

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC204			
Name of Service:	Kindercare Childcare			
Address of Service:	Unit 4,5,8,9,10, Classes Lake Retail Centre, Classes Lake, Ovens, Co. Cork			
Eircode:	P31 CY98			
Name of Registered Provider:	Frances Cunningham			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	08/05/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	128	PM	102
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Office, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork			
Inspection undertaken by:	C Stokes & E Friel			
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).				
Conditions if applicable	N/A			

Description of service

Kindercare Childcare is a privately owned full day care service. It offers full day care and sessional care to children aged 0-6 years and offers a school going service with a breakfast club and after school activities. Kindercare Childcare is registered to operate from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The service is in a suburban setting within a retail and housing development near Ballincollig. Kindercare operates from a purpose built two storey premises with 10 rooms. Downstairs comprised of 7 rooms including, baby, wobbler, pre-toddler, toddler, senior toddler, morning preschool. Upstairs there were 3 additional rooms, pre-preschool, preschool-up and junior preschool. One downstairs room was not in use by preschool children on the day of inspection. There were 2 sleep rooms adjacent to the baby/wobbler unit. The service also had a full kitchen and two outdoor areas, one rear outdoor area and one balcony area for the upstairs rooms. Kindercare uses a play-based approach to learning.

Staffing

On the day of inspection, there were 22 staff working directly with the children, including the Registered Provider, person in charge, excluding the staff for school age care, administrator and the 2 chefs. Staff working directly with children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education between levels 5-8 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 unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety. 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 inspectors wish 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 provider ensured there was a designated person in charge and three named persons available to deputise.
- (b) The manager was available when the inspectors arrived on the premises and two of the named persons arrived as designated on the staff roster. When informed of the inspection the registered provider arrived a short time later. The staff roster indicated that the manager and or named persons were rostered for the period of time the service was in operation.
- (c) A clear management structure was available, which detailed roles and responsibilities of the manager and named persons, in the reception area of the entrance of the service. In addition, staff photographs and responsibilities were available on the door of each of the care rooms.
- (2) The staff files of the twenty-eight staff working in the service were assessed.
- (a) (b) There were thirty-three validated references from past employers and twenty-three validated references from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available for all twenty-eight staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International police vetting was available for thirteen staff who had lived outside of the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer as adults.
- (4) Seventeen staff working directly with children, attending the service, held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education between levels 5-8 on the National Framework of Qualifications and seven staff had a qualification which was deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. The remaining adults; two kitchen staff, one administration worker and an adult working with school age children did not require a childcare 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.

Compliance Information

(1) At all times during the period of the inspection, the registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained as follows:

Room (Age Range)	Adults	Children morning	Children afternoon
Baby (12-15 months)	2	6	6
Wobbler (15-19 months)	2	10	8
Pre-Toddler (19-27months)	2	3 under 2 years& 7 over 2 years	9
Toddlers (2-2 .5 years)	3	12	14
Senior Toddlers (2.5-3.5 years)	2	14	14
Morning Preschool (ECCE age)	1	11	n/a
Pre-Preschool (ECCE age)	2	18	14
Preschool Up (ECCE age)	3	28	21
Junior Preschool (ECCE age)	2	19	16
Totals	19	128	102

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:

- Breakfast, snacks, and meals were observed to be served throughout the day with appropriate gaps between meals/snacks. Adults were observed to sit with the children and interact to make the mealtime a social occasion. The crockery, cutlery and drinking utensils used for the main meal and snacks were suitable for the children's age and stage of development. Appropriate levels of independence were encouraged by the adults at snack and mealtimes.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop independence regarding personal care, particularly, with hand washing after outdoor play and prior to meals. The children in the downstairs rooms were largely in nappies. Nappy changing was observed to occur regularly throughout the day. For those children who were toilet trained they were supported to be independent by the adults.
- Quiet/sleep time was facilitated in all downstairs occupied rooms and in 2 of the upstairs rooms. There were cosy corners in the playrooms to provide for the children's need for rest and relaxation during the day. The two sleep rooms which facilitated sleep for children under 2 years (with 14 cots), portable cots were used in the care rooms which converted to sleep rooms after lunch for the children under 2 years to sleep. In addition, stackable beds were in place for children over 2 years to facilitate sleep after lunch at a designated time.
- Children's need for mobility was met with both the indoor and outdoor play area being used on the day of inspection. There was sufficient space with the layout of the well planned and presented playrooms for mobility in the indoor area. In addition, the children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment outdoors. Children had access to outdoor play, in designated areas and at designated times, except for the baby room who could use their outdoor space freely.
- Adults were observed to support the children in their interactions with their peers and were noted to be caring and warm in their support of assisting the children to integrate into the daily life of the setting.

