

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020WW002
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Name of Service:	Welltrack Junior Academy
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Address of Service:	33A Charlesland Court, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 KP40
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Name of Registered Provider:	Elaine Whelan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	24 October 2022
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No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	16
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre Loughlinstown Drive Loughlinstown Co.Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona Condon
Title:	Early Years Inspector(s)

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

Welltrack Junior Academy was established by the registered provider in 2020 and is privately owned. The service offers full day care, part time care and sessional childcare service providing care and education for children aged 2 years to 6 years. It is currently registered on the National Register of Early Years' Services to cater for a maximum of 33 pre-school children and operates from 07.30am to 18.30pm each weekday for 51 weeks of the year. The service operates from a detached purpose built bungalow located in a residential area in Greystones, Co. Wicklow. There are three care rooms namely; The Caterpillar Room, The Butterfly Room and The Bumblebee Room. An outdoor area is located at the rear and side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs six staff members which includes a person to carry out cleaning and general duties. All staff members providing direct care to the pre-school children hold Early Childhood Care & Education qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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. The inspections 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-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 administrator, 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

- (2)
- (a) Written past employer validated references were available in respect of all adults.
 - b) Where past employer references were not available, validated references from sources other than a previous employer were available.
 - (c) Completed Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for 6 adults employed by the service.
 - (d) International Police vetting was available for 2 adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months adults.
- (4) All staff members who were working directly with the children held major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework for Qualification.

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) Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were 4 adults present with 25 pre-school children on the day of Inspection. The manager was not allocated to a specific room but was available to give assistance as required.

(8)(a) There were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times and the staff roster indicated that there are at least 2 adults 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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs of Infants & Children

- A healthy nutritious breakfast, snacks and dinner was provided by the service for the children who attended for part time or full day care. Parents of children attending on a sessional basis provided a snack for them. The main meal of sausage hotpot or pasta marinara was enjoyed by the children. Younger children were provided with bibs to protect their clothing from spills. The daily menu was on display in the service. Snacks available included crackers, cheese, fruit and a sandwich.
- Drinking water was available for the children throughout the day.
- All children were observed availing of fresh air and sunlight in the outdoor area during the day. The Butterfly room and the Bumblebees room had doors which opened into an outdoor area adjacent to their room where they could safely explore and play.
- Younger children's nappies were changed as required and good engagement in conversation with the children was noted during this time. Older children used the toilet independently and assistance given if required.
- Between 13.15 and 14.30 on inspection children in the Bumblebees Room were facilitated to sleep comfortably. Each child slept on low beds with individual linen in the darkened room while supervised and assisted by the adult present to settle if needed.

Supporting Relationships around Children:

- There was evidence that the service worked in partnership with parents. A daily verbal report detailing the child's day was given to parents upon collection. The staff caring for the children stated that an electronic app was used by them to update parents on a daily basis. The service also uses the phone, texting and email to update parents regarding the service.

- It was evident that the service was actively linking in with parents of children attending where English was not their first language. In the Caterpillar room four of the children were relatively new and all four were of differing nationalities. The staff member had learnt important words to use in their own languages in order to communicate with the children while they settled. These children appeared relaxed and actively engaged with the activities in the room.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The play resources available to the children were accessible, organised and stored on low level shelving which allowed the children to select and replace items and materials of interest.
- There was an adequate amount of age-appropriate furniture and equipment available in the rooms. Equipment included push-pull toys, musical toys, toy animals, Montessori equipment, construction, puzzles and a library.
- There was evidence of the children's artwork on display in the rooms.
- A secure outdoor area was available at the rear and side of the premises. It was subdivided into two areas. Play equipment available include bikes, tractors, activity climbing area and slide, swings, sand play and a toy kitchen area.
- Low beds with individual bed linen was provided for the younger children in the Bumblebees room to Sleep. Rest areas with suitable couches and mats were available in the Caterpillar and Butterflies rooms