

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC195
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Name of Service:	Kealkil Childcare
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Address of Service:	Droumlickacruie, Kealkil, Bantry, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P75 W596
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Name of Registered Provider:	Martina Doody
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	24/04/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	25	PM	25
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Department, Child & Family Agency, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co Cork P81 PD78
Inspection undertaken by:	Ms. O'Reilly
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

Kealkil Childcare is a privately owned full day care service in operation since 2015. This service is registered to cater for children from 1 to 6 years offering a choice of sessional, part time or full day care. Also, for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service also offers a school aged care service. At time of inspection the registered provider informed the Inspectorate that she is moving the services school aged care service to the local national school and will be operating the service from there from September 2025.

The service is registered to operate from 08:00 to 18:00 hours each day Monday to Friday. It comprises of a detached two storey purpose-built facility located within the grounds of the registered providers own private residence. It provides five care rooms, adult and children's toilets and nappy changing facilities, a designated separate area for the children to sleep off the Baby room. Most of the playrooms have direct access to the many outdoor play areas beside the premise.

Staffing

At time of inspection, there were 11 staff and 1 volunteer involved in the direct care of the children who attend. The eleven staff who work with the children hold a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education and this includes the registered provider. It does not include a volunteer who attends the service one morning a week.

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 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.

Compliance Information

(1)
(a) There was a named person in charge and a deputy appointed to deputise as required.
(b) The person in charge was present on the premises on day of the inspection.
(2) The registered provider stated, there was no new staff member appointed since the last inspection. No documentation was assessed in relation to Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b) as the vetting records were reviewed on all eleven staff and on the one volunteer on the last inspection dated the 07 October 2024
(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of the 11 adults and 1 volunteer. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
(d) The 11 staff who worked directly with the children all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, or an equivalent qualification, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications. There was one volunteer present on the day of inspection. A childcare qualification is not required when the adult is a volunteer.

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 person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in each room on day of the inspection.

(2)
During the period of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations.

Baby Room

There were 4 children present in the morning and in the afternoon. The four children were aged between 1 and 2 years with 1 adult in attendance.

Toddler Room

There were 8 children present in the morning and in the afternoon. There were 4 children aged between 2 and 3 years and 4 children were aged over 3 years with 2 adults in attendance.

Preschool Room 1

There were 5 children in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon. The children were aged between 3 and 5 years with 1 adult in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon. There were two school aged care children in attendance for the day.

Preschool Room 2

There were 7 children in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon. The children were aged between 3 and 6 years with 2 adults in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon until 2:30pm. One of the adults was a

volunteer and not included in the adult child ratio in the service. There was one school aged care child in attendance for the day.

Preschool Room 3

This room was not in operation on day of inspection as the inspection took place during the Easter holiday period.

(8)

(a) At least two adults were present at all times throughout the inspection period.

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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)

(h) Details of attendance by each child was recorded. The record indicated the arrival and departure time of each child, on a daily basis in the service.

(k) The service had records detailing any accidents or incidents that had occurred in the service. A sample of the accident and incident records reviewed, each had been counter signed by the child's parent to evidence that the information had been relayed.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(i) While a weekly staff roster was maintained in the service and the roster indicated the names of the staff, the arrival and departure time from the service each day.

The following was not recorded on the staff roster:

1. The names of the staff rostered daily in each room in the service was not recorded.
2. The times staff went on their lunch break daily in each room.

This issue was identified as non-compliant in the last inspection dated the 07 October 2024 following which the registered provider gave assurances in the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) this issue would be addressed however, this did not prevent a reoccurrence of this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) received from the registered provider/person in charge of the service, the following was stated:

(1)(i)

1. The staff roster has been updated to include the names of the staff rostered daily in each room.
2. The time full time staff go on their daily lunch break is now recorded. The registered provider/person in charge is the main person that relieves staff in the service at lunch break time as she is not assigned to any room. One other staff member is also assigned to relieve staff at lunch break time

Supporting documentation submitted

- A copy of daily/weekly staff rosters were forward to the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

Correspondence was received and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation (16)(1)(i) of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. Staff rosters will again be reviewed on the next inspection to ensure that the required details are recorded on the daily rosters.

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

Basic Needs

- The service promoted healthy eating and the food provided by the parents and guardians for the mid-morning snack and lunch was observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- Support and assistance offered by the adults during mealtimes was appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children in their care. For example, toddlers had the opportunity to feed themselves, while younger children were provided with one-to-one support. The available cutlery was suitably sized and easily handled by the children.

- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Independent use of the toilet was encouraged. The children were supported and encouraged prior to eating, after toileting, messy play and outdoor play.
- Nappy changing was incorporated into the daily routine at frequent intervals and as the need arose. This care practice was observed to be managed by adults in a caring and sensitive manner, as they chatted warmly to the children throughout. The second staff member in the Toddler room assisted the staff member in the Baby room for nappy changing.
- Shortly after eating lunch, the children in the Baby room were facilitated to sleep as needed in the designated sleep area in the room. The children who did not wish to sleep were accommodated to participate in activities in the Baby playroom. The children in the Toddler room were facilitated to sleep as needed, during a scheduled rest period after lunch. The children who did not wish to sleep were accommodated to participate in activities in the covered outdoor play area beside the Toddler room.
- There was adequate space in the care rooms to accommodate a variety of play activities.
- Children had sufficient space to move about freely indoors and outdoors. Transitions were made as smooth as possible when children moved from their room to the outdoor play area. The children from all rooms were observed playing in the outdoor play area on day of inspection.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members were observed to be kind, patient and caring to each child as observed during caring duties, facilitating play and one-to-one engagement. Only low tones were used, and minor behavioural issues were dealt with promptly by staff.
- The staff members were observed to work well together, and the children were familiar with the routine.
- The mid-morning meal and lunch meal were observed to be social occasions, as the children chatted freely in a relaxed environment with their peers and with the staff and were offered appropriate assistance by the staff for example, the opening of lunch boxes, cartons and peeling of fruits.
- During observed tabletop activities, the children were supported and encouraged by the staff, who acknowledged their efforts and achievements for example during the completion of paintings during art and craft and items completed during block building time.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- The playrooms in operation were child friendly, bright and the play materials were largely accessible to the children.

- The Baby room had soft areas for children to roll and crawl and walk. There was appropriate equipment such as, shape sorters pull along toys, handheld toys, sound making materials and construction available to the children.
- The two Preschool rooms in operation had interest areas that included, a wide range of tabletop activities and games to encourage companionable interaction, there were cars and trucks, a fine motor skills area, a home corner suitably furnished with dolls, buggies, dress up and small utensils to prompt imagination and pretend play.
- Highchairs in the Baby room and adequate numbers of child sized tables and chairs were available in each room.
- The shelving was set low to display play materials which were mostly plastic and wooden in nature and easily washable. The low shelving facilitated easy access to the materials by the children.
- Rest areas were available to the children in all rooms to allow the children to opt out of play activities and relax if they so wished.
- All playrooms had access to secured outdoor play areas which had an artificial grass surface area and a hard course for the use of ride on toys.
- The rooms were airy with many openable windows which allowed for natural light and ventilation.
- There are partially covered outdoor play areas with climbing frame, see saws and slides. The children had access to a number of push and ride on toys.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The children appeared to enjoy the food provided by their parents/guardians at the mid-morning snack and hot meal at lunch time and were afforded ample time to eat and drink at a relaxed pace.
- The children were provided with appropriate cutlery and crockery at snack and mealtimes.
- Perishable foods were refrigerated in a refrigerator located in all playrooms.
- The children had access to their own labelled water bottles so that they could help themselves to drinks when they were thirsty

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:

- Upon the inspector's arrival at the service, the main entrance door was found to have been adequately secured and was maintained secure when not in use.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the children's reach.
- First aid boxes were appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- No cables were visibly within reach of children on the day of inspection.
- The outdoor area was noted to be fully enclosed and secured.

Infection Control:

- There was liquid soap and paper towels in the hand washing facilities in all wash hand basins in the service
- The tables were sanitised prior to lunch and snack mealtimes.
- Handwashing by the children was observed before snacks, lunch and after toileting, nappy changing and outdoor play.
- Within the nappy changing areas, there was neat and tidy individually labelled storage for the children's toiletries.
- Pedal operated bins were in place for the disposal of paper towels.
- Non-contact bins were available for the storage of used nappies.
- In general, the playrooms, toilets and nappy changing facilities in the service were visibly clean on day of inspection. There were weekly cleaning schedules on display.

Safe Sleep:

- Ten-minute sleep checks were recorded for each sleeping child by the adults monitoring the sleeping children.
- The children aged under two years rest needs were facilitated in a designated sleep area in the Baby room. There were adequate numbers of standard cots with safety mattresses for children under two that required a sleep with individual accompanying bed linen.
- Each of the safety mattresses was covered with a waterproof mattress cover.

