

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN031
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Name of Service:	Kids Corner
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Address of Service:	22 Thorndale Close, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	A82 E6X7
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Name of Registered Provider:	Catherine McCabe
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	26/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	11
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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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Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Kids Corner Pre-school is a privately operated early years' service, in operation since 2007. The childcare service provides a part-time and sessional service to children aged from 2 years to 6 years. The service operates from 08.45 hrs to 13.45 hrs and 12.15 hrs to 15.15 hrs Monday to Friday.

The pre-school is facilitated from a two-storey semi-detached house in a housing estate in Kingscourt. Two interconnecting rooms called the Downstairs Room are provided on the ground floor and two interconnecting rooms called the Upstairs Room are provided on the first floor. An outdoor play area is located to the rear of the pre-school and consists of a hard surfaced area.

Staffing

There are four staff members employed in the service including the registered provider. The staff members working directly with children have completed a major 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

The inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection included both pre-school rooms in operation on the day of inspection.

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, 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) The registered provider was the designated person in charge and had identified a named person to deputise as required.

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

(2) Files in relation to the four staff members employed in the service were examined.

(a) Five written past employer references were available and validated.

(b) In the absence of past employer references, 3 references from a source other than an employer were available.

(c) Garda Vetting was available in respect of the 4 staff members.

(d) Police Vetting was not applicable as the four staff members had not lived outside the state for a period of more than 6 consecutive months.

(4) The four staff members who provide direct care to pre-school children, held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National 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) 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:

- **Downstairs Room:** One staff member cared for 11 pre-school children (aged between 2 years to 5 years), attending for a sessional service. In the afternoon period 11 children attended for a sessional service.
- **Upstairs Room:** One staff member cared for 10 pre-school children (aged between 2 years -5 years), attending for a sessional service in the morning time. In the afternoon period 3 children attended for a sessional time.

(8) Two staff members are present, at all times confirmed by the staff roster and staff attendance record.

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) to (i) The pre-school child records for 16 children were reviewed. Documentation as specified in Regulation 16 (a) to (i) was available for the children's records that were sampled.

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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

Basic Needs:

- The children's basic care needs were met on the day of inspection. The parents/guardians provided the children's snacks which consisted of healthy options, fruit pieces, small sandwiches, and cheese pieces.
- Children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to the age and stage of their development and settling in period.
- The children attending both rooms availed of outdoor play.

Supporting Relationships

- The staff members used age-appropriate soft tones and spoke at their level. The staff members were kind and they sensitively managed children transitioning from home to the pre-school environment. Children were encouraged to share and talk to each other nicely as some of the children had recently starting pre-school and were settling in. The adults supported the children to find positive solutions when they experienced challenges in sharing play equipment and materials.
- A settling in ethos was implemented in the service in relation to supporting the children's emotional well-being and getting to know each other. This was evidenced in the service on the day of inspection with a staff member was observed using a poppet to introduce each child by saying their name.
- The children were observed playing and appeared comfortable in their new environment. The children were supported with their play choices and staff engaged in play as required.

- Transitions were managed well. Children were given lead in times and staff were predictable in telling the children what will happen next.
- A helper system was in place which also assisted the children in getting to know each other, in addition to promoting the children's ability and confidence.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

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

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

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

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1) There were adequate and suitable facilities for children to play indoors in both rooms. A variety of textures and materials were available to support the children's choice of play. There was a rest area for the children to avail of quiet or rest time in each room.

(3) An outdoor play area was available, accessible through patio doors in the Downstairs Room, adequately equipped with play materials to support the age and development of the children attending.

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

- There was adequate furniture and play equipment available for the children on the day of inspection.
- The pre-school rooms were laid out in defined interest areas to support the children’s welfare and development. The defined interest areas were resourced and displayed at eye level to the children to promote independent access by children. There was adequate space to accommodate the children’s individual needs.
- Both Rooms consisted of two interconnecting rooms where the rest area and a home corner area with play material such as kitchen area, dress up, dolls prams, were available to support imaginative play while tabletop activities, construction toys and arts and craft material were noted in the other room.
- Children’s artwork was displayed on the walls with this month’s theme “All About Me” and Autumn. One of staff members had a bag of leaves and sang a song about leaves falling. In the hallway “Our Self-Portraits” were displayed. Each room had a Family Wall and a Birthday Wall to promote a sense of belonging in the pre-school.
- A range of books were available in the cozy reading areas which supported children’s language and development.
- The outdoor play area provided an alternative change of environment for the children. This included a sand tray, a planting area, ride on toys such as tractors, a tunnel, and space to run and play.

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 leading into the premises were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The external outdoor play areas were secured.
- Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided to support effective hand hygiene in the sanitary accommodation in the service.
- The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet.
- Perishable foods were stored in a fridge.

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) An attendance book for the Downstairs Room and Upstairs Room was available to record the children attending each room.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider failed to record one child's attendance until it was highlighted by the inspector.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Ensure children's names are recorded at all times.

Preventive Action

Ensure names are all written into the role book for attendance.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has been accepted. Assurance has been given that children's attendance will be recorded as specified in Regulation 24 (1). Regulation 24 has been addressed.

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) Four staff members were trained in First Aid Response (FAR) and available to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) (a)(b) The first aid box available in the service was suitably equipped and stored in conspicuous locations on the premises and were available for the children in attendance.

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 written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 25/09/2023.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment which was last serviced on the 20/12/22 respectively.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed on the premises.

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 insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed an expiry date of 27/03/2024.