

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL061
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cheeky Monkeys Playschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Churchview, Chapel Road, Kinsealy, Malahide, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	K36 VP76
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Rachel Tarpey
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	16/05/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM	0
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Taaffe
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Cheeky Monkeys Playschool is a privately-owned sessional early years service, in operation since 2007, which participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.15am to 12.15pm from Monday to Friday for 38 weeks each year. The service currently caters for a maximum of 20 pre-school children from 2 to 6 years of age. School aged children are not accommodated in the service. Cheeky Monkeys Playschool is conducted from two interconnecting spaces which are operated as one L-shaped pre-school room which is attached to the registered provider's detached residential property. Outdoor play is facilitated in the spacious and well-maintained enclosed garden to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider and three staff members work directly with the pre-school children in the service on a daily basis. Two of these staff members are employed to work directly with children with additional needs when necessary in posts which are funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme. An additional adult is employed to work in the service in a relief capacity when necessary to cover staff absences.

### 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 regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28 and 30. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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)(a) The registered provider is the designated person in charge of the service and a named staff member is appointed to deputise in her absence when required.

(b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service at 9.35am on the morning of inspection.

The staff files for the registered provider, 3 core staff members and the staff member employed in a relief capacity were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b) There were 2 written references available for the registered provider and 2 written, validated references available for the 3 core staff members and the staff member employed in a relief capacity.

(a) Eight of the 10 written references reviewed were from past employers.

(b) Two of the 10 written references reviewed were from sources other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the registered provider and all staff members. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for one adult who had lived outside the State as an adult for more than 6 consecutive months.

(4) The registered provider held a Level 8 major award in Early Childhood Care and Education while all 3 core staff members and the staff member employed in a relief capacity held appropriate early years qualifications at Level 5 - 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

### 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.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) During the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) On the day of inspection the registered provider and 3 staff members were working directly with 14 pre-school children aged 3 years 2 months to 5 years 3 months, all attending the service on a sessional basis.

### 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) The registered provider ensured a record was kept in writing in relation to the children's details as outlined in Regulation 15 (a) to (i). All children's registration forms were reviewed and each form was found to be appropriately completed with the required information.

### 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*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service:

#### Basic needs:

- The registered provider and staff members were observed to be kind and caring in their interactions with the children which nurtured a warm and child-centred atmosphere in the service.

- The service promoted healthy eating and children brought their own healthy packed lunches and water bottles to the service. The children were supported to develop knowledge in making nutritious food choices, as evidenced by the discussions heard taking place between the children and adults during the inspection. The registered provider and staff members sat with and chatted to the children at snack time, encouraging conversation and extending interactions. Towards the end of the session a platter of fruit slices, raisins and blueberries was offered to the children by the registered provider.
- The children's independence was encouraged. For example, children who were able opened their own yogurt and fruit containers at snack time and some children put on and took off their own clothing. The adults pre-empted children's difficulties and were on hand if a child needed assistance. The children were praised for their involvement in activities and on completion of tasks. The adults were observed to be sensitive and responsive to the children's cues to use the toilet, with supervision and assistance provided when necessary.
- Floor mats were provided at the library area to facilitate a child to rest and relax during the session should they wish to do so.
- There was a focus on outdoor play being facilitated in the service as evidenced in many of the children enthusiastically playing in the outdoor play area at 9.35am when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service, and again on a number of occasions during the session. The adults ensured that the children wore sun hats and limited the amount of time that the children were exposed to direct sunlight in the outdoor play area. Children who opted to return indoors to play were readily facilitated to do so, with the adults observed supporting the children in their chosen play activities in both spaces.

### Supporting Relationships around Children

- The adults demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's individual needs, likes and preferences, and spoke positively and warmly to and about the children during the inspection. The adults frequently initiated conversations and responded meaningfully to the children's verbal and non-verbal cues and provided regular praise and encouragement using gentle tones of voice.
- The adults played alongside the children providing space and opportunity for children to lead and direct play, listening carefully to their stories and questions and responding to the children in an interested and warm manner. The children were readily supported in their choice of activities with moments of joint laughter and shows of affection observed during the inspection.

- The children in the service were encouraged to value and respect each other. This was particularly evidenced by the positive regard shown by the adults and children towards children with additional needs in the service, fostering each child's inclusion and involvement in activities when appropriate. An example of this was clearly demonstrated in the adults using Lámh as well as oral vocabulary when interacting with children during the session. In addition, the children confidently communicated using Lámh including when signing and singing familiar songs.
- The inspector observed that children's transitions were well-supported. Visual and verbal strategies including tidy-up-themed songs were used by the adults to inform and prepare children for up-coming activities and movement.
- A warm, welcoming atmosphere in the service was evidenced by the registered provider and staff members observed greeting the children's parents and siblings by name in a friendly and familiar manner and facilitating them to enter the premises to collect the pre-school children at the end of the session. Further communication to and from the parents was facilitated by email, electronically through a secure smartphone messenger application and by telephone contact as necessary.