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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the preschool. The outdoor area was secured.
- Blind cords were secured, and no electrical cables or leads were observed to be accessible to the children.
- Cleaning chemical/products were inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The staircase was in good condition with appropriate handrails and was well lit.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, paper towels/electric hand dryers were in place for hand washing/drying.
- Waste in the playrooms was disposed of in appropriate lidded pedal bins.
- Handwashing prior to dinner was observed in the Toddler room.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned down prior to and after snack/meals.

Administration of Medication:

- No medicine was observed to be administered on the day of inspection. Staff spoke competently about the medicine administration process and storage and individualised care plans were in place for children requiring an auto-injector pen.

Safe Sleep:

- There were 5 cots in the baby sleep room and 9 cots in the wobbler sleep room, all were standard cots in good condition with appropriately fitted sheets.
- There was sufficient space between the cots in both the baby, and wobbler, sleep rooms (50cm).
- Records were available of the ten-minute checks conducted on the children in the sleep rooms.

Fire Safety:

- No serious fire safety concerns were noted as escape exits were unobstructed.

Outing:

- No outings were observed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

Several infection control issues were noted on inspection, which may lead to the spread of infection in the setting, as follows:

1. There were two torn mattresses in the baby and wobbler sleep rooms and two heavily stained mattress covers in the wobbler room observed.
2. Baby wipes were used instead of handwashing in the wobbler room prior to snack.
3. Staff were observed to store children's soothers without any protective covers in their pockets.
4. Staff were not observed to wash their hands/ change gloves in between cleaning children's runny noses. A staff member was observed wearing gloves and attending to three children with runny noses before changing their gloves.
5. A strong malodour was noted in the nappy changing area off the junior preschool room on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

6. One child under 2 years of age was noted to sleep in a stackable bed rather than in a standard cot or approved floor bed as required for children of this age group. There was no risk assessment or sleep plan in place to support this child.

General Safety:

7. On the day of inspection, there were two rugs with curled edges, one in the toddler room and a second in the junior preschool room. These presented as a potential trip hazard

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. The torn mattresses and stained mattress covers were replaced, and evidence of purchase was submitted on 11 June 2024. These items were added to the services daily audit list according to the response of the registered provider. Evidence of the updated audit list was submitted.
2. Handwashing training was part of a staff meeting and this practice was added to the services audit list to ensure that wipes are not used instead of handwashing. Evidence of the updated audit list was submitted.
3. According to the registered provider a staff meeting introduced a new policy on soothers. All staff were briefed on the policy and all staff signed that they read and understood the policy. Parents were asked to provide soother covers. A copy of this policy was submitted as evidence.

4. All staff have been briefed on the importance of handwashing/changing gloves when nose cleaning and briefed on the importance to wash hands/change gloves after each individual child, according to the registered provider.
5. The mechanical ventilation system was serviced. Evidence of this was submitted. All vents have been checked and are in working order to prevent any malodour. The registered provider further stated that the staff ensure that the nappy bins are emptied regularly during the day. The service added checking vents to the daily audit sheets.

Safe Sleep:

6. The registered provider stated that the service has reverted to their original policy that all children under 2 years sleep in cots and the service have enough cots to cater for this.

General Safety:

7. The curling rugs were removed immediately, and the condition of rugs will be monitored for trip hazards.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted by the registered provider was deemed sufficient in meeting the requirements of this regulation.

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) The registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid was always available. Several adults (x8) were trained in FAR and were rostered on for opening and closing times in the service.

(2)(a)(b) The registered provider ensured that a fully equipped first aid box, was readily available/accessible both upstairs and downstairs in the service.

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) The registered provider ensured that a record of the fire drills was maintained. The most recent fire drill was dated 11 April 2024.
- (b) The registered provider ensured a maintenance of the fire extinguishers and smoke alarms were maintained. These records were dated 4 April 2024 and 16 March 2024 respectively.
- (4) A notice of the fire evacuation procedure was on display on the wall both upstairs and downstairs in the service.