

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC407
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Caha Childcare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Caha Centre, Family Resource Centre, Adrigole, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P75 EK72
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	John O'Sullivan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	25/11/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	11	PM	8
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Department, Child & Family Agency, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co Cork P81 PD78
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Ms. O'Reilly
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

	<b>Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</b> <b>QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2015CC407</b>	<b>1 of 16</b>
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Caha Childcare is a registered community based early years service in operation since 2008. The service is registered to cater for children aged from 0 to 6 years offering a choice of full day-care, part-time or sessional care and for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. At time of inspection the children in attendance were aged between 2 and 6 years.

This childcare facility is located within the local GAA grounds situated in the rural townland of Adrigole in Co Cork. The service operates from a single storey building. The entrance door leads into a reception area with a kitchen off it that is inaccessible to the children. There are two childcare rooms namely the Crèche Room and the Preschool room known as the Ramblers room both of which are located adjacent to the children's toilet and nappy changing facilities. The Preschool room has shared use of the community hall. There is a designated sleep room adjoining the Crèche Room. The children have access to a covered outdoor play area beside the premise and an enclosed all-weather pitch.

### Staffing

At time of inspection, there were 5 adults employed at the early years setting involved in the direct care of the children who attend. The office of the coordinator of the Family Resource Centre is on site. The registered provider is not service based. Each of the five childcare staff involved in the direct care of the children hold a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,16,19,22,23,25,26, and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 8. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 coordinator of the family resource centre, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part II - Registration and Register

#### Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.*

*(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1). (3)

The registered provider had not informed the Agency in writing that the service was operating outside of the service current registration status. On inspection, it was found that a new person in charge was commencing in the service in December 2024. In the interim and on day of inspection there was no named person in charge in the service since the 6th November 2024

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The coordinator in her written response has stated the following:

##### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The service has informed the department of the new named person in charge. The coordinator of the service will ensure that the department will be informed of any changes to the current registration status of the service prior to the change taking place.

##### **Supporting documentation submitted**

A copy of the correspondence from the quality and regulation directorate approving of the changes to the registration status of the service was forwarded to the Inspectorate and deemed satisfactory.

#### Summary Comment

Correspondence and evidence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 8 (1)(3) of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

### 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

(2)

The recruitment records in relation to 7 adults who were associated with the service were the subject of the inspection.

- (a) Of the 14 required references, 7 references were from previous employers with records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the remaining references, 7 references were from another source other than a previous employer with the required records of validation on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for each of the 7 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as no adult had resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) The 5 childcare staff had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education with copies of the relevant qualifications on file.

## Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(a) (b) There was no named person in charge on day of inspection. There was no named person to deputise as required.

(c) On day of inspection, there was no clear management structure in place in the service that identified the specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member working in the early years service.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The coordinator in her written response has stated the following:

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)

(a)(b) The service has appointed a named person in charge and a named person to deputise as required

(c) The coordinator held a meeting with management and staff, and all are now aware of the newly appointed person in charge and the named person to deputise as required and the specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member working in the service.

### Supporting documentation submitted

(1)

(a)(b) Received a copy of the correspondence from the quality and regulation directorate stating approval of the new person in charge. Written correspondence from the service naming the person to deputise as required.

(c) A written copy of the management structure of Caha Childcare.

## Summary Comment

Correspondence and evidence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(c) of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

## 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) A sufficient number of adults were observed to work with the children who attended the service.

(2) At the time of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of regulation.

#### Preschool Room

There were 11 children with 2 adults in attendance in the morning.

There were 3 children aged between 2 and 3 years attending part time and the full day care service.

There were 8 children aged between 3 and 6 years. Three were attending sessional and 5 were attending full day care.

There were 8 children in attendance in the afternoon with 2 adults in attendance.

The minimum adult child ratio was adhered to as per the regulations.

The creche was not in operation on day of inspection.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A written record of the attendance of each child on a daily basis that included the arrival and departure time from the service was recorded and maintained in the service.
- (i) A weekly staff roster was maintained in the service. The record indicated the time each staff member arrived and departed from the service and the time that staff went on breaks each day.
- (k)
- An accident and incident duplicate book was available for the recording of any incident or accident that had occurred in the service. A number of accident and incident records were reviewed and were completed and signed by staff and the relevant parent or guardian. The templates were closely examined, and parental signature indicated that the information had been duly relayed.

