

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CW044
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	The Creative Kids
-------------------------	-------------------

Address of Service:	Unit 1, Liddard House, Liddard House, Old Burrin Road, Carlow, Co. Carlow
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	R93 A729
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Katarzyna Gurzawska
-------------------------------------	---------------------

Service type:	Full Day
----------------------	----------

Date of Inspection:	30/10/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	9
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	---

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusal Child & Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow.
Inspection undertaken by:	Norma Thornton
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.
---------------------------------	-----------------

Description of service

The Creative Kids is a registered full day childcare service located in the centre of Carlow town.

The service provides a sessional early childhood care and education (ECCE) service, part-time and full day care pre-school services for children aged 1 to 6 years and has a registered school age service.

The service operates between 07:00 to 19:00 hours from a terraced premises located in a retail business park.

There are five pre-school rooms including a wobbler room, toddler room, Junior ECCE room and two senior ECCE rooms. On the day of inspection two rooms were in operation, the toddler room and junior ECCE room.

Staffing

There were 10 staff members employed in the service including the registered provider and designated chef. All staff members who as part of their role in the service were employed to work directly with the pre-school children held qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 on the national Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) framework.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulations 9,10,11,19,23,25, 26 and 28.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the toddler room and junior ECCE room.

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 *person* in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The designated person in charge was onsite on the inspector's arrival at the service. There was a named deputy designated person in charge available to deputise as required.

(b) The staff roster that was provided to the inspector demonstrated that there was always the registered provider, designated person in charge or a named deputy designated person in charge onsite while the service was in operation.

(c) A clear visual outline of the management of the structure in the service was displayed in entrance hall of the service, identifying the roles and responsibilities of individual staff members in each classroom in the service.

(2) Staff files for ten staff members were available in the service and were reviewed by the inspector.

(a)(b) Two validated references were available on file for each staff member, from either a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting certificates were available on file, for each staff member employed in the service, including the registered provider.

The registered provider demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting disclosure certificates were on file for five staff members employed in the service, who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

(4) Certificates of qualifications were available for each staff member, who as part of their role were working directly with the children, demonstrating that each staff member held at least a minimum Level 5 to Level 8 qualification in early childhood care and education on the national QQI Framework.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

On review of the service's policies the inspector was assured that the registered provider ensured that all required documents specified in Schedule 5, were available in the service and were communicated to the staff as part of their induction process on commencing employment in the service, with annual reviews and revisions taking place as appropriate.

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) Throughout the inspection, there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed in both preschool classrooms that were in operation on the day of inspection.

In the toddler room there were 5 children aged 18 months to 2 years directly cared for by 2 staff members. In the afternoon 3 children remained under the care of the 2 staff members.

In the junior ECCE room, there were 8 pre-school children aged 4 to 5 years of age and 4 school aged children directly cared for by 2 staff members. In the evening 6 preschool children and 3 school aged children remained under the care of 2 staff members.

The designated person in charge was available to provide relief for staff breaks and to support staff with nappy changing toileting and children's sleep routines.

(8)(a) On review of the staff roster and in discussion with the designated person in charge, the inspector was assured that there were always at least two adults on the premises while children were in attendance in the service.

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

(1)(a)(b) Through observation of the staff and children on the day of inspection, the inspector was reassured that the registered provider and staff provided the children with the appropriate learning environments and care to stimulate learning and development.

Both classrooms provided interest areas, play equipment and resources appropriate to the age and needs of the children in attendance.

Children in both rooms were observed enjoying free play and child led play, choosing the activities that they were most interested in. Children could easily access what resources they wished to play with from low level child sized shelves or were supported by the staff in provision of play materials and resources that they required for example with painting or free drawing.

A few children aged 18 months to 2 years were observed developing their fine motor skills with activity boards equipped with a variety of opening and closing mechanisms while others played imaginatively in the home corner with dolls pretending to be “Mammy” and changing and feeding the dolls. The inspector observed that staff sat close by at the children’s level observing and extending the children’s emergent interests as opportunities arose but were careful in holding back to allow the children to develop their learning through their play activities.

At mealtimes, children washed their hands and sat at on appropriate seating to comfortably enjoy their meals.

