

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC469		
Name of Service:	Cairde go Deo		
Address of Service:	Unit 1, Riversdale, Rathcormac, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P61 CH58		
Name of Registered Provider:	Karen O'Keeffe		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	05/07/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	39	PM 39
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Administration Building St Mary's Health Campus Gurrabraher Cork T23X440		
Inspection undertaken by:	Ms. M O'Reilly		
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Cairde go Deo is a registered privately owned early years service in operation since 2014 and is operating under the current registered provider since 2018. This service is registered to cater for children from 0 to 6 years and at time of inspection the service was catering for children from 1 to 6 years. The current opening hours are from 07:15 am to 18:00 hours each day Monday to Friday. The service is also registered to cater for school aged care children.

The service is situated at the edge of the Riversdale estate in the rural village of Rathcormac Co Cork. It is easily accessed from the main road, and it provides adequate parking to allow parents to drop off and collect the children in a safe manner. The premise consists of four playrooms, a baby, wobbler, toddler and preschool rooms. Each room has direct access to the secure outdoor area and there is a designated sleep room available adjacent to the baby room and a second sleep room in close proximity to the Toddler room.

Staffing

There was a total of eight staff and that includes the registered provider who is serviced based. The staff working directly with the children all hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. A volunteer attends the service for five hours one day a week.

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 inspections 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/person in charge, 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.

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 observed:

- The hours that the service was registered to operate each day were incorrect. The service is registered to operate from 07:15 to 18:00 hours each day Monday to Friday. The service is currently operating from 07:30 to 18:00 hours Monday to Thursday and from 07:30 to 17:00 hours on Friday.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

In the written response the registered provider has stated the following:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)
(3) The early years registration office has been informed of the change in the hours-of-service operation. Going forward management will inform the registration office of any changes to the current registration status of the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Correspondence from the early years registration office approving of the change was forwarded to the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

Correspondence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 8 (1) (3) of the Child Care 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

(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 service had a named person in charge and a deputy that could deputise as required.

(b) The deputy was on duty when the inspector arrived at the premise and the person in charge arrived later in the morning and remained for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

The person in charge confirmed that four new adults that is three staff and a volunteer had commenced at the service since the previous inspection undertaken on the 24/02/21 therefore recruitment records in relation to these adults were reviewed.

(a) There were five references with a corresponding written validation on file from past employers in respect of the four adults.

(b) There were three references with a corresponding written validation on file from a source other than a previous employer.

(c) A completed Garda vetting disclosure was received for each of the four adults.

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

(4)
Three of the four adults that worked directly with the children held at least a major Award in Early Childhood Care and Education ranging from a Level 5 to a Level 6 on the National Qualifications Framework.
The fourth adult is a volunteer in the service for four to five hours, one day a week and a childcare qualification is not required.

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 person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2) During the period of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations and an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children in each care room.

Caterpillar room

There were 4 children aged between one and two years in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon: with 1 adult in attendance.

Butterfly room

There were 4 children in attendance in the morning and in the evening: One child was aged between one and two years and 3 children were aged between 2 and 3 years with 1 adult in attendance.

Busy Bee room

There were 10 children in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon. The children were aged between 2 years 8 months and 3 years plus with 2 adults in attendance.

Explorers Room

There were 21 children in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon. Nineteen children were aged 3 to 6 years and two were school aged care children with 3 adults in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon.

(8) (a)

There were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 20 children's registration forms on file were reviewed and found to contain most of the elements of information as required by Regulation 15 (a) to (g) and (i).

Non - Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) There were no immunisation details recorded on some of the child registration forms reviewed on day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

In the written response the registered provider has stated the following:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(h) All parents were contacted, and immunisation records were requested. All have now been received and children's files updated. Management will request immunisation details upon registration for all children.

Supporting documentation submitted

The statement from the registered provider is accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

Correspondence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 15 (1) (h) of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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:

- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (i) A weekly staff roster was maintained in the service that indicated the time the staff commenced and finished each day, the time they went on breaks and who relieved the staff in each room while on their break.

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 service promoted healthy eating and food and snacks were provided at regular intervals during the day. Young children were observed to have the opportunity to feed themselves appropriate to the age and stage of development.
- Children's behaviour was managed in a competent and positive way and the adults were observed to support the children and handle any minor behavioural issues promptly. The adults supported children to be sociable and respectful towards each other and spoke and listened to them in a calm and sensitive manner.
- At time of inspection, it was observed that a mixture of adult led play and child directed play was facilitated through planning and having a variety of play and natural materials available to the children. Lots of positive interactive communication was observed between children and adults.
- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Self-toileting by the older children was encouraged. Children in nappies were attended to regularly.
- Hand washing by the children was supported and encouraged prior to eating, post toileting and outdoor play.
- Children had sufficient space to move about freely indoors and outdoors.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN:

- During mealtimes staff members were observed to sit at the tables and engage in social conversation with the children promoting a relaxed atmosphere.
- The service maintained a daily written record to provide information to parents in relation to daily update on food and drink intake, toileting and nappy changing, play activities and sleep
- The adults were observed interacting and assisting the children in play and encouraging them to interact with each other.

- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. For example, the staff members in the Caterpillar, Butterfly and Busy Bee rooms communicated positively with the babies and children under 3 years 6 months using soft tones, offered reassurance by sitting near them on the floor as they explored the environment and promptly comforted any child if they became upset.

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

- All food and snacks consumed on the premise is provided by parents and guardians.
- It was observed that children were provided with appropriate cutlery and crockery at snack and mealtimes.

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:

- Access to the main entrance door was adequately secured that prevented unauthorised access by an unauthorised person or exit by a child.
- The play materials, resources and equipment were in a satisfactory condition

Infection Control:

- Playrooms and communal areas were adequately ventilated as there were openable windows in each room.
- The children had access to sufficient toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing facilities.
- The adults had their own designated toilets and wash hand basins.

- A supply of liquid soap and paper towels were available throughout the service.
- A supply of cleaning agents and equipment was available in each room of the service.
- Daily records of cleaning were available on file.

Safe Sleep:

- The children's rest needs were facilitated in one designated sleep rooms for the children aged less than two years. There were adequate numbers of standard cots with well-fitting safety mattresses and waterproof mattress covers for children under two that required a sleep with individual accompanying bed linen. Physical checks of sleeping children were observed to take place every 10 minutes and a record of sleep checks was on file.
- The older pre-school child's rest needs were met during a planned sleeping period when stacking beds were set up in a separate room from the Wobbler and Toddler Rooms. There were a sufficient number of stacking beds available with designated suitable bed linen for each child over 2 years who wanted a sleep while attending the service.
- It was observed when children were asleep there was adequate space provided between the cots and stacking beds.

Fire Safety:

- A record of monthly fire drills was presented for examination.
- Most of the fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the outdoor play area, deep holes were present on the earthy ground located on the entrance and exit from the play tunnel that had the potential risk of causing injury to a child when entering and exiting the tunnel.

Infection Control:

2. On the Inspectorate arrival to the service there was no thermostatically controlled hot water in the wash hand basins in the toilets, nappy changing rooms and playrooms. This was brought to the attention of the person in charge who then put on the control switch and on a second check there was a supply of thermostatically controlled hot water in some of the wash hand basins in the toilets, nappy changing rooms and playrooms.

On the third check there was no thermostatically controlled hot water in two of the wash hand basins in the children's toilets, in one of the nappy changing areas and in some of the wash hand basins in the playrooms.

Fire Safety:

- The emergency fire exit door in the baby and wobbler sleep room was obstructed by an infant cot on the Inspectorate arrival to the service. This was brought to the attention of the person in charge, the infant cot was removed from in front of emergency fire exit door. The issue was dealt with at time of inspection and the emergency fire exit door and the emergency fire exit route in the baby/wobbler sleep room is now unobstructed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

In the written response the registered provider has stated the following:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The Inspectorate received correspondence from the registered provider /person in charge on the 12/07/23 stating that the holes located at either side of the play tunnel in the outdoor play area had been filled with earth and covered with all-weather mats. Going forward this area will be included in the outdoor play area safety risk assessment record.

Infection Control:

- New under-sink water heaters were purchased and fitted to work automatically so that the service is not relying on the oil heating system for water alone. Going forward, management will get them serviced and checked regularly, to ensure they are in full working order at all times while the service is in operation.

Fire Safety:

- This issue was rectified at time of inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographic evidence of the covered ground holes at either side of the play tunnel in the outdoor play area with all-weather mats now in place was forwarded to the early years inspector and deemed satisfactory.

Infection Control:

- Copies of the invoice of the newly purchased under-sink water heaters were forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed satisfactory.

Fire Safety:

3. This issue was rectified at time of inspection.

Summary Comment

- Correspondence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23 points 1,2,3 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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) Most of the staff held a certified, First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificate.

- (2)
- (a) There was a sufficiently stocked first aid boxes available in the service, which were safely stored out of reach of children in each of the playrooms.
 - (b) At all times when the service was in operation, first aid supplies were accessible to the 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) Records of monthly fire drills carried out at the service were available on file. The last fire drill was carried out on the 12th June 2023.
 - (b) Records regarding the number, service and type of fire equipment were maintained on file. The fire equipment was last serviced in January 2023. The emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced in April 2023
- (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 services' insurance certificate was available on the premises and demonstrated that the service was adequately insured. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of children covered which was 41, the start date, which was 28 March 2023, the end date, which was 27 March 2024 and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding, contents, public liability and fire and theft cover.