

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC210
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Name of Service:	Le Cheile Family Resource Centre (Mallow) Ltd
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Address of Service:	Mallow Community Campus, Fair Street, Mallow, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P51 F344
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Name of Registered Provider:	Paddy Lane
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	09/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM	23
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Second Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	F Collins
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).

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Description of service

Le Cheile Family Resource Centre (Mallow) Ltd. is an early years service operating as a full day care service in the town of Mallow, on the Mallow Community Campus.

The service is registered to provide full day care, part time and sessional services to the children aged between 0-6 years. The service is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm daily and facilitates the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme for 38 weeks of the year.

The service operates from the ground floor of the Mallow Community Campus building. The premises is custom built and consists of five childcare rooms each having access to the large outdoor area. Four of the five care rooms are currently open with the baby room previously catering for children under one year currently closed. Part of this closed room has been set up as a sensory room with toys and activities where children can be taken if they need a break from the busy environment of their care room.

Each room has children's toilets or where required nappy changing facilities. One of the care rooms in use has a sleep room adjacent. There were staff toilets, an office and the services of a kitchen and storage facilities away from the childcare areas.

Staffing

There were 19 staff employed by the service and two adults working in the service on community employment schemes. Eighteen of the staff work directly with the children, 12 of whom were present on the day of inspection. The person in charge covered for breaks as required. The chef was also present however does not work directly with the children.

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

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- 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.

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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 that there was a person in charge in the service during the operation of the service. On the day of inspection, the named person in charge was onsite when the inspectors arrived and the deputy person in charge was also onsite.
 - (b) The staff roster indicated there was at all times a named a person in charge or a named deputy onsite.
 - (c) All staff were aware of the management structure within the service.

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(2) The requirements for vetting were assessed for all staff on the last inspection however there were four new adults working in the service since the last inspection, their staff files along with the Garda Vetting for two further staff members was reviewed.

(a) Of the eight references required, six validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Two validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Up to date Garda Vetting was available on file for each of the six adults requiring same. This was in keeping with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

(d) Police vetting was available for the two staff members whose service history indicated the need for same.

(4) Of the four new staff to the service one required a qualification at level five or above on the National Qualifications Framework and this was available on file for review.

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 were assessed:

- The infection control policy inclusive of the nappy changing procedure.
- The safe sleep policy and,
- The Healthy Eating policy.

These policies were in keeping with good practice.

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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) There were adequate staff working with the children during the operation of the service. There were 9 staff working directly with the 23 children attending the service during the day. The person in charge provided break cover where needed.

(2) Three staff were working directly with the eight children attending the Butterflies room (older children) during the day. An adult employed under the community employment scheme was also supporting the staff in this care room.

There were three staff working directly with the nine children in the Buttercups during the day. Children were aged 1-2 years.

There were three staff working and caring for the six children attending the Bubbles room. All children in this care room were aged 3 years.

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;

© 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;

© 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-

© an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) – (i) A sample of 10 records across the three care rooms that were open were reviewed and all 10 records reviewed contained all information as outlined in (a) –(i) above.

(3) © The records as indicated above were open to inspection by the inspectorate.

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 children's needs were met around food and drink provision. Snacks were served twice in the morning with toast served to the children that arrived early and fruit snacks served later in the morning. Dinner served consisted of mash potatoes, minced beef in gravy with carrots. Drinks of water were available to the children throughout the day.
- Children that required nappy changes were changed on a routine basis and children were also changed as required.
- The temperature of each of the care rooms was comfortable with the temperatures ranging from 19.4 to 19.9°C. The windows were open to allow for ventilation and ensure the comfort of the children.

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- The older children used the toilet independently and assistance was given with the younger children who needed reminders with hand washing and with their clothing.
- There were rest areas accessible to the children in all care rooms where they could rest and opt out of activities as they wished. There were family sized couches, mats and floor cushions and in the rooms caring for the older children there were beanbags.
- The children were free to move about and access the equipment independently.
- The children slept on a routine basis after dinner. Dinner was served at 11.30am in the Buttercups room to allow the children to sleep earlier. No child was observed to require sleep outside of these times.

Supporting Relationships:

- The children were supported by the staff at snack time and lunch time when the staff sat at each table and provided support to the children when required.
- The service communicated with parents daily at drop off and collection. Staff members were observed to talk with the parents. The service was using an IT care application, and this was also used to send messages to parents. The service had engaged a new system to send home, drawings or notes to parents/guardians where each child had a named post pouch fixed to the wall outside of the care rooms. These were easily identified with the child's name and photograph indicating each child's individual pouch.
- Each child was supported to participate in each activity, and it was observed when some needed more help this was offered.
- The children knew each of the staff and were observed to call them by name. it was observed that the children sought the help of their carers when needed.
- The staff appeared to work well together and good communication was observed when meeting the needs of the individual children.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The layout of the indoor environment in the Bubbles and Butterflies rooms allowed for the children to be independent when choosing and doing activities. There were areas of interest, and these were grouped so children could play in small and large groups.
- Appropriately sized child height tables and chairs were accessible and available in each care room. The children could sit at these in comfort and participate in colouring, playing with tabletop activities and when eating.