While the older children in the junior ECCE room fed themselves, the inspector observed staff in the toddler room to gently support and supervise the younger children feeding. Positive praise was expressed by the staff when children confidently used their appropriate eating utensils to navigate the food to their mouths and were offered water from their individual beakers at intervals. Staff ensured that children took adequate pauses in between spoonfuls of food and enjoyed their meals in a relaxed and unhurried atmosphere while availing of the mealtime to develop speech and words around food and eating.

Children’s clothing was protected by waterproof bibs and after meals were finished children had their faces cleaned and hand washed to ensure that they were comfortable after their meals.

Children in both rooms who expressed that they would like an extra helping of food were provided for. When the service chef came to the rooms to collect the dinner plates after the main meal, she was observed to ask the children if they enjoyed their meal and if everybody had had enough. The main meal of the day was spaghetti bolognese which had been cooked onsite.

Staff demonstrated skills in managing conflict between the young children at different times throughout the inspection through means of conflict resolution. Staff always identified with the children involved that it was the behaviour and not the child that was the issue and offered opportunities for children to come to a resolution amongst themselves which were positively acknowledged when the conflicts were resolved.

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 service's main entrance was secured with a call bell system which was answered and monitored from the office and front senior ECCE classroom. Staff could view clearly any persons approaching the service, while a specialised window covering prevented anyone outside the window from viewing inside. The internal side of the entrance door was secured with an electric exit button positioned at adult height out of the reach of children. These security precautions helped to prevent any unauthorised persons from entering the premises and to reduce the risk of any child exiting the service unsupervised.

The service's outdoor play area was secured with a ten-foot concrete block wall and a high wooden secured side gate.

The service had a designated cleaning storage area where the service's cleaning equipment and cleaning solutions were stored securely and safely away from the children.

The kitchen area was in a designated area where children were not permitted access to.

Infection Control:

There was an adequate number of child sized toilets, hand-wash basins and a nappy changing facility provided in the service appropriate to meet the needs of the children in attendance. There was a designated staff toilet located on the main corridor.

The inspector observed that staff and children carried out effective handwashing according to the service's infection control and hand-washing policies. Children could easily access liquid hand soap and paper towelling and were observed to wash their hands post toileting and messy play and prior to mealtimes.

Staff were observed to prompt children to carry out correct hygiene practices after sneezing or coughing and ensured that the children washed their hands.

Administration of Medication:

Staff demonstrated that they were well informed of their responsibilities and procedures for safe administration of any medication to children in the service. Child centred care plans were available for any child prescribed with

specialised medication for diagnosed medical conditions. Staff were reassuring in the knowledge they demonstrated regarding administration of ant prescribed emergency medications, standard prescribed medications or of anti-febrile medication to children with high temperatures, in accordance with the service's administration of medication policy.

Safe Sleep:

There was a designated sleep room adjacent to the wobbler room which contained three cots and a child sized bed for children under two years to sleep in if required during the day. Staff were knowledgeable regarding the service's safe sleep policy and were observed in practice throughout the inspection to physically monitor any sleeping child's colour, respiratory rate and sleep position every ten minutes and record their findings.

Outing:

The service did not currently operate any outings away from the service, however had an outings policy developed in the event that the registered provider and staff decided to organise an outing with the parents' consent.

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) There were two staff members employed in the service with current certification in the required first aid responder (FAR) training for children. At all times while the service was operating, the roster demonstrated that one staff member with FAR training was onsite. It is acknowledged that the designated person in charge

(2)(a)(b) A dedicated first aid box was available in the office for staff to access. Records demonstrated that its contents were checked monthly and replaced if necessary.

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-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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) The following fire records were maintained.
- (a) There was a written record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on the 2 October 2025.
 - (b) The registered provider maintained a record of the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. The last maintenance check for both the fire-fighting equipment and for the smoke alarm system was recorded as having taken place on 14 October 2025.
- (2) The fire safety records were available and open for inspection by the early years inspector or by a parent / employee on request.
- (3) The registered provider demonstrated that records were maintained for the five years prior to inspection.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that a fire procedure notice was clearly displayed in the main entrance hall.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was a current insurance certificate for the service available.

The insurance certificate detailed insurance cover for a full day care service provision for a maximum of 53 early years children and covered the period from 28 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.