

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022FL002
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Name of Service:	Phoenix Childcare
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Address of Service:	Luttrelstown Community Centre, Porterstown Road, Clonsilla, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D15 DY29
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sinéad Faulkner
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	30 November 2022
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No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	Non-Applicable
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, The Brunel Building, St John's Road West, Dublin 8
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Inspection undertaken by:	Lorraine O' Connor
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Phoenix Childcare is located within a shared building located within the grounds of Luttrellstown Community College. The two care rooms; the blue room and the red room are located on the first floor of the building. The outdoor area is located at the rear of the premises. The service provides the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) from 9.15am-12.15pm daily. It is registered to accommodate a maximum of 44 pre-school children within the two care rooms. The service also caters for School Age Children.

Staffing

On the day of inspection, there were seven adults present who were working directly with the children, this included 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 announced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety.

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, 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.
- (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.
- (7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:
- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information

- (1)(a)(b) The Designated person in charge and the registered provider were on the premises throughout the inspection.
- (2) Seven staff files were reviewed, and the following was available;
- (a) Eleven validated references were available from a previous employer.
 - (b) Three references were available from a reputable source and validated as required.
 - (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for seven adults.
 - (d) Two staff required Police Vetting, and both were available for review.
- (4) Seven adults had at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (7) Documentation was available to demonstrate the staff training which had taken place. In discussion with staff, it was outlined if an area of training was identified, the completion was supported and encouraged by the registered provider. This was further supported by the services staff training policy.

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)-

(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) There were seven adults working with twenty-five children aged 2-6 years.

(3) The adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection. In the red room, there were three adults present with nine children. There were sixteen children present in the blue room with three adults. The registered provider was available to support the care rooms if required.

(8)(a) There were two adults on the premises at all times during the inspection.

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:

- (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;
- (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

- (1)
- (g) The following policies were reviewed and detailed the required practices;
- Healthy Eating
 - Behaviour management
 - Administration of medication
 - Safe sleep
 - Accidents and incidents
 - Inclusion
 - Complaints
- (h) The attendance records were available in each care room and were reflective of the children present. The staff were observed to complete the record as child arrived and departed.
- (j) On review of the administration of medication and discussion with the registered provider, medication has not been administered to a pre-school child to date.
- (k) The accident and incident records relating to pre-school children were reviewed. The records included the required details and were signed by the parent/guardian of the child.

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
 - (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

(a)

Materials and Equipment

- The children were provided with age-appropriate equipment at a low level in both the Blue and Red rooms. The rooms provided the children with areas of interest which included the following; a home corner with supporting materials including a cot, highchair, kitchen with food. There was an art and crafts area, cosy area, construction area, and small world play area which included animals, cars and blocks.
- Low level shelving had boxes labelled with the picture of its contents. These included puzzles, various blocks, bricks, matching games, dinosaurs and animals.
- The outdoor area provided children with various opportunity for play and learning. In the grassy area, the children had access to a playhouse, sand tray and planters. Children were observed to engage in outdoor play on the day of inspection. The registered provider outlined the children often go for walks as well as going the outdoor play area.

(b)

- The children's snack time was calm and relaxed. Children were observed to be supported with the transition through various strategies including prompts, and a familiar routine including handwashing and handing out of placemats. The children chose the seat which they sat in and were observed to have conversation with their peers and staff who sat with them. Children's independence was encouraged, and staff provided support in opening tubs, drinks and yogurts when needed.
- The children had choice in their activities and play choices. For example, in the Blue room, children individually tidied away their lunchboxes and continued their play. At this time, a small group of children went to the book corner and playfully asked the adult to read the 'blue book' which contained photographs of each child and their families. Other children played continued to eat while staff stayed sitting at the table, and others played in different areas of the room.
- Children's interests were recognised throughout the inspection. Staff explained one child had an interest in bubbles. The staff member encouraged the child to wash their hands before snack time by asking the child if they wanted to make bubbles. The child responded positively and washed their hands. These strategies alongside the child's interests supports children in their independence and positive engagement.

