

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022FL007
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Once Upon a Time
-------------------------	------------------

Address of Service:	Hollywood Rath Avenue, Hollywood Rath, Dublin 15.
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	D15 X6TE
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	AnneMarie McCormack, David McCormack
-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

Date of Inspection:	27/05/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	99	PM	96
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Harte and T. Nelson
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Once Upon A time is a privately owned full day care service operating from a purpose-built building located in Dublin 15. The service is registered to accommodate 150 children aged 0-6 years and is one of eleven services operated by the registered provider. There are twelve care rooms within the service located across two floors. On the day of the inspection, all care rooms were in operation with children present: Wobbler 1 (1-2 years), Wobbler 2 (1-2 years), Wobbler 3 (1-2 years), Wobbler 4 (1.5-2 years), Toddler 1 (1 - 2 years), Toddler 2 (1 year 7 months – 2.5 years), Toddler 3 (2-2.5 years), Toddler 4 (2-3 years), Pre-Montessori (2 years 8 months - 4 years), Montessori 1 (2 years 8 months - 3.5 years), Montessori 2 (3-4 years) and Montessori 3 (3-5 years). A lift is available to the first floor, and the kitchen is also located on the first floor. A staff room and office are located on the ground floor. An enclosed outdoor play area is located at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 32 staff to work within the service including the person in charge, deputy person in charge 29 early years professionals and domestic staff. The registered provider also employs a management team to work across the eleven services. On the day of the inspection the training and development manager, cover manager and training area manager attended the service during the inspection and supported across care rooms guiding and directing staff. In addition, one cover domestic staff member and two early years professionals from other services attended the premises. A total of 31 staff were present across the day of inspection. The registered provider does not work directly with the children attending the service.

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- 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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 Health welfare and Development of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included care rooms Toddler 2 and Toddler 3.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the training and development manager, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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) The registered provider ensured that;

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) Documentary evidence showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.

(2) A review of paperwork and discussion with management showed that 24 new staff have been employed since the last inspection. The full files of all new staff were reviewed. In addition, the files of the training and development manager, cover manager, one domestic cover staff and two early years professionals who attended the service on the day of inspection were also reviewed as part of the inspection process. A total of 29 staff files were reviewed. A review of records maintained by Tusla demonstrated that Garda vetting

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

disclosures were dated within three years for all existing staff. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) Forty written and validated references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Eighteen written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 29 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for 26 adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (3) Evidence was available to show that the procedures required under (2) has been completed prior to the start date of all staff members.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that twenty-seven staff members 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.

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) There were 99 preschool children being cared for by 24 adults on the morning of the inspection. The designated person in charge was available to assist in care rooms as required.
- (2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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;*
- (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) The registered provider ensured that of the sample 12 records reviewed the following was maintained in each record:

- (a) The name and date of birth for each child was available.
- (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) Each of the 12 files reviewed were of children still currently attending and detailed a section to note their leave date.
- (d) The relevant contact details for parents and or guardians were available.
- (e) Authorisation to collect a child.
- (f) Relevant details relating to the health and care of a child.
- (g) The contact details of the child's doctor.
- (h) The child's immunisation record.
- (i) Written consent for emergency medical treatment if required.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(3) (c) All the records requested were available for review by the inspector on the day of the inspection

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) The following practices were observed in place to support the children attending:

- Children's footwear and heavy clothing were removed prior to sleep. Soft music and dimmed lighting helped create a restful environment for sleeping children.
- Service menus were clearly displayed and also listed options of the Halal menu. Details of the Halal meat suppliers was available for review by parents.
- Mealtimes were observed to be regular, and children were given ample time to enjoy their meals. Additional food was provided when requested.
- A schedule for play in the outdoor area was displayed and children were observed to engage in play outdoors on the day of inspection.
- Foot stools were present to assist children to comfortably access the sink for handwashing.
- Staff used strategies such as stories and discussion at the children's level to support transitions.

Non-Compliance Information

1. A child under the age of two was observed in a wet top which was not promptly changed by staff. This posed a potential for discomfort and irritation.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The finding was addressed immediately by the Manager with the staff team. The circumstances relating to the observation were reviewed, and the required standard in relation to monitoring children's clothing, comfort and personal care was clearly reinforced. All staff have completed specific refresher training on Regulation 19. Staff were also reminded to remain attentive to children's individual cues and signs of discomfort and to respond to their needs without unnecessary delay. The manager will carry out regular spot checks to monitor compliance with Regulation 19, with particular focus on children's comfort and individual care needs.

Supporting documentation submitted

Training record.

Template spot check form.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 19 has been addressed.

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 service entrance was secured on arrival. A video bell allowed staff to identify who was present at the door before opening it. This prevents unauthorised persons accessing the service without staff knowledge.
- A visitor log was maintained, and inspectors were asked to sign in on arrival.
- Furniture and equipment were observed to be maintained and suitable for use.
- Window restrictors were observed in place.
- Water temperature records were displayed and completed up to date.
- The service had the nut policy clearly displayed supporting a safe approach for children attending.
- A garden risk assessment checklist was available and completed up to date.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Infection Control:

- Foot pedal bins were present in sanitary areas and operational to support effective hand hygiene practices.
- Hand towels and liquid soap were hygienically dispensed.
- Sanitary area cleaning records were displayed and completed up to date.
- Children had individually labelled drink cups.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was observed stored out of children's reach.

Safe Sleep:

- A record of 10-minute physical sleep checks was maintained on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency evacuation routes were displayed within the service, and fire exits were observed clear of obstruction on the day of inspection.