

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL013
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Ashleigh House Pre-School and Creche
-------------------------	--------------------------------------

Address of Service:	Coolmine Therapeutic Community, Damastown Walk, Damastown, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	D15 HK12
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Anita Harris
-------------------------------------	--------------

Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
----------------------	---------------------

Date(s) of Inspection:	04/06/2025
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	0
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	---

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive Airside Business Park Swords Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. McDonnell, A. Dunne
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

Ashleigh House Preschool and Creche is based on a residential complex for parents who are availing of programmes run by Coolmine Therapeutic Community. The service is registered to provide part-time time and full-day care to children aged 0-6 years old. The service is located in a ground floor building with a Baby and Pre-school room in operation. The service has a dedicated cot area adjacent to the Baby room. There is also a kitchen and sanitary facilities available for staff and children. There is direct access to a covered outdoor area from both rooms and then a large outdoor area.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. The service employs ten staff members to include the person in charge, deputy person in charge, six childcare staff and two staff members employed under the Community Employment scheme. The deputy person in charge was not assigned to a care room but was available to assist if required. The person in charge arrived to the service at 12.30pm to facilitate the feedback meeting.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 25 First Aid and Regulation 29 Premises. A sample of records were reviewed in relation to Regulation 16 Record in Relation to a Pres school Service.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation, 19, 23 and 29 and both care rooms were examined on this 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, deputy 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.*

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The deputy person in charge was on the premises at the start of the inspection and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.
- (b) A review of the roster for the week of the inspection demonstrated that the designated person in charge or deputy person in charge was in the service at all times during operational hours.
- (c) There were displays in the service and a discussion with staff members demonstrated there was a clearly defined management structure to ensure lines of accountability in the event of an emergency.
- (2) Following the last inspection on 26 June 2024, a review of the staff roster, and staff attendance on the day of inspection demonstrated that there were 2 new staff members working in the service. These two staff files along with the garda vetting disclosures for eight staff since the last inspection held on the 26 June 2024 were reviewed.
- (a) The registered provider had four written and validated references available for the two new staff members. Of these references available, three were from a previous employer.
- (b) The registered provider had one written and validated references available from a reputable source.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the two new staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for eight previous staff members.
- (d) A review of the documentation concerning the new staff members' employment history demonstrated either the police vetting was not required for one staff member and was available for review for the other staff member.
- (4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that one staff member was employed to work with children held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. The other staff member was employed under the community employment scheme.
- (7) The staff members and management team described a system of team meetings and one to one supervision. There were documented records of these meetings and agendas were available for review. The staff members discussed how these processes supported their engagement with children and children's development within the service and the wider community.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) On the inspectors unannounced arrival, the adult child ratio was observed to be correct and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult-to-child ratios were observed when the service was operating to maximum capacity on the day of inspection;

- In the Baby room there were three adults with five children aged between 2 months to 7 months old.
- In the Pre-school room there was two adults with six children aged between 1 year and 3 months old to 4 years and 9 months old.

On the day of the inspection the children did not attend the service following lunchtime.

The deputy person in charge was available in a supernumerary capacity.

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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis was completed accurately in attendance record books.
- (i) The staff roster was available demonstrating hours each staff worked.
- (j) A review of eight medication administration records demonstrated that all the details were completed on each record.
- (k) A review of ten accident and incident records demonstrated that all the details were completed on each record.

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*
- (1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-
 - (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

Basic Needs

The children were observed to be supported by the staff throughout the inspection. In the Baby and Preschool rooms the staff were observed supporting each other by discussing what they had learnt about the individual needs of the children to provide children with individualised care. Child led practices were observed through the inspection period with children being provided with sleep, play and eating opportunities as they demonstrated their needs to staff members. When settling for sleep, providing food or playing with the children, the staff

members interacted warmly with the children and engaged in conversations with them about choices, preferences and their family. In the Pre-school room, children enjoyed a long period of time in the outdoor play areas and their morning snack provided from home in a relaxed and social environment during outdoor play. Staff supported children in nappy changing and bathroom visits. The transitions between activities were observed to be calm and organised.

