

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC090
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Cheeky Cherubs Early Years Schools - Bishopstown
-------------------------	--

Address of Service:	19 Uam Var Avenue, Bishopstown, Cork City, Co. Cork
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	T12 T802
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Michelle Akerlind, Sarah O'Leary
-------------------------------------	----------------------------------

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

Date of Inspection:	28/07/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	21
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick, V94 XT5F
Inspection undertaken by:	S O'Brien
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	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

Description of service

This full day care service was established in 2005 and is located in Bishopstown, on the outskirts of Cork City. The service caters for children aged 2 to 5 years of age. The service operates from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The pedagogical style of the service is to follow the interests of the children drawing on the Reggio approach. The focus is on the promotion of self-help skills. The service comprises of two rooms, the Explorers and the Atelier. The outdoor studio hosts the morning and afternoon ECCE sessional sessions, 38 weeks of the year. This room was being used as an additional space for children on the day of inspection. In addition, there was a boot room, a cozy reading room, covered outdoor area and several open outdoor areas.

Staffing

The service employs 11 staff which includes 2 registered providers and 2 centre managers, who are based between 2 Cheeky Cherub childcare services. On the day of inspection, eight staff members were present, including one registered provider and two centre managers.

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 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.

Additional Information

On 28 July 2025, an Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider under Regulation 23: Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of the children, where additional information is outlined.

On 29 July 2025, the registered provider outlined the steps taken to mitigate the risk to the children.

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
- (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 registered providers of the service were the designated persons in charge. A named person, who was the centre manager was able to deputise in the absence of the registered providers.
 - (b) The designated person in charge and the named deputy were on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service. All staff members were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Eleven staff files were reviewed including the registered providers and centre managers.
- (a) Twelve references were available from a past employer and were validated.

(b) Ten references were available from a reputable source and were validated.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 11 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 had been obtained for three staff members who had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) All 11 staff members held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 or a qualification deemed equivalent by the minister.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies and procedures were reviewed:

- Administration of medication policy
- Accidents and incidents policy

These policies contained the relevant information to guide staff in their care practices.

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) The registered providers ensured that there was an adequate number of staff caring for the children in attendance in the service, on the day of inspection.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection and met the minimum requirements.

In the morning, the ratios were as follows:

- In the Explorers care room, there were eight children, aged between 3 and 5 years, being cared for by two staff members.
- In the Ateliers care room, there were 12 children, aged between 2 and 5 years, being cared for by 2 staff members.

In the afternoon the ratios were as follows:

- In the Explorers care room, there were eight children, aged between 3 and 5 years, being cared for by two staff members.
- In the Ateliers care room, there were 13 children, aged between 2 and 5 years, being cared for by 3 staff members.

(8)

(a) There were at least two staff members on the premises at all times while the service was in operation. This was observed on the day of inspection and on review of the staff roster.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 12 children's records were assessed and reviewed. All records accessed contained the relevant information outlined from (a) to (i).

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:

- (i) details of staff rosters 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) The following records were reviewed:

- (i) A staff roster was available and clearly outlined the start and finish times of each staff member.
- (j) Ten medication records between March 2024 and March 2025 were reviewed and contained all the relevant information.
- (k) Eleven accident and incident records that had occurred between February 2024 and March 2025 were assessed and contained all relevant information required.

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

- The children were observed spending large amounts of time in the outdoor area.
- Children were observed freely moving around the rooms and outdoor area and participated in various activities of choice.
- The children had individual water bottles available on child height shelving and staff encourage children to keep hydrated during the day and at mealtimes.
- The service provided breakfast, morning and afternoon snacks and a main meal to the children. Fruit, tuna, pasta, tomato sauce, rice cakes, yogurt and granola were observed to be served to the children on the day of inspection. Alternatives foods were also available.
- Staff supported each child's independence. This was observed at dinner time in the Explorers care room. Children served their own dinner and staff outlined that it gave children a sense of autonomy and choice. Staff were also observed supporting a child putting on their own shoes.
- The Explorers care room was made available to children who wanted to rest and sleep. Sleep mats and quiet music were available, and children were observed sleeping and resting.
- Children were supported with toileting when needed and during handwashing times.
- Individual care plans were available for the children who required them. Staff were aware of the individual needs of each child and adapted activities to support the learning and development of each child. This was observed using music during transition times.

Supporting relationships

- The staff were observed interacting with the children in a kind and respectful manner. Each child's voice was heard and listened to. Staff ensured they were at the child's level when communicating with them.
- A family wall was on display in the Aterliers and Explorers room which support the children's sense of identity and belonging.

- Staff in the care rooms were observed sitting with the children and made mealtimes a relaxed environment for the children to enjoy their food.
- The staff outlined the importance of communicating with parent and guardians. The service used an electronic application to communicate photos of activities the children partake in.
- There was a sense of teamwork observed between staff in the care rooms. Staff worked together on developing activities for the children.
- The children spoke about what activities they took part in at 'Recall time' and staff outlined how this supported language, communication and cognitive skills. Staff were available to support children during this time.

Physical and material environment

- A mud kitchen, vegetable and fruit patch and hammocks were available to the children in the natural area of the outdoor space.
- A covered area was available to the children to sit and play with building blocks and construction material.
- Slides, hula hoops and ride along toys were available to promote physical movement.
- The studio room was available to the children to take some time away from the larger group at outdoor play. Art and craft materials were placed on the table for children to use.
- A light box and translucent discs and building blocks was available to the children in the Atelier room.
- A large art and craft table was also available with recycled materials to promote imagination skills.
- Natural materials such as twigs, seashells, timber discs were available in the Atelier room.
- A quiet corner with books and cushions was observed in the Explorer room with fairy lights to promote relaxation.

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 main entrance to the service was secured and prevented any child from exiting unsupervised and any unauthorised access.
- Internal doors were secured to prevent children from accessing unsafe areas.
- The outdoor area was secured by a fence and gates. All toys and equipment in the outdoor area was observed to be in good condition on inspection.
- Blind cords were observed to be secure on inspection.
- On inspection, low level windows had window restrictors to prevent children from exiting or falling.
- All toys and equipment in the Explorers and Ateliers care rooms were observed to be in good condition during the inspection.
- All flexes and cables were observed to be out of reach to children, during the inspection.
- All medicines were observed to be appropriately stored in their original containers, clearly labelled and out of reach to children.
- During the inspection, cleaning agents were observed to be stored out of reach to children.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available to the children and staff for effective handwashing.
- Children were observed washing their hands before mealtimes and after outdoor play.
- Lidded and foot pedal operated bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas.
- Staff were observed cleaning the tables before mealtimes with antibacterial spray.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed during the inspection. On discussion, staff were aware of the procedure to follow in the event of medication administration.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were observed sleeping on appropriate sleep equipment such as mats. Blankets were also available to the children if needed.

- One staff member was observed supervising the children who were resting and sleeping, on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- All fire exits were observed to be clear and free from obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A water temperature of 51.5°C was recorded in the hand basin in the Aterliers care room where children were observed washing paint brushes and trays. An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection. It is acknowledged, when the inspector informed the centre manager of the risk to children, the staff in the care room were made aware not to use this sink until the issue was resolved. The centre manager also tried to regulate the water temperature. The inspector recorded further water temperatures of 47.5°C and 45°C. In the Explorers children's sanitary area, a water temperature of 45.5°C was recorded in the wash hand basin. The centre manager informed staff to ensure that children were supervised at all times while using the wash hand basin in this area. Water temperatures that exceed 43°C and 50°C posed a risk of scalding to children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Corrective Action

The registered providers stated in their response that a plumber was arranged to call to the service. The plumber found the thermostat on the cylinder was at 60 degrees, and this could not be lowered as it can lead to legionnaires disease. The plumber adjusted the blending valve in the hot press to let more cold water in which decreased the water temperatures.

Preventive Action

Water temperatures checks will be carried out twice daily for all the taps in the building and has been added to the checklist on the electronic application for each room.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Documented and photographic evidence was submitted to the inspectorate for review.

Summary Comment

The registered providers response, documented and photographic evidence were reviewed by the inspectorate and has met the regulatory requirements.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service on an electronic application.

(3)

(b) A daily record of visitors to the service was available for review. On arrival to the service, the centre manager requested the inspector to check in and to check out on departure.

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) Five staff members held a current certificate in First Aid Responder (FAR) training and at least one of these staff members were on the premises at all times.

(2)

(a) There were fully stocked first aid boxes available and were observed to be stored out of reach to children.

(b) The first aid boxes were accessible at all times and staff were aware of its location, should it be required.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(e) There were an adequate number of toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing areas for the children and staff that were in attendance on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(d)

1. In the children's sanitary area of the Ateliers care room, there was peeling paint on the wall near the wash hand basin. The area between the hand basin and tiling on the wall was observed to require maintenance making the area difficult to adequately clean.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Corrective Action

The registered providers stated in their response that the painter removed the peeling paint and followed on by painting the area. The maintenance man reapplied silicone around the sink to fill in any gaps which now ensures ease with cleaning the area.

Preventive Action

Each room has their own maintenance log sheet which staff are required to fill out when maintenance is required in the room.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documented evidence was submitted to the inspectorate for review.

Summary Comment

The registered providers response and documented evidence were reviewed by the inspectorate and has met the regulatory requirements.