

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS060
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	St. Kevin's Family Resource Centre Childcare Service
-------------------------	--

Address of Service:	St. Kevin's Girls School, Kilnamanagh, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	D24 R6PT
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Bernadette Conroy
-------------------------------------	-------------------

Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	----------------------

Date of Inspection:	06/11/2024
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	47	PM	37
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien & S. Early O' Brien
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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

St. Kevin's Family Resource Centre Childcare Service is registered to provide part time and sessional care for children from 1 to 6 years of age. The part time service operates from 08:30 to 13:30 and sessional care is provided from 08:30 to 11:30 and from 11:30 to 14:30, Monday to Friday.

The service is located on the grounds of St. Kevin's Girls National School and operates from converted classrooms. There are four preschool rooms in the service. The Snowdrop room caters for children aged 1 to 2 years. The Daffodil room caters for children aged 2 to 3 years. The Buttercup and Bluebell rooms cater for children aged 3 to 5 years. The service has a designated cot room. There are four, enclosed outdoor play areas directly outside each care room.

Staffing

The service currently employs sixteen staff including a manager and deputy manager. There were thirteen staff and one student working directly with the children on the day of inspection.

The registered provider does not work directly in the service but was present during the morning of the inspection.

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/ records/ health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

9(1)(a)(b),(2),(3),(4) Management and Recruitment,
11(1),(2),(4),(8)(a) Staffing Levels,
15(1) Record of a Pre-school Child,
19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1) Record of a Pre-school Child.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19(1)(a)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child and regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Snowdrop, Daffodil and Bluebell care rooms.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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*

(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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)(b)
The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

The files of seventeen adults were reviewed as part of this inspection including three staff who commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 30 November 2022 and one student who was present during the inspection. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b)

Of the thirty-four written, validated references that were required, nineteen were available from a past employer and fourteen were available from a reputable source.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the seventeen adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was required and was available for two staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4)

Records were available evidencing that fifteen staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(b)

One of the references obtained in respect of one staff member from a source other than a past employer was not suitable, as the source of the reference could not be considered to be independent or unbiased.

(3)

The registered provider did not take appropriate measures to ensure that all employees were suitable to work in an early years service prior to commencing employment. It is acknowledged that a Garda vetting disclosure and two validated references were available for a staff member who had previously been employed in the service and

who had returned to work in the service in September 2024. However, the Garda vetting disclosure and validated references available were dated from 2022 and 2021 respectively and had not been renewed before the staff member commenced employment on 20 September 2024.

(4)
There was no evidence available to demonstrate that one adult, who had been employed since the last inspection, and who was working directly with the children in the service held a relevant major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(b)
Manager sought to validate most recent employer reference submitted by employee. Recruitment policy reviewed and updated to reflect new knowledge gained from recent inspection, ie. Past employees returning to work in our organisation require new references from most recent employers to be sought and validated prior to starting new contract with St Kevin's.

(3)
New Garda vetting application being processed for employee who returned to employment in our service. Recruitment policy update to include a paragraph which states: Employees who have left our organisation for periods over 6 months will need new Garda vetting, regardless if old certificate is still in date, also latest employment reference need to be validated and held on compliance folder in place of past reference checks.

(4)
DCEDIY letter for qualification recognition applied for by employee who has successfully gained 180 credits and completed year 1, 2 and 3 in degree course in college and returned to complete level 8. Member of staff not included in ratios until letter of qualification recognition delivered to St Kevin's.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(b)
Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

(3)

Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

(4)

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these non-compliances. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection.

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.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-

(a) a sessional pre-school service, and

(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).

(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)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)(4)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for part-time services and services that contemporaneously provide a sessional and part-time service were adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were forty-seven children attending the service being supervised by thirteen adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were at least two 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 ten records were reviewed which demonstrated that a record was available in writing which contained the information required in (a) to (i) above.

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 service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that children bring their lunch in from home. Meals were provided at regular intervals. Lunch took place at 10:30 and children who were attending on a part time basis also had a snack at 12:30. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the inspection and children were given a drink with their meals. Staff were observed sitting with the children at lunchtime and supporting those who needed assistance with their lunch. Children were observed engaging in conversation with staff and their peers promoting a relaxed atmosphere.

Children were given responsibility appropriate to their age and were encouraged and supported to be independent. Inspectors observed children cleaning up after their play and lunch and older children were observed using the toilet independently. Younger children's nappies were changed regularly and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Staff were observed cleaning children's noses as required. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and lunch time.