- Staff were responsive to children’s needs. A child was observed to have an interest in washing their hands in the hand basin in the Red room. Each time, the child retrieved the attention of the staff members and the staff responded warmly and engaged with the child at the sink while they were washing their hands. The staff were overheard to playfully acknowledge the child’s interest.
- Transitions were recognised and positively supported through verbal cues to children and providing visual prompts including timers. The staff supported individual children during this time through acknowledging their achievements for example – well done, you done a great job. These practices support children’s confidence and well-being.
- Play was child led and children had choice in engaging in the adult led activities happening. During the morning, the adults in the Red room carried out circle time. At this time, a number of children continued to play while other children engaged in the singing of Christmas songs. In the Blue room, children were playing with playdough at the tables. A number of children were observed to continue to play in various areas of the room at this time. This practice supports children’s independence and choice.
- Interactions were respectful and provided children with a voice. For example, in the Red room, two children were the assigned helpers for putting the weather picture on the wall, handing out placemats and lunchboxes. For each task, the staff asked the two children ‘would you like to help to do [activity]’ one child was overheard to respond ‘no’ and staff responded positively to their decision.
- The care rooms were calm, and the relationships between the staff was intuitive and supportive towards the needs and interests of the children. Staff were observed to respectfully communicate verbally and non-verbally throughout the inspection to indicate leaving the room, next steps in the activity or if a child required support.
- Staff responded to with curiosity and asked the children playful questions to provoke their thinking. For example,
 - In the Blue Room, a child asked the staff to make a princess with the playdough. The child named the princess, and the staff member asked the child ‘what do you think we could do to make [the princess]. The child responded long hair, and the staff asked, ‘I wonder what [the princess] looks like?’ while the child was manipulating the playdough.
 - In the Red Room, during circle time, the staff member asked the children ‘I wonder what season it is’. The children responded ‘Winter!’, the staff looked out the window and replied, ‘but how do we know it is Winter’. Each child’s response was listened to and acknowledged.

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:

- Unauthorised entrance and exit was managed through a number of measures including keypads and fob access. The entrance was secure on arrival and the entrance door remained locked, as required, throughout the inspection.
- Low level presses within the care rooms were inaccessible for the children throughout the inspection.
- Large furniture and equipment was appropriately anchored. This reduces the risk of injury to a child.
- Cleaning products were out of reach of children.
- Blinds cords were secured, and out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor area on the ground floor was secured through a surrounding fence.
- The staff from both rooms practiced the services outdoor policy. Children were observed to line up inside the care rooms and the staff carried out a head count. One staff member was at the front of the children on the stairs, and another was at the back. The children were encouraged to hold the low-level handrails and take their time on the stairs. The blue room were observed to use a walking rope which each child held onto.
- Risk assessments were on display within the care rooms as per the services policy.

Infection Control:

- Children and staff were observed to follow the services infection control policy through handwashing before snack times, after using the toilet, and returning from the outdoors.
- Lunchboxes were stored in the fridge within the care rooms as per the services healthy eating policy. Staff were familiar with the services policy and discussed the foods which pose a choking hazard including popcorn, and the requirement for grapes to be quartered.
- Tables were cleaned prior to mealtimes with a disinfectant spray. This reduces the risk of the spread of infection.
- Pedal bins were observed in the care rooms and sanitary areas.
- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available to the children and adults in the hand basins in the rooms and within the sanitary areas.

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 there was at least one adult present at all times with First Aid Responder (FAR).

(2)(a)(b) A first aid box was available within each of the care rooms and stored in an accessible position with visual displays to indicate its location. If required, it was available to children at all times.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The service conducts regular fire drills with pre-school children on various days and at various times.

(b) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate a maintenance check was carried out on the firefighting equipment on the 20/12/21, and the smoke alarms on the 19/07/2022.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)

The services complaints policy included the required details including the procedure to follow in making a complaint, the manner it would be dealt in, and the procedures for keeping the person informed.