

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN015
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Name of Service:	Carealot Daycare
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Address of Service:	Corgreagh, Tullyvin, Cootehill, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	H16 HX93
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Name of Registered Provider:	Maura Comiskey
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Service type:	Full Day Care
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Date(s) of Inspection:	16/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM	20
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Family Resource Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath.
Inspection undertaken by:	C Tunney
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

Carealot Day Care is a privately operated Early Years' Service located in a rural area near Cootehill Co. Cavan, in operation since 2006. The childcare service provides full day care, part time and a sessional service to children aged from 0 years to 6 years. The service operates from 08:00hrs-17.45hrs Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. There are two pre-school rooms, namely The Toddler Room and the Pre-school Room. The curriculum is facilitated in the outdoor area in respect of children attending the Pre-school Room. Other facilities include a kitchen, office and sanitary facilities. An all-weather surfaced outdoor play area is located to the side and back of the pre-school. Adequate parking is available to the front of the pre-school to facilitate parents.

Staffing

Six staff members are employed in the service, including the registered provider. The registered provider is service based.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 15 Records of pre-school Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 24 Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance, Regulation 25 First Aid, Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. The two pre-school rooms were in operation on the day of inspection and were inspected.

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.

Additional Information

A Regulatory Compliance Meeting was convened on 31/8/2023 to discuss the outstanding non-compliance in relation to the administration of emergency medication. The registered provider submitted an amended procedure for the administration of emergency medication.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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

(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 had identified a manager and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present on arrival of the inspector and remained throughout the period of inspection.

(2) The registered provider confirmed there were no new staff employed since the last inspection on 17/5/22.

(4) Staff members who provide direct care to pre-school children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct and observed as follows:

- Toddler Room: Two staff members cared for 9 children aged between 1 year and 2 years 2 months attending for full day care.
- Pre-school Room: Three adults cared for 15 pre-school children aged between 2 years 2 months to 5 years, attending for full day care.

(8) At least two adults are present on the premises, confirmed by the registered provider and staff members.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) Twelve out of 24 registration forms were reviewed and found to be appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) of this regulation.

(3) (c) The records referred to above were open to inspection by an authorised person.

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
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs:

- A dinner is prepared and cooked in the service daily. On a weekly basis the menu for the week is placed in each child's daily record book for the parents' attention. The snack consisted of a variety of food including fruit, cheese, and small sandwiches provided by the parents. All the children attending full day care enjoyed their dinner in the outdoor area which consisted of potatoes, vegetables, and mince. Staff members sat with the children and assisted the younger children as required.
- The children's personal care was attended to. Hand hygiene was carried out at recommended times such as, prior to mealtimes and following outdoor play. The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to the age and stage of their development.
- A quiet space was available for a child who required rest or quiet time.

Supporting Relationships

- The staff members used age-appropriate tones, addressed each child individually and spoke at their level. The staff members were actively involved in the children's play where appropriate. The staff members acknowledged the children's efforts. The children appeared comfortable with their routines and with the staff members caring for them. Children received appropriate attention and were comforted in a timely and appropriate way when upset.

Planning and Assessment.

- The children had opportunities to enjoy free time and group time. In group time the children enjoyed familiar songs, stories which promoted their linguistic development. The staff appeared familiar with the children's interests and choices, promoted the children's independence while offering adequate support when required.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The physical and material environment supported the children's welfare, development and learning. The Toddler Room contained a variety of suitable play material including kitchen unit, construction toys, playhouse, push along toys, stacking blocks and climbing blocks. The play materials were accessible and available to the children at low level. On the day of inspection, the children were mostly cared for in the toddler outdoor area where they appeared to enjoy the small climbing frame, sit on cars, and the space to move unhindered.
- The Pre-school Room was facilitated in the large Perspex covered outdoor area. Defined interest areas were inviting and laid out to accommodate the needs of the children attending. The interest areas were adequately resourced and were accessible to promote independent access by children. They included a climbing area, shop, home corner area, construction area, large blackboards, a messy play area, quiet area beside the books, arts and crafts, puzzles and building blocks.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

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

Compliance Information

General Safety:

The registered provider ensured all reasonable measures were put in place to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending such as;

- The external doors and the outdoor play area were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the Early Years' service.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children on a high shelf.
- The play materials in the outdoor play areas were kept in good working order and covered where appropriate.
- The children's attendance was recorded correctly.

Infection Control:

- Documented and up-to-date cleaning and disinfectants checklists were noted in the Toddler Room and Pre-school Room. The premises, its play equipment and materials were maintained in a satisfactory state.
- Hand washing was carried out at recommended times.
- Prior to the children's meals, tables were cleaned.
- Warm running water was available in the children's sanitary area, along with a supply of liquid soap, paper towels and foot operated bins.
- Creams were labelled and each child had a storage area for their belongings such as nappies, wipes, and creams.

Safe Sleep:

- Two sleep rooms were available, In Sleep Room 1, ten cots 1 low bed in satisfactory condition were available. In Sleep Room 2, six cots and 3 low beds were available. Children were monitored every 10 minutes while sleeping in relation to their colour, breathing status and position.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Appropriate action was not taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the pre-school as the registered provider stated medication is not administered in the pre-school. Therefore, administration of medication especially in an emergency was not considered.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

General Safety:

Corrective and Preventative Action:

An agreement for emergency medical treatment form submitted to the inspectorate.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Agreement for Emergency Medical Treatment Form submitted to the Inspectorate.
2. Procedure for the administration of Emergency medical treatment submitted to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

Following the convening of a regulatory compliance meeting to discuss the obligation of the service to provide emergency medication to children, an 'Agreement for Emergency Medical Treatment' Form was submitted to the Inspectorate. This indicated that a plan was in now in place where emergency medication would be provided in all cases. The Inspectorate will assess the implementation of this practice at the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) A record was kept of each child's time of arrival and departure on a daily basis by the staff members.

(3) A system was in place to ensure that no person other than employees or authorised visitors can enter the pre-school. A visitor's book was maintained, there was evidence that visitors were requested to record their attendance, the inspector was requested to record her attendance and departure time. (The registered provider stated she remains unwilling to allow parents/guardians into the pre-school since the Covid 19 pandemic, drop off and collection continues at the outer gate to the pre-school).

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 ensured two staff members hold a certificate in First Aid Response (FAR) with an expiry date of July 2024.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions in the care rooms out of the reach of children.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) A record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. Fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 25/4/ 2023.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire extinguishers and smoke alarms in the premises, which were last serviced 1/10/22 and 1/2/23 respectively.
- (2) (c) The record referred to above was available and open for inspection in the fire record folder.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises.