

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC116
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Name of Service:	Crawford Childcare
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Address of Service:	Crawford Woods, Church Hill, Glanmire, Co Cork
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Eircode:	T45 AF54
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Fenton Tutty
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	26/08/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	45	PM	44
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440
Inspection undertaken by:	D Prendergast
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
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Description of service

Crawford Childcare is registered to provide full day, part time and sessional care to children aged 0 to 6 years. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and operates a sessional service from 9.00am to 12.00pm, over 38 weeks of the year. Daily opening hours are from 7.30am to 5.30pm.

The premises is situated in a residential area of Glanmire in Co Cork and consists of a purpose built, single storey, detached building. There are three care rooms available, each of which has direct access to an outdoor play area. The service also includes child and staff sanitary facilities, two sleep rooms, a kitchen, a reception area and an office. There is an onsite car park at the front of the premises, to facilitate the safe drop off and collection of children and staff parking.

Staffing

Eighteen adults are employed at the service, with 15 of these staff involved in the direct, day to day care of the children. The registered provider is not service based and two ancillary staff do not work directly with the children. There were 15 adults present at the time of 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 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 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.
- (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)
- (a) A manager was in charge of overseeing the operation of the service. Two deputies had also been identified, to deputise as needed. This information was available in writing.
 - (b) When the unannounced inspection commenced, the manager was working at the childcare facility and was available for its duration. Upon examination of the staff roster, it was demonstrated that the manager or a deputy was consistently present, while the service was in operation.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that nine new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. All of these new staff members worked directly with the children. A total of nine files were

reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for two staff members, whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal, were requested for review.

- (a) Of the 18 required written and validated references, 14 were on file from past employers.
- (b) A further four of the required written and validated references had been provided by sources other than previous employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all nine staff. In addition, Garda vetting in respect of two adults had been renewed. This was in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting records were available on file for the eight staff members who had lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer, as adults.
- (4) The records provided demonstrated that seven of the adults held a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications, or as recognised by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE). A Letter of Qualification Recognition had been obtained by two of the staff members.

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, it was noted that a sufficient number of adults were involved in the direct care of the children who attended the service.
- (2) The adult child ratio was correct on the day of the unannounced inspection.

- A total of 45 children, with an age range of 11 months to 5 years, were in attendance during the morning. There were 12 adults responsible for the direct care and education of these children.
- In the afternoon, 10 adults were available to 44 children present, who were aged 1 to 5 years. The person in charge was also available to provide cover in the care rooms as necessary.

(8)

(a) There were at least two adults rostered to work at the service, for the duration of the hours of operation.

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)

Ten of the 52 available child registration records were sampled. Each of the 10 records were assessed in relation to parts (a) to (i) above and were deemed to meet the requirements.

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:

- (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)
- (j) A sample of 10 administration of medication records, dated within the past 12 months, was assessed. Each record was found to include the required information. Signed parental consent for staff to administer the relevant medication was also in place.
 - (k) Ten accident and incident records, relating to the current term, were sampled and were found to have been completed in full.

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)

Supporting relationships:

- The person in charge advised the inspector that each child who attended the service was allocated a key worker, whose role included ensuring that the child's interests were reflected in the care room and recording their activities of daily living. This information was inputted on a digital application, which could be viewed instantly by the child's parents.
- Exchange of information with the children's parents was also facilitated through informal conversation at drop off and collection times, one to one meetings, phone calls, email and window notices, such as

newsletters. A copy of a recent newsletter was displayed in the entrance area. In addition, the service had a website and incorporated the use of social media.

- At the time of the inspection, some of the children were settling into the Exploring room and their parents were invited to remain in the care room, while they became familiar with their new environment. Similarly, when a parent arrived to collect their child, they were advised about their child's morning by a staff member, which included describing the materials the child had enjoyed playing with and what they had eaten. These practices supported the children to have positive experiences when transitioning into the service.
- The adults adopted soft tones of voice when communicating with the children and attending to their care needs, for example, when supporting the children with toilet training. The children were also comforted and reassured when upset, as was observed when an adult calmly intervened to prevent a minor disagreement in relation to play materials, from escalating.
- Doors between the care rooms and outdoor areas remained open, which allowed the children to move between the indoor and outdoor environments as they wished. This provided children with opportunities to engage in a range of play experiences and allowed children in the older care rooms to interact with one another.
- During conversation with the person in charge, the inspector was informed that weekly staff meetings took place in each room, along with weekly leader meetings. Full staff meetings were accommodated as the need arose, for example, in relation to training. A sample of recent meeting minutes for the various care rooms was reviewed by the inspector. Email and a messaging application were also used by staff to communicate and share relevant information.

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 door was found to have been appropriately secured prior to the inspector's unannounced arrival. An intercom system was in place for visitors, while staff used an electronic keypad. This minimised the risk of unauthorised persons gaining access to the service.
- Keypad entry was also required to access the care rooms.

- In the outdoor play areas, walls, high-level fencing and gates were in place, to create secure enclosures.
- Low-level cupboards were secured with child proof locks, which prevented children from accessing unsafe materials.
- Cables from electrical equipment were inaccessible to the children.
- Visibility strips were fitted to low-level glass panels.
- Wall mounted storage was ensured for firefighting equipment.
- Cleaning agents were maintained out of the children's reach.

Infection control:

- Facilities were in place to support effective handwashing practice; warm running water, liquid soap, paper towels and pedal operated bins were available at the wash hand basins. The children were observed to wash their hands after using the sanitary facilities.
- During an observed nappy changing procedure, the following measures reduced the risk of cross infection:
 - The staff member wore a disposable apron and gloves.
 - The changing mat was sanitised after use.
 - Both the adult and the child washed their hands when the nappy had been changed.
- Waterproof mattresses, which could be easily cleaned, were provided in all of the examined cots.
- Windows in the care rooms and sanitary areas remained open throughout the inspection, which facilitated adequate ventilation.
- Within the nappy changing areas, the children's toiletries were stored on shelves, which were labelled accordingly.

Administration of medication:

- A sample review of the medication held at the service found that it was safely stored and clearly labelled.
- During discussion, a staff member demonstrated familiarity with the procedures to be followed, in the event that emergency medication was required to be administered. Clear guidance in relation to a specific medical condition was also stored with the relevant medication.

Safe sleep:

- The air temperatures of both sleep rooms were noted to be within the required range, while occupied by sleeping children. A temperature of 19.3°C was recorded in the sleep room adjoining the Exploring room and the second sleep room had a recorded air temperature of 19°C.
- Staff members maintained electronic sleep records in relation to children's breathing, colour and position, at 10-minute intervals. The inspector also observed one of the adults undertaking a sleep check.

Fire safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.
- Fire exit signage was illuminated.

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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) Documentation in relation to completed monthly fire drills was presented for review. It was noted that the most recent fire drill was undertaken on 21 August 2025.
 - (b) The number and type of firefighting equipment available were outlined in writing. Maintenance records demonstrated that the firefighting equipment was serviced on 16 May 2025 and the smoke alarm system was tested on 2 May 2025.
- (4) Fire evacuation notices were clearly displayed in the care rooms.