Supporting relationships around children

The family was supported through the inclusion of children's family units within the service. For example, in both rooms the children's family pictures were displayed at the children's eye level and in the Baby room removal from the wall was possible to allow staff to chat to them about the pictures. In the Baby room, staff members discussed how the daily records kept in the service and the preparatory meetings with staff, management and the parent supported the children's development whilst in the creche. The staff members spoke with inspectors about regular discussions with parents to support care routines. These were supported and evidence by specified, documented supports in place in conjunction with the parent to help provide appropriate care and development.

Physical and material environment

In the Baby room activities and equipment were available on open shelving at a low level for children to access independently which included a range of books and sensory items in baskets. There were activity centres and soft blocks to support gross motor development.

Adult chairs were provided, and these were used by staff to support children in eating and settling for sleep. In the Preschool room low level shelving and child sized furniture supported children's independence. The materials and equipment provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment available to them. Cosy areas were present in both rooms and in the sheltered outdoor area with books, offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day.

The covered outdoor area was secure and safe and contained an art area, a play kitchen with supporting equipment, a tray for water play and two picnic tables on an artificial grass surface. The overhead shelter enabled the children to access this outdoor area during inclement weather.

In the open outdoor area with an artificial soft surface, there was a garden section with a large sand pit with supporting equipment, a playhouse with a blackboard, alongside large play and climbing area with a climbing frame, slide and swings.

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 had a secure entrance to the service with a buzzer system in place. This prevented any unauthorised access to the service and exit from the service by children.
- Blind cords were secured and were not accessible to children.
- Cleaning agents and medications were stored out of the reach of children.
- The temperature of the care room throughout the period of inspection was maintained below 21°C.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the preschool children demonstrating the preventive actions were maintained following the last inspection.
- Play equipment in the garden area was appropriately maintained and was checked on the service's risk assessments.

Infection Control:

- Following the previous inspection the inspector observed the preventive actions in place in relation to children's formula. The children requiring formula had their bottles stored in the fridge and these and any other food items were labelled with their name and picture.
- Staff members were observed to complete nappy changing as per the service's nappy changing procedure. Staff wore gloves and aprons and removed these on changing the children's nappies and before returning to the care room.
- The children's hands were washed before they ate and after outdoor play and after toileting or having their nappy changed.
- During sleep time, cots and low floor mats were positioned with the recommended 50 centimetres between each child.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were facilitated with sleep as required. Staff were aware of the service's safe sleep policy. The ten-minute checks on children's breathing, position and colour and described by staff members were

completed on children who were sleeping. The temperature of the room whilst they slept was maintained between 16 and 20°C.

- Appropriately labelled mattresses were available in the children’s cots, demonstrating the preventive actions were maintained following the last inspection.
- Children were appropriately dressed for sleep with no outdoor clothing on.

Non-Compliance Information

Safe Sleep:

1. Safe sleep practices were not always implemented in the Preschool room in-line with Tusla’s safe sleep guidelines for children under 24 months.
 - A child under 24 months was placed to sleep on a floor mat. This is at variance to the guidelines which outline the required sleep equipment for children under 24 months.
 - A sleep plan was not in place for this child. This is at variance to the guidelines that state a child can sleep in an approved alternative to a cot provided it is agreed with parents, and a sleep plan is established and signed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Safe Sleep:

1. The registered provider stated individual sleep assessments have been compiled in light of the recent inspection in line with the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Guidance for Early Learning and Care Sector on Sleep Provision for Children Under 24 months. This has been shared with staff to view and familiarise themselves with along with a PDF copy of the guidance document. Sleep pods have been purchased in order to support sleep time in the preschool room in line with Tusla Guidance. As a preventive action the registered provider will ensure staff and management follow the Guidance for Early Learning and Care Sector on Sleep Provision for Children Under 24months. A discussion with staff took place in relation to sleep times and how we will implement new sleep assessments for children attending the service in line with guidance.

Supporting documentation submitted

Safe Sleep:

Copy of communication with staff members and guidance.

Invoice for purchase of sleep pods

Sleep assessment

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered employer, in their corrective and preventive action plan, have addressed the non-compliances identified under regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(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

(2)(a)(b) There was an appropriately stocked first aid kit in the service and was easily available to the staff members to provide care to the children.