The service had a key person system in place. Staff displayed warmth and sensitivity during all interactions with the children throughout the inspection. Staff demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of each child in their care and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise

when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour policy. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed.

The staff described how they communicate with parents daily about their child at arrival and collection time. Staff were observed to work well as a team, frequently communicating with each other in relation to the daily routine and children's needs.

The care rooms were bright and were arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included arts and crafts materials, home corners, small world toys, construction toys, rest areas with books and sensory play materials. The care rooms provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and were adequately resourced with a variety of materials. Family photos were displayed at the children's level and children's art work was displayed in each care room.

The environments were laid out to support the children's independence. Low level hooks were provided for coats and bags. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care room.

There were four fully enclosed, sheltered outdoor play areas on the premises which were directly accessible from each care room. A range of developmentally appropriate play equipment was provided in each of the outdoor play areas. All children accessed the outdoor area on the day of inspection. Older children were observed moving freely between the indoor and outdoor play areas. Children were observed to be engaged in their play with adults supporting them as needed.

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

The inspectors found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with staff and inspection of the premises that the registered provider had taken the following steps to safeguard children attending:

General Safety:

- The entrance door to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.
- Cleaning agents, medicines and hand sanitisers were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- All blind cords were secured.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff and children were observed to wash their hands in line with the infection control policy.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.
- An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. The premises, equipment and materials appeared clean and maintained in good condition.
- Individual bed linen was provided for the children in the Snowdrop room.
- Children's lunches were stored in the refrigerator.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had an administration of medication policy in place. There were documented care plans available for two children attending the service who required emergency medication. Staff working in the room with the children were aware of the treatment plans and demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the procedures to follow if the medication was required.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff stated that children who attend do not routinely sleep during the day. However, a record was available to demonstrate that children are physically monitored while sleeping and sleep checks were documented every ten minutes. Staff were familiar with safe sleep guidance.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

Inspectors observed a number of practices which posed a risk of transmission of infection within the service:

1. Some nappy changing practices observed during the inspection in the service were inadequate for infection control purposes and at variance with the service's nappy changing procedure. Staff were observed to redress children with the same used gloves following nappy changes.
2. Staff were observed lifting the lid of the bin in the nappy changing area to dispose of waste posing a risk of the spread of infection.
3. Toilet paper was not stored on a toilet roll holder in the sanitary area in the Daffodil and Bluebell rooms. Children were required to handle the roll of toilet paper posing a risk of cross contamination.
4. There was no dispenser for paper towel for hand drying in the Daffodil room. The paper towel was stored on a shelf. Staff members were required to tear pieces off the roll for the children and hand it to them posing a risk of cross contamination.

Administration of Medication:

5. Procedures and practices in place for children attending the service requiring medication were inadequate and at variance with the service policy, posing a potential risk to the health and safety of children. Medication for one child in the Daffodil room was not stored in its original packaging and was not clearly labelled. This medication was stored loosely in the child's bag and was not labelled with the child's name or individual dosage requirements. It is acknowledged that the child's bag was stored out of reach of the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Spoke with each staff member individually to remind them of correct nappy changing procedures as per our policies. Whole service meeting will be held on January Friday 3rd 2025 prior to children returning to reflect on nappy changing policies and procedures, also reminders at regular support and supervision, spot checks will also be conducted by management.
2. Spoke with each staff member individually to remind them of correct nappy changing procedures as per our policies. Whole service meeting will be held on January Friday 3rd 2025 prior to children returning to reflect on nappy changing policies and procedures, also reminders at regular support and supervision, spot checks will also be conducted by management.
3. Toilet roll holder bought and installed in all cubicles. Added onto cleaning checklist to monitor toilet roll holders/blue paper towel dispensers to ensure ample supply and fittings in good working order.
4. Blue roll paper hand towel dispenser fitted in Daffodil room at children`s level. Added onto cleaning checklist to monitor toilet roll holders/blue paper towel dispensers to ensure ample supply and fittings in good working order.

Administration of Medication:

5. Child`s medication now stored safely with clear instructions as provided to us by parent with child`s name and dosage to be administered in event of asthma attack clearly labelled. Revisit our medications administered policy with all staff on January 3rd whole service meeting/training day.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Written and photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Administration of Medication:

Photographic evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these non-compliances. These actions will be assessed on the next inspection