- The children over two rest needs were met during a planned sleeping period when floor beds were set up in the Toddler room.
- There were a sufficient number of suitable floor beds available with designated suitable bed linen for each child over two years who wanted a sleep while attending the service. There was an adequate distance between each floor bed.
- The air temperature reading of the sleep area in the Baby room was reading between 19°C and 20°C.
- The Toddler room where the children were observed sleeping in the playroom converted into sleep room after lunch were reading within the normal range of between 19°C and 19.6°C. Accepted air temperature range is between 16°C and 20°C for rooms where children are sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exit doors were noted to be maintained free from any obstructions

Outing:

- Not applicable, as an outing was not observed.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. There was no thermostatically controlled hot water in one of the wash hand basins in the children's toilet facilities designated for the Baby and Toddler room. This would impede effective hand washing increasing the risk of cross infection.

The following two issues were identified as non-compliant in the last inspection dated the 07 October 2024 following which the registered provider gave assurances in the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) that both issues would be adequately addressed however, this did not prevent a reoccurrence of both of these non-compliance.

2. The babies had access to the refuse bin located in a cupboard under the sink in the Baby room. While there was a magnetic lock installed on the cupboard door since the last inspection The childproof lock that was present at time of inspection was not adequately securing the cupboard door to prevent a child having access to the refuse bin located in the cupboard at child height. Babies should have no access to bins due to the potential risk of cross infection.
3. There was extensive visible areas of dried brown and black coloured staining all over one of the inner painted walls in the outdoor play area for the Baby and Toddler Room. When touched, the stains came away easily on your hands increasing the potential risk of cross infection to the children playing there if they touched the surface of the wall.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

In

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) received from the registered provider/person in charge of the service, the following was stated:

General Safety:

1.
 - a) Full length locked doors (where the electric Hoover was stored on day of inspection) have been ordered to enclose the open storage area in one of the children's toilets on the first floor.
 - b) Child proof locks have been installed on the doors where the electric operated clothes drier and service washing machine are stored in the same children's toilet on the first floor.
2. The renewed Garda Vetting for one adult was processed.
3. A child proof lock is now in place on the dishwasher located in Preschool room 2.
4. The electric cables are now adequately encased and adequately secured behind the pedal operated lidded bin in the kitchenette area of the Toddler room.

Infection Control:

5. A plumber was called and a new tap has been installed in one of the wash hand basins in the children's toilet facilities designated for the Baby and Toddler room. There is thermostatically controlled hot water now in the said wash hand basin.
6. The magnetic lock has been replaced with a new childproof lock that adequately secures the cupboard door where the refuse bin is stored in the Baby room. A supply of new child proof locks are now available in the service to replace existing child proof locks when required.
7. In the written response the registered provider has stated that the wall in the outdoor play area for the Baby and Toddler Room has been covered with a false wall, with a washable white surface in front. The children no longer have access to the stained wall. A divider has been put in place to stop further rust from coming down onto wall.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1.
 - a) A copy of the order form and receipt for the doors ordered to secure the storage area in the children's toilet on the first floor was submitted to the early years inspector.
 - b) Photographic evidence of the new childproof locks on the doors where the electric operated clothes drier and service washing machine are stored was submitted to the early years inspector.
2. A copy of the processed Garda Vetting record for 1 adult was forward to the to the early years inspector.
3. Photographic evidence of the child proof lock now in place on the dishwasher located in Preschool room 2 was submitted to the early years inspector.
4. Photographic evidence of the encased cables behind the pedal operated lidded bin in the kitchenette area of the Toddler room was submitted to the early years inspector.

Infection Control:

5. Photographic evidence of the newly installed tap was submitted to the early years inspector.
6. Photographic evidence of the new childproof lock that secures the cupboard door where the refuse bin is stored in the Baby room was submitted to the early years inspector.
7. Photographic evidence of the washable white wood surface on the wall in the outdoor play area for the Baby and Toddler Room was submitted to the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

Correspondence was received and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 23, General Safety (1)(b), 2.3.4. and Infection Control 5. 6. 7. of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

General Safety

1. (a) While a copy of an order and receipt for the purchase of two long doors to secure a storage area in the children's toilet was submitted. The work was not completed at time of finalising this report. This issue remains outstanding and will be assessed at the next inspection to ensure regulatory compliance.

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)
There were two staff in total in the service that had a current certified First Aid Responder certificate (FAR). There was one of the two staff present on day of inspection with a current certified First Aid Responder certificate (FAR).
- (2)
(a) The first aid boxes were safely stored out of children's reach in the service.
(b) The first aid boxes were available to adults at all times if in the event that a child may require treatment.

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.

(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) A record of monthly fire drills carried out in each room was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place on the 24 April 2025
(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced on the 03 October 2024 and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced in 24August 2024.

(4)

The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was adequately insured, with insurance for 54 children until 27/03/2026. The records detailed the category of service covered which was full day care, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.