## 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:

- On inspection, a relaxed and calm environment was provided for the children, and it was observed that the adults spoke kindly and offered encouragement to each child.
- Staff were observed to demonstrate patience and kindness in their interactions with the children, as was noted when the children's efforts were readily acknowledged.
- Lunchtime was a sociable and unhurried. Staff members sat with the children and were actively assisting with opening yogurt cartons and peeling fruits.
- Children who required nappy changing were attended to at frequent intervals throughout the day and as required. Older children were supported to use the adjacent toilet facilities in an independent manner, with supervision ensured, as needed.
- Children had sufficient space to move about freely indoors and outdoors.

##### SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- The staff members were observed speaking with the children during snack time and using it as an opportunity to enhance social interaction with the children which promoted a relaxed atmosphere.
- Staff helped children to recognise and understand the rules for being together as seen on day of inspection when the children were observed playing a game of ball with the staff in the enclosed all weather pitch. The children were observed waiting their turn, sharing the experience and the activity fostered the children's confidence in completing a group task together and they had lots of gross motor play while playing outdoors.
- The children's language skills, emotional, cognitive and social skills were all enhanced during play activities. This included the children playing with sand and accompanying play equipment in the outdoor play area that fostered their imagination and fine motor skills.

##### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The room was spacious, warm and child friendly with high ceilings. The room temperature was recorded at 21°C.

- The use of low level, open shelving provided the children with easy access to materials such as jigsaws, connectable shapes, threading materials and a variety of art and craft supplies. In addition, there was a well-equipped play kitchen, a shop stall, dolls, accessories and a playhouse.
- There was suitably sized furniture available for the children to engage in tabletop activities and to sit comfortably at mealtimes.
- A range of developmentally appropriate play resources were accessible to the children on low shelving or at floor level. These included a well-stocked play kitchen, push toys, barn houses, building blocks and books.
- The layout of the rooms promotes the independent access to all the materials to foster children's autonomy and freedom of choice.
- A quiet corner was in place to facilitate quiet time. A supply of soft padded mats and cushions were available for the children to sit and relax.
- One of the outdoor play spaces was enclosed by a combination of high fencing and gates and consisted of an artificial grass surface. Available equipment included goal posts, balls, seesaws, push toys and handheld vehicles. There was a covered outdoor play area beside the service with bench seating and play sand with accompanying play equipment.

### 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 parents/guardians provided all the food and drink for the children including the main hot meal which was reheated on site. The food was served to the children by the adults in the service.
- Fridges were available for the storage of perishable items provided by parents.
- Healthy, varied and nutritious food were observed being eaten by the children for the mid-morning snack. for example, sandwiches, wraps, rice cakes, chopped fruits and vegetables.
- There were generous supplies of cutlery and plates.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- It was observed that three of the eight children attending full day care service were not provided with a suitable and nutritious hot meal at lunch time. Each child had just a portion of reheated plain pasta for their hot meal on day of inspection.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The coordinator in her written response has stated the following:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The coordinator has written a letter to all parents of children attending the full day care service stating that the parents/guardians are to provide a nutritious lunch time meal that will be reheated in the service. Adequate portion size to include potato/pasta, protein and vegetables.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation included a copy of the correspondence, the coordinator sent to the parent/guardians regarding the hot nutritious meal required for the lunch time meal for children attending the full day care service.

### Summary Comment

Correspondence and evidence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 22 of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

*A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.*

#### Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

- Upon the inspector's arrival at the service, the main entrance door was found to have been secured and was maintained secure when not in use.
- The first aid box was appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- No cables were within reach of children on the day of inspection.
- The door that provided access to the kitchen was secured, which reduced the likelihood of a child gaining access to the area.
- The outdoor play space was enclosed by a combination of high fencing and gates and consisted of an artificial grass surface. Available equipment included goal posts, balls, seesaws, push toys and handheld vehicles. A second garden area was not in use at the time of inspection.

- All of the available cleaning agents were stored out of children's reach on day of inspection.

### Infection Control:

- Throughout the service, wash hand basins were equipped with running water, liquid soap and paper towel dispensers. Handwashing by the children was observed before mid-morning snack and lunch and after toileting.
- A fridge was situated within the service kitchen for the safe storage of the children's perishable items of their lunches.

### Safe Sleep:

- Children under the age of two were accommodated in a designated sleep room, which was furnished with standard cots. A supply of stacking beds was available for children aged over two years.
- No child present at time of inspection that required a sleep.

### Fire Safety:

- The emergency fire exit doors in the preschool room and creche room were unobstructed, and the emergency lighting of the fire exit signs were illuminated in the two playrooms.

