

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC355
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Name of Service:	School Around The Corner Childcare
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Address of Service:	Boherash, Glanworth, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P51 EK58
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jennifer Kiely
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	04/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	41	PM	10
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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/A
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Description of service

School Around the Corner is a private early years care and education service in operation since 2012. It is registered for children aged between 0 to 6 years of age and currently accommodates children aged from 12 months to 6 years of age. The service operates on a part-time basis from 8.00 am until 1.30 pm and from 1.30 pm until 4.40 pm. A sessional service operates within these hours from 9.00 am until 12 noon, facilitating the Early Years Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, 38 weeks of the year. A school age service is also available in the morning from 8.00 am until 9.00 am and in the afternoon from 2.00 pm until 5.30 pm.

School Around the Corner is located in the rural village of Glanworth in North Cork. It operates from a single storey building which comprises of an office, dining room, kitchen, three care rooms, adult and child sanitary areas and two nappy changing areas. There is a dedicated outdoor play area to the rear of the service and the children have access to the community playground. A car park is available at the front of the service.

Staffing

There are ten adults employed in the service including one adult working under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), an administrator and the registered provider. In addition, a relief staff member is available, if required.

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, supervisor, 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 was the designated person in charge, a named person was available to deputise and a supervisor was also present.
- (b) The staff roster evidenced that the person in charge and supervisor are available, on the premises, when the early years children are present.
- (c) There was a clear management structure available in the service. In conversation, staff stated they were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Recruitment files of all ten adults working in the service along with the relief worker were reviewed;
- (a) (b) There were thirteen validated references from past employers and nine validated references from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all adults for whom they were required. 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) An overseas police vetting disclosure was available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer as an adult.
- (4) There was evidence that nine adults working directly with the children and the relief worker had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent. The administrator 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.

(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 registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working with the children at all times.

(2) The adult/child ratios were met.

Room / Age Range	Adults	Children AM	Children PM
Busy Bees (12 months to 2 years 8 months)	3 AM	9	
Butterflies (2 years 8 months to 4 years)	2 AM, 2 PM	16	7
Bears (4 years to 6 years)	2+ 1 AIM AM, 3 PM	16	3
Total		41	10

(8)

(a) The staff roster indicated there were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the registered provider, deputy, supervisor and staff were observed to be kept in the staff recruitment files.
 - (b) Details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide were available on the Tusla Registration Certificate displayed in the reception area of the service.
 - (c) The details of the adult child ratios were kept in the Early Programme documentation.
 - (d) (e) (f) The type of care programme available along with the facilities available, opening hours and fees were available in the Early Programme documentation.

- (g) The services policies and procedures, required for Regulation 10, were kept in soft form in the reception area of the service where parents/guardians could access them.
- (h) The attendance records for each child were available in attendance record books in each care room.
- (i) The staff roster was furnished to the inspector on arrival which included staff working hours and breaks.
- (j) Administration of Medication forms were available, if required.
- (k) A sample of eleven Accident/Incident forms were reviewed, these were found to contain all of the particulars required.
- (3) The records referred to in paragraph (1) above, were open to review by the inspector on the premises.

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:

- Food and drinks were available at regular intervals and served not more than three hours apart.
- Children were observed been given adequate time to finish snack without being rushed and those who were finished were escorted to the outdoor play area.
- Nappy changing was carried out as and when required with older children observed accessing the Bear sanitary area independently. Adults were nearby to provide assistance, if required.
- Children were observed sitting reading books in the rest quiet area of the service.
- Tables and chairs were age and stage appropriate with younger children observed sitting in highchairs to have their food.
- There was space in the indoor and outdoor areas for children to play and explore.
- Children's behaviour was consistently managed in a positive manner by staff, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS:

- A staff member from the Bears care room was observed helping children to find positive solutions to minor issues, supporting them, and talking to children in a variety of ways including modelling and providing a timer for resolving turn taking and sharing of toys.
- The inspector observed staff providing comfort and support to children who were settling in including carrying children, bringing children to visit siblings and singing to children while carrying them in the outdoor play area.
- Staff stated that they use various methods of communication with parents, including verbally at drop off and collection, email, phone, and electronic application in a group and individually. A communication book was furnished to the inspector by staff in the Butterfly care room which detailed messages which are recorded by staff of information provided by parents/guardians.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENTS:

- The care rooms were laid out in clearly defined areas which enhanced the learning needs of the children across all developmental areas. Children in the Bear care room were observed engaged in a variety of materials including knobbed cylinders, joining construction, following patterns with flat stones and threading with laces and reels.
- The layout of each care room allowed the staff to supervise the children as they moved into the different interest areas.
- Materials and resources were easily accessible from nearby shelving which offered independence, facilitated choice and encouraged curiosity.
- A variety of multi-sensory materials were provided including sand and pasta, which supported the children to engage in meaningful play experiences and open-ended play.
- The outdoor area play area provided an alternative environment for the children to play and explore and included two covered outdoor play areas facilitating the children to play outdoors in all weathers. The children had access to a variety of resources which encouraged their gross motor skills of cycling, sliding, balancing and running with equipment including slides, seesaws and tricycles. Children playing on the grass area were observed playing in the large sand pit with spades and wheel barrows. A hexagonal climbing frame and goal post were situated in the area. One of the covered areas had three swings, a water wall and double-sided easels for creative opportunities.

