

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC207
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Name of Service:	Krafty Kidz
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Address of Service:	Rahan National School, Lavally, Mallow, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P51 DP79
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Name of Registered Provider:	Suzanne Coughlan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	11/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square, Mallow. Cork. P51 DD5Y
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Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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/Aj
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Description of service

Krafty Kidz is a private service in operation since 2015 providing early years care and education on a sessional basis. It is registered for children aged from 2-6 years of age and children currently attending are aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years of age. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated between the hours of 8:30 until 11:30, Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. A school age service is available in the afternoon from 13:30 until 16:30 Monday to Thursday and from 13:30 to 15:30 on a Friday, term time only.

The service operates from the old Rahan National School building, which is located near the town of Mallow in North Cork. It consists of a single storey building which has its own entrance door leading to a single corridor from which there is access to, an adult toilet, storage room, office, care room, kitchen and a children's sanitary area. There is an interconnecting door which leads to the school office and a second door leading outside to an adjoining walkway to the new Rahan National School building. A dedicated secure outdoor play area is available at the side of the service and the children have shared access to a green area and a pitch with artificial grass.

Staffing

There are five adults employed to work directly with the children in the service, including one adult employed under the Access and Inclusion model and the registered provider.

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 and 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, deputy, 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.

(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) The register provider was the designated person in charge and a named person was available to deputise, as required.

(b) Both the registered provider and the deputy were observed working in the service while the pre-school children were present.

(c) There was a clear management structure visible on the notice board in the hallway of the service. In conversation, staff stated they were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2) Recruitment files of all five staff members were reviewed:

(a) (b) There were ten validated references available, eight from past employers and two from sources other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all five staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) An international police vetting disclosure was available for one staff member who had lived outside of Ireland as an adult for more than 6 consecutive months.

(3) Staff recruitment files indicated that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) Staff files viewed on the day indicated that the four staff members in the service had obtained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, ranging from levels 5 to level 7, on the National Framework of Qualifications. In addition, one staff member held a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that on the day of the inspection there were an adequate number of staff working directly with the children in the service.
- (3) There were three staff members working directly with fourteen children on the morning of the inspection.

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.*
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) All sixteen records of the pre-school children attending the service were reviewed. The following particulars were found to be compliant; (1) (a) to (i) above.

(3)

(c) The children's pre-school records were reviewed by the inspector on the premises on the morning of inspection.

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.

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

- Mid-morning snack, served at 10:20, was observed to be healthy and nutritious in line with the service's healthy eating policy. Examples of food prepared by parents/guardians included filled sandwiches cut into shapes, pretzels, cheese and cucumber.
- Most children had brought in fruit for sharing which had been cut up by the parent/guardians and a staff member. The children placed the fruit on three plates which were then shared with the whole group after all the children had eaten their snacks. There was a colourful array of apples, blueberries, strawberries, and kiwi.
- Individual water bottles were accessible at all times and alternative food was available should a child not want their snack or if they were hungry.
- Children had the opportunity to rest/relax with soft seating in the form of three child size couches with multiple cushions. Two picnic benches were available to sit at and a variety of age and stage appropriate books, linked to the curriculum themes, were available from nearby shelving. Children and adults were observed in this area throughout the morning.
- Staff were observed escorting groups of children to the children's sanitary area throughout the morning. They were nearby to provide assistance and to remind the children to wash their hands.

- Self-help skills were encouraged by the adults who praised each child's efforts. Examples included children hanging up their dressing up outfits, bringing their snack from the fridge and returning it to their bags for home and zipping up their coats for outdoor play.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS:

- Children's behaviour was consistently managed in a positive manner by staff, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement. This was observed to be in line with the positive discipline measures outlined in the service's behaviour management policy.
- A key-worker system was in place in the service with named staff members assigned the responsibility for creating close relationships with a designated group of children and their parents.
- Staff stated they held daily planning meetings after each session with examples of minutes furnished to the inspector which included topics such as keyworker system, observations, Aistear, Siolta and checklists. More formal staff meetings with management were reported to happen monthly. Examples of minutes from meetings in August and November 2024 were furnished to the inspector with topics such as parents meetings, open door policy and developmental issues.
- Staff stated they use various methods of communication with parents/guardians including an electronic application, email and verbal communication at drop off and collection times as observed on the day of inspection. In addition, the inspector was furnished with examples of communication books in use in which staff record the children's needs and behaviour which are sent home on a daily basis.
- Staff were observed employing strategies to ensure the needs of all children were being met throughout the morning. Examples included two staff members observed using sensory equipment ensuring that each child's individual needs were being taken into consideration which enabled them to take part in circle time.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The care room was laid out in clearly defined areas which enhanced the learning needs of children across all developmental areas.
- Equipment and toys were laid out in baskets on low-level shelving which encouraged choice and promoted independence, which the children were observed exercising throughout the morning.
- The walls of the care room and hallway were decorated with a variety of materials including themed artwork and projects, photographs of children involved in activities, themed curriculum posters - for example space, planets, and projects on hibernation and light and dark.