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- The outdoor area had been developed extensively and each care room in use on the day of inspection had access to a covered and sheltered outdoor area. This area was an extension of the care room, and the space was divided for each group. The toys and equipment in each area were suitable for the age group of children using them and the children had access to sensory activities of sand and water with digging toys available to the children.
- Arts and crafts, peg boards, bricks and blocks were used in the care rooms to encourage fine motor development.

Programme of Activities:

- The children were observed to participate in a schedule of activities such as free play, outdoor activities and circle time activities. These activities promoted sensory, language, gross and fine motor development of each child.

Outdoor Environment:

- The outdoor environment consisted of three areas that were covered and had Perspex to the sides to reduce the effects of the wind. These areas were an extension of the care rooms and could be used on a daily basis even with inclement weather. On the day of inspection these areas were used frequently. The area beyond the sheltered areas was an area covered in grass and a playground area which was covered in soft matting. These areas were not used on the day of inspection.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and outdoors.

(b) The service has adequate sleep facilities, on the day of inspection six of the children attending the service slept in cots in the Buttercups room, one child slept on a stackable bed and another stackable bed was set up for the remaining child who did not want to sleep but access to a bed was available to them.

In the Bubbles room, six stackable beds were set up and in use for the six children in attendance.

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 service provided snacks and meals to the children in attendance unless by parental choice the parents/guardians provided the food served to the children.

The main meal served to the children on the day of inspection was mashed potatoes, minced meat with carrots in gravy. For children that did not like this meal as prepared each element of the meal was provided separately and the children could choose, plain mash potatoes, minced meat without gravy, carrots without gravy and gravy to the side.

Snacks served throughout the morning included different fruits and buttered toast.

Drinks of water were always available on low shelves.

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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 doors into the service were secured with electromagnetic locks and no child could leave the premises unattended.
- The outdoor space was secured by a series of gates and secure high fencing.
- The window openings were out of the reach of the children, and the windows were a tilt and turn mechanism that would not allow children to climb out.
- Blind cords were tied up high and out of reach of the children.
- The electric cables were out of reach of the children and were made safe.
- The toys assessed were safe and did not appear to have any pinch or crush points.
- The cleaning equipment was stored out of reach of the children in locked presses.
- There was no full-length glass door which may cause an injury to a child, and the glass doors were split by a white panel through them and stickers to indicate the presence of glass down low.
- No hot drinks were consumed by the staff near the children.
- The shelving units were secured where necessary and others were not high enough to be pulled down by a child if climbed on.
- The play equipment outside was dried by the staff before the children went outside.

Infection Control:

- The bags and coats for the children were stored off the ground on accessible hooks on the corridor outside of each care room.
- The windows were opened to ensure good air circulation throughout the service.
- The service was cleaned daily, and the cleaning records were signed by the staff.
- The rubbish was inaccessible, all bins inside were lidded and pedal operated.
- Tables were cleaned with appropriate disinfectant after tabletop activities and before snack and lunch time.
- There was hot water in the sinks in the children's toilets and nappy changing facilities. The water temperatures recorded in the sinks the children had access to ranged from 31.8 to 40.3 °C.
- There was liquid hand soap and paper towels beside each sink.

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Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection.
- Temperature reducing medication was available in the office should same be required.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep checks were completed every 10 minutes on the children that were sleeping in the sleep room attached to the Buttercup room. All children sleeping were over 1 year of age.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit doors were not blocked.
- The firefighting equipment was safely tethered to the walls for ease of use should they be required.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The staff member was observed to change nappies and followed the procedure correctly however throughout the two nappy changes observed they handled the lid of the bin multiple times with gloved and ungloved hands, before, during and after the nappies being changed. This practice increases the risk of contamination and cross infection and may cause an illness in a child/children. The bin in question was pedal operated and was working.
2. Six of the seven cots in use did not have waterproof mattresses or in the absence of waterproof mattresses have waterproof mattress protectors. Not having easily cleanable mattresses may allow for contamination of the mattress and potentially allow for cross infection between children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Staff training was provided immediately and as indicated by the person in charge will be provided on an ongoing basis at team meetings.
2. Cot mattress protectors have been purchased and will be in use on the cots where the mattress is not waterproof. Additional protectors have been purchased to ensure an adequate supply. These have been added to the laundry schedule.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

2. The receipt for the purchase of the cot mattress protectors has been received.

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Summary Comment

The requirements for this regulation have been met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The insurance certificate was reviewed, and the policy covered the service to operate and to have 110 children at any one time. The additional children insured was for the wider building where children attend classes upstairs. The insurance expires on 24.06.2026.