripped and painted over a number of weeks.
6. The new walls in the Baby and Toddler rooms have been painted. The sink in the Toddler room is now usable.

Evidence Submitted

Photograph of sink in the Toddler room.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified. However, evidence to support these actions has not been submitted.

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Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The service opened a toddler room with an adjoining sleep room with sanitary accommodation without prior notification and approval from the registration office of the Early Years Inspectorate.
2. The service made alternations to the baby room, without approval from the registration office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

This was highlighted in a previous inspection report dated the 22/09/2022.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that in future they will contact the Early Years Inspectorate prior to making any changes.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider will ensure that any proposed changes will be made to the Early Years Inspectorate and approval sought prior to any changes being made.