- On the morning of the inspection the inspector observed the children in the outdoor play area leaving their individual plants in the fairy garden. The various outdoor areas offered alternative changes of environments for the children. A range of developmentally appropriate equipment was provided in the fully enclosed outdoor play area which provided opportunities for the children to practice their gross motors of climbing, sliding, swinging and running. Staff stated that the children had shared use of an artificial grass pitch and a grassed area.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES:

- Ongoing observations and assessments were documented for each child which helped create a complete, well-rounded picture of each progress and development. These observations informed the planning for the curriculum. The curriculum was observed to be flexible in accordance with the emerging interests of the children, their needs, and preferences. Examples included staff taking a child over to visit a puppy when they had previously had a negative experience with bigger dogs.
- Children’s language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection.
- Activities were mainly child led and children had the opportunity to express their views, take the lead and exercise choice in relation to their engagement in activities and in accessing play equipment throughout the session. Examples included a child observed to be the room leader who was assigned tasks and roles of responsibilities for the session. In addition, children were observed each choosing a book to put in the book corner in relation to the monthly themes with titles such as Picnic on the moon, and Adams amazing space adventures.

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 registered provider was at the service entrance welcoming the children on arrival which ensured that no unauthorised adult could enter the service.
- The main entrance door was secured with an electronic pad on the outside and an electronic switch was fitted on the inside of the door. This was placed out of reach of the children, ensuring that no child could leave the service unsupervised.
- A phone system, alerting staff to an adult presence at the door, was noted on the care room wall and was heard in use during the morning.
- The three window blind cords were secured, out of reach of the children.
- Handrails were provided at the main entrance door to assist and support children going up and down the steps safely.
- All indoor toys and play equipment appeared to be well maintained and in good working order.
- Storage units were secured preventing them from tipping or falling onto the children.
- Monitor and speaker flexes were stored securely, out of reach of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored in the adult sanitary area in a cupboard which was inaccessible by the children.
- Safety matting was noted under the swings and the slide in the outdoor area, helping to protect the children in the event of a fall.
- The perimeter of the service and outdoor play areas were secured with high metal fencing. New high metal gates were in place, since the last inspection, ensuring that no child could leave the area unsupervised.
- Three staff members were noted to stand outside with the children at collection time. One adult stood at the main exit gates and while the other two staff members supervised the children. Children were only released by a staff member when a parent/guardian arrived to take them home.
- All cleaning agents were stored securely out of reach of the children in a cupboard in the adult sanitary area.

Infection Control:

- Staff were observed disinfecting the tables and sweeping the floors before and after mid-morning snack and after the morning session had finished. This ensured that the areas were clean and hygienic for future use.
- Hand basins in use in the service by the adults and children were fitted with thermostatically controlled hot water, 34°C, dispensing soap, paper towels and a pedal operated bin for the disposal of paper waste.
- Child friendly posters of handwashing were displayed above the sinks in the children's sanitary areas which demonstrated the steps for hygienic hand washing.
- A folding nappy changing table and pedal operated nappy bin were available, should they be required.
- Cleaning schedules were observed to have been completed and were noted to be up to date.
- Children's belongings were stored in the hallway on individually named hooks, and lunch bags were stored on the window sill the away from the floor area.
- Perishable food was observed to be stored in a fridge, ensuring the food did not spoil.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored in their original containers, on a high shelf which was inaccessible by the children.

Safe Sleep:

- No children were observed resting on the morning of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Fire extinguishers were observed to be anchored by brackets onto the walls.
- Fire exit doors were unobstructed allowing for the quick evacuation of children and staff in the event of fire or emergency.
- The fire assembly sign was visible in the outdoor play area, a safe distance from the service.

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) Certificates were on file to evidence that three staff members were trained as First Aid Responders (FAR); two of whom were available while the pre-school children were present in the service.

(2)

(a) (b) The well stocked first aid bag was stored within easy reach of the adults in the care room on a shelf above the fridge and was available at all times.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(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) Written records of the fire drills that took place in the service were furnished to the inspector. The last date recorded was noted as 4 November 2024 with previous monthly drills recorded as 17 October and 5 September 2024.

(b) Written records were available of the servicing of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms. The firefighting certificate was dated 19 August 2024, and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 22 October 2024.

(2)

(c) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were available on the premises for review by the inspector.

(4) The fire emergency and evacuation procedures to be followed in the event of either event taking place were displayed on the inside of the care room entrance door.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was insured. Written records were furnished to the inspector which included the following details;

- The name, address and contact details of the insurance company
- The name and address of the service
- The number of children for whom the service is insured: 21
- The type of service: Sessional
- Expiry date: 27 March 2025.