

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY254
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Name of Service:	Eco Kidz Sandymount
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Address of Service:	63 Sandymount Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D04 FA44
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Name of Registered Provider:	Richard Lynch
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	06/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	6	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	N. McEndoo
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

Eco Kidz Sandymount is one of four early years services operated by the registered provider in the Dublin area. The service is registered to provide sessional care for children from 2 to 6 years of age from 08:45 to 12:15. The early years' service is located within the registered provider's domestic dwelling in a residential area of south Dublin. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor play to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs four staff members. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. Two staff members are shared across the four services operated by the registered provider: one acts as relief staff, providing direct care to children when needed, and the other serves as a supply coordinator. The remaining two staff members work directly with the children on a daily basis, one of whom is the designated person in charge. On the day of inspection, two staff were present and working directly with the children. The registered provider and the supply coordinator arrived during the course 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/ 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 Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service.

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

During the CAPA process it was determined that the smoke detection system is non wired and battery operated. A referral has been sent to the Local Authority Fire Officer.

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 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)

The registered provider ensured that.

- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
- (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
- (c) There was 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.

(2)

On the day of inspection, four adults were in attendance, the registered provider, two adults who were employed to work directly with the children, and one adult working as supply coordinator.

The following vetting information was available for five adults:

- (a) Six written validated references from past employers for three of the adults.
- (b) Two written validated references from reputable sources for one of the adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all five staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another state was available for four adults.

(4)

One of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) Of the five files reviewed, a complete employment history was not available for one adult's file.

- (a)(b) While two written references from a reputable source were provided for one adult, there was no documented evidence that these references had been validated.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

All staff files have been reviewed and CVs with full employment history are now available for all staff. A team member file check list is now updated and in place to ensure all staff files are kept up to date and compliant.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2) Copy of complete employment history received for one adult.

- (a)(b) Two written and validated references from a reputable source were provided for one adult.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted have been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 have been adequately addressed.

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.

(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.

(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)
On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.
- (4)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection. There were six pre-school children attending the service, supervised by two adults.
- (8)
The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises when children were present in the service as evidenced by the staffing roster.

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-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- On the day of inspection, six children's files were reviewed. A record in writing was held on file for the following.
- (a) the name and date of birth of the child was available from five records.
 - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service was available from two records reviewed.
 - (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 was available for all records.
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child was available for any children who required it.

- (f) provision for 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 was available for all records.
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner was available from all records.
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child was available from five records.
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency was available for all records.

(3)

On the day of inspection, a record in writing in respect of each pre-school child was available and open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.

Non-Compliance Information

The following information was not available on the day of inspection.

- (a) The date of birth was omitted from one of the records reviewed.
- (b) The date of first attendance was omitted from four of the records reviewed.
- (h) A record of immunisation was not available for one record reviewed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (a) The document had been misfiled and was immediately filed correctly. The children's files checklist was updated and the person in charge will make sure to set reminders until the files are fully up to date.
- (b) The information about the date of first attendance was updated on registration forms. A checklist for people in charge to use, that includes all required information, such as Start date of attendance was created.
- (h) The record of immunisation was updated. The checklist for people in charge to use that includes all required documentation was updated, and set reminders set for regular checks with the parents.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of updated records submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted have been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 15 have been adequately addressed.

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;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)

(i) Records pertaining to a staff roster was held for adults working within the service.

(k) A sample of ten accident and incident records was reviewed on the day of inspection. The records were found to be comprehensive, containing all required information, including signed confirmation from parents acknowledging notification of the incident.

(3)

On the day of inspection, records referred to in paragraph (1)(i)(k) were found to be available and accessible on the premises for review by an authorised person.

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 main entrance was found to be secured on arrival preventing unauthorised access or exit from the premises.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C.
- Cleaning products and equipment were stored out of the reach of children.

- The outdoor area was secured with tall brick walls and a bolted gate to prevent unauthorised exit from the premises.

Infection Control:

- Soap was readily available to children to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting. Handwashing was supervised by the adults to ensure all hands were cleaned effectively.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available within the service for safe disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

- When interviewed, staff were aware of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication. No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises, maintained and easily accessible.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Shelving units positioned in front of both fireplaces on the premises were observed to be unsecured, presenting a potential risk of harm or injury to children in the event of toppling.
- The stairgate located in the entrance hallway of the premises was observed to be in poor condition, requiring replacement to ensure safe use and prevent potential unauthorised entrance to the upper level of the premises.
- A blind located in the front room of the premises was observed to be not fully functional and required repair to ensure safe and effective use. The window and the windowsills could not be effectively cleaned as a result.

Infection Control:

- Surface areas including care room and sanitary area skirting boards, windowsills, blinds and play materials were observed to require deep cleaning, as visible dust and dirt were present. This presents a potential health risk to children, particularly in relation to respiratory issues, and the spread of germs. This compromises the hygiene of the children's environment.

Fire Safety:

- The fire alarm located on the first floor of the premises was observed to be emitting a continuous beeping sound throughout the inspection, indicating a potential fault. This may compromise the effectiveness of the alarm system and requires attention to ensure compliance with fire safety standards.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The shelves were removed immediately and both fireplaces were secured. The risk assessment document was updated to ensure that no shelves are allowed to be placed in front of the fireplaces.
- The stairgate located in the entrance hallway of the premises was replaced immediately. The risk assessment document was updated to ensure the stairgate is in good conditions was added.
- A maintenance person was immediately contacted, and the blinds were inspected. A blind cord was installed. The blind is now functional and in good condition. The risk assessment document was updated to ensure that the blinds are functional. The person in charge of carrying out the risk assessment will pay close attention to the blinds, checking them regularly.

Infection Control:

- A deep clean was organised. The windowsills, walls, wall base, blinds, shelves, materials were cleaned. The Daily cleaning worksheet was updated with more detailed explanation. A document for a Deep Cleaning/Disinfection Checklist was made, and a reminder was scheduled for the beginning of every term to remind to the person in charge to organise it.

Fire Safety:

- A maintenance check was scheduled immediately. On 14th of October the batteries of the alarm were changed, and the system was assessed and confirmed to be working properly. On 7th of November our annual maintenance of the alarm system was completed. A weekly Fire Alarm Checks document was created, where the person in charge will check the alarm daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Photographic evidence submitted.
- Photographic evidence submitted.
- Photographic evidence submitted

Infection Control:

- Copy of checklist and photographic evidence submitted.

Fire Safety:

- Copy of maintenance cert submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted have been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

During the inspection, the required ratio of qualified adults to children was maintained, ensuring that every child was under the supervision of a qualified staff member. The staff were observed positioning themselves within the room to allow them to engage effectively with the children, offering supportive and attentive supervision when required. When the children were playing outdoors the staff were observed to move around and engage with children to keep them in their line of vision at all times.

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 adequate insurance was in place for the preschool service for 22 children up until 27 March 2026.