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-

(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)

(b) In each care room children had the opportunity to rest or sit quietly with soft seating in the form of child sized sofas, leather chairs, cushions and soft toys. A cot with individual linen was available for children under two years and sleep mats were available for children over two years of age, if required. Lights could be turned off and blinds in the Butterfly room could be lowered to ensure ambient lighting. No children were observed resting or sleeping on the day of inspection.

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

There was a healthy eating policy in place, and this was demonstrated in the food provided by the parents/guardians for both morning snack and lunch for children who were availing of the part-time care. During the inspection it was observed that each care room had morning snack in the dining room at differing times starting at 9.30 am and finishing at 11.15 am with lunch available for children staying on from 1.00 pm.

- Food observed being served included mixed sandwiches, crackers, berried fruits, cheese and yogurts.
- Children had access to individual water bottles at all times in each of the care rooms.
- Age and stage appropriate cutlery and crockery were available for each child.
- Alternative food was observed in the well stocked cupboard and in the freezer in the kitchen.

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 entrance door was secured upon arrival. Entry was gained by pressing a bell which was answered by a staff member ensuring no unauthorised entry by an adult. An access control pad was available for staff and the glass panels in the office look directly out to the front of the service. Exiting the service was achieved by pressing a switch, located out of reach of the children, ensuring that no child could leave the service unsupervised.
- The kitchen door was secured with a key which was hung on a hook which was inaccessible by the children.
- Window openings in the care rooms were fitted with restrictors, out of reach of the children.
- All highchairs were fitted with five-point safety harnesses ensuring children could not climb out of the chairs.
- The toys in the care rooms, and outdoor play areas, were observed to be in good condition.
- All flexes and cables were secured out of reach of the children, including the SMART board leads and projector cables in the Butterfly room.
- Cleaning agents were stored in a locked cupboard in the dining area, and on high shelving in the Bears nappy changing area, out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor play perimeter was secured with tall hedging, metal fencing and high metal gates with sliding bolts.

Infection Control:

- Sinks in use by adults and children were fitted with thermostatically controlled hot water, dispensing soap and dispensing paper roll.
- Staff were observed sanitising tables and sweeping floors keeping the area hygienically clean.
- Windows in the care rooms and sanitary areas were open facilitating the circulation of fresh air.
- Perishable food was observed to be stored in the fridge in the kitchen preventing spoilage.
- Children's coats were stored on hooks, and bags were located on shelving, away from the floor area.

- Staff members were observed wearing disposable aprons and gloves for each nappy change. The inspector observed the staff member sanitising the mat and nappy changing area after use.
- Children were observed handwashing coming in from outdoor play and after toileting. Staff were nearby to assist with handwashing and to ensure toilets were flushed.

Administration of Medication:

- Anti-febrile medication, stored in its original container, was located out of reach of the children.

Safe Sleep:

- No children were observed sleeping on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exit doors were unobstructed.
- The fire assembly sign was visible at the rear of the service.
- Firefighting equipment was secured with brackets to the walls of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- (1) Garda vetting was available for all ten adults and the relief worker. However, three of the adults vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI- RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
- (2) A large adult sized doll's house in the Butterfly care room was not anchored, posing a safety risk should it tip or fall on top of a child.
- (3) A white shelving unit in the Butterfly care room was not secured, posing a safety risk should it tip or fall onto a child.

Infection Control:

- (4) The inspector observed that swing bins were in operation in the care rooms and in the sanitary areas in the service, posing a risk of cross contamination from the number of adults and children coming into contact with the lids. This was noted as a non-compliance on the last inspection 16 September 2023 when the registered provider stated in their response that all swing bins would be replaced. This was not found in practice on inspection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- (1) Renewed Garda vetting for the three staff members has been submitted. Dates have been set to ensure that

Garda vetting is renewed every three years.

- (2) A risk assessment has been carried out on the doll's house which indicated that this piece of equipment is not suitable for children under three years. Therefore, it will not be placed in the Busy Bees care room.
- (3) A risk assessment was carried out of the shelving unit and consideration was given to the age and stage of development of the children in the care room. Risk assessments will be carried out on large unsecured equipment in the future.

Infection Control:

- (4) All pedal bins have been replaced.

Supporting documentation submitted

The following documentation and photographs were received in the office of the inspectorate.

General Safety:

- (1) A new Garda vetting disclosure for one staff member and two application numbers returned by the National Vetting Bureau of the two remaining Garda vetting applications.
- (2) (3) Copies of the completed risk assessments.

Infection Control:

- (4) Photographs of the new pedal operated bins were received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23. The two outstanding Garda vetting applications will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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) First Aid Responder (FAR) certificates were available to evidence that 2 adults had FAR training completed and ten of the adults had completed paediatric first aid. The roster indicated that at least one adult with FAR training was available at all times.

(2) (a)(b) The suitably equipped first aid boxes, stored in the office and kitchen were within easy access of the adults and were available at all times, throughout the inspection.

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) Written records were available detailing number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. These records were both dated 11 October 2023.
- (4) The emergency evacuation procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were located in reception area of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) Written records of fire drills indicated that the fire drills were not carried out on a regular basis. The last fire drill was recorded on 24 April 2024 with the previous fire drill dated 1 February 2024. In conversation, management stated they were unaware of the requirement to carry out monthly fire drills.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The following statement was received from the registered provider;

- (1)
- (a) Fire drills will be carried out monthly.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1)
- (a) The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The action taken by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 26 (1) (a). Fire drills will be reviewed on the next inspection.

VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the early years service was insured. The insurance document evidenced that the service is insured for sixty children on a part-time basis and the expiry date was noted as 27 March 2025.

Details included public and employers liabilities.