The staff had recently attended a training course in Fire Safety. The trainer advised that all early years services with young children in attendance should have an evacuation cot on site. A referral was sent to the Fire Safety Prevention Officer seeking advice on this issue.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. The children were observed playing outdoors in a covered area that was not adequately secured by a fence on one side. While the children were adequately supervised while playing there, because the area was not adequately secured at all sides, there was the potential safety risk of a child escaping and having easy access to an open onsite car park. .

### Infection Control:

2. There was no thermostatically controlled hot water available for hygienic hand washing in the wash hand basins in the adult and children's toilets and nappy changing facilities increasing the potential risk of cross infection.
3. During observed nappy changing procedure, appropriate infection control measures were not ensured as the children did not wash their hands after nappy changing. Children's hands were not washed after nappy changing therefore increasing the potential risk of cross infection.
4. The two cot mattresses were not waterproof or were not fitted with a waterproof mattress protector, as required to reduce the risk of cross infection.

5. Cobwebs were visible on the walls in the preschool room and in the sleep room and dirt and dust were evident on the perimeter of the preschool room. To reduce the potential risk of cross infection a deep clean of these two rooms are required (This room is a community hall shared with community groups in the area, in late afternoon, evening and weekends).
6. The lidded operated pedal bins in the preschool room, children's toilet and nappy changing facility were in poor repair and need to be repaired or replaced.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The coordinator in her written response has stated the following:

#### General Safety:

1. As the children have access to a secured-on-site all-weather surface pitch for outdoor play. The service will use this outdoor play area for the moment until works are completed on securing the covered outdoor play area/room. Staff have been informed and there is a notice located on the covered outdoor play area/room stating area is not used at present until play area is adequately secured and safe for the children to play. The service recently received funding to secure the covered outdoor play area, and management are currently seeking quotes and tasking a builder to complete same. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

#### Infection Control:

2. The coordinator stated in her written reply that staff forgot on day of inspection, to turn on the thermostatically controlled hot water switch for the wash hand basins in the children's toilets and nappy changing area. The coordinator stated that following the inspection she spoke to staff regarding this. A decision has now been made in the service, that the staff member that opens the service each morning is responsible for switching on the thermostatically controlled hot water in the service.
3. The coordinator stated in her written reply that staff were informed of the importance of hand washing post nappy changing for both the staff and the children to prevent the spread of cross infection. Also, that staff assist each child with hand washing and hand drying post nappy changing.
4. Two new waterproof mattress covers have been purchased and are now covering the safety mattresses in the standard cots in the sleep room.
5. A deep clean of the walls, ceilings and floors in the preschool room and sleep room have now been completed and going forward a deep clean will take place once a month.

- The bins in poor repair in the service have been replaced with new lidded pedal operated bins in the preschool room, children's toilet and nappy changing facility. The bins will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are in a proper state of repair and when found in poor repair will be replaced.

## Supporting documentation submitted

### General Safety:

- Supporting documentation included, the written response from the coordinator and a copy of the notice in the covered outdoor stating, currently not in use until adequately secured, are accepted as evidence

### Infection Control:

- Supporting documentation included: a copy of the notice in the kitchen to remind staff to turn on the hot water each morning. The written response from the coordinator are accepted as evidence.
- Supporting documentation included: a copy of the written notice located beside the wash hand basin in the children's toilet and nappy changing area to remind staff to assist children to wash their hands post nappy changing.
- Supporting documentation included: photographic evidence of the purchase of the two waterproof mattress covers.
- Photographic evidence of the equipment in place to reach and clean the high ceilings. Photographic evidence of the rooms before and after deep clean and around the perimeter of the preschool room after the deep clean.
- Supporting documentation included photographic evidence of the newly purchased refuse bins.

## Summary Comment

Correspondence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 23, 2.3.4.5.6. of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

- How the service has secured the covered outdoor play area 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) The registered provider did ensure that there were staff available at all times with appropriate first aid responder (FAR) training. The FAR certification on file indicated that two staff members held current up to date training and one of these staff members was present on day of inspection

(2)

(a) The first aid box was safely stored out of children's reach in the preschool room. The first aid box was stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the playroom.

(b) The fully equipped first aid box was available at all times to adults if in the event that a child may require treatment.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-*

*(a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*

*(b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

*(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(a) A record of monthly fire drills carried out was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place on the 30/10/2024

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced in October 24 and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced in February 2024.

(4)  
The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was adequately insured, with insurance for 28 children attending until 11/07/2025.