### **Physical & Material Environment:**

- The service was well resourced with a broad range and quantity of equipment, toys and materials to support the children's independent thinking and extend their learning and natural curiosity.
- The pre-school room was laid out in clearly defined interest areas and it was evident that each area had been carefully considered by the registered provider to ensure they were visually stimulating and inviting for children. The interest areas included a home corner containing wooden kitchen units equipped with real world utensils and packaging; a hair salon; a large shop area; a hospital area; an arts and crafts zone; construction areas and a well-resourced library area. Each interest area contained an array of supportive equipment and play materials.
- The children appeared confident and content in their environment. The layout of the room supported the children's independence in making choices and provided them with lots of opportunity to initiate and take the lead in activities. The children were observed discussing their play plans with their friends and collaborating with each other. For example, two children were heard discussing their up-coming pre-school tour to a farm and decided to make sheep using paper plates and cotton wool while, later, a number of children opted to make pigs using paper cups, with support provided by the staff members when required.

- Outdoor play was facilitated in the spacious enclosed garden to the rear of the premises and which is accessed directly from the pre-school room. An extensive area running along the back wall of the premises was paved, with steps in place leading up to a large lawned garden. Play materials provided in the paved area included a mud kitchen, lidded sand table, numerous ride-on toys, petrol pumps, two plastic playhouses, basketball hoops, rubber blocks and oversized interconnecting blocks. The lawned area contained slides, a domed metal climbing frame, a large plastic climbing frame with a tunnel and two slides attached, and a wooden A-frame with a climbing wall, rope netting wall, standing platform and slide attached.

### 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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. On arrival to the service visitors were viewed by the registered provider through the glass door panels, in advance of entry, ensuring only authorised persons were permitted to enter the premises.
- The warm water temperature in the sanitary accommodation in the service did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children.
- The children attending the service may be required to access a second toilet located off the hallway in the registered provider's family home, adjacent to the pre-school room, based upon demand for the toilet located off the pre-school room. Children were accompanied by a staff member at all times when using the second toilet.
- Play materials and equipment available in the service were stored on stable-based low level shelving which reduced the risk of the furniture toppling over and causing injury to a child.
- Cleaning agents were stored on high shelving out of children's reach.
- The outdoor play area was secured to prevent a child gaining unsupervised access to a roadway or other source of danger.

### Infection Control:

- Running warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided for hand hygiene at the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation of the service.
- The children were encouraged to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and after messy and outdoor play.
- Appropriate hygiene practices were observed when the adults assisted children to blow their noses with the tissues provided in the service.
- The play equipment and materials and the premises were in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The outdoor sand table was fitted with a secure lid to prevent contamination by animals and birds.

### Administration of Medication:

- There were forms available to record the details of any medication administered to a child in the service, should the need arise.

### Fire Safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

### Outing:

- The registered provider and staff members demonstrated comprehensive knowledge of the relevant safety issues associated with the preparation and safe management of an outing scheduled to take place to an open farm on the day following the inspection.

## 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) The service maintained accurate details of all children in attendance during the inspection. The children were entered as present in attendance records noting each child's arrival and departure time on a daily basis.

(3)(a)(b) A system was in place to ensure that no person other than the children and their parents or guardians, employees, approved students or authorised visitors could enter the service. A visitor's book was maintained and on arrival to the service on the day of inspection the inspector was requested to record their attendance on the premises and the purpose of their visit.

### 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) The registered provider and the staff member who deputised in the absence of the registered provider held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training which ensured that a person with FAR training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)(b) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and easily accessible to the staff and available for the children at all times if required.

### 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) The records indicated that fire drills were conducted at least on a monthly basis in the service, most recently having been undertaken on 29/04/2024.

(b) Records were available showing that the smoke detection system was certified as having been serviced on 14/06/2023.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire are displayed in the premises.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) There was no record available to show that the fire extinguisher provided in the service had been approved and appropriately serviced by a person with expertise in fire safety. Instead, the registered provider purchased a new fire extinguisher on an annual basis and maintained records of checking it herself on a monthly basis.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been carried out:

#### Corrective Action

(1)(b) A trained person serviced the fire extinguisher on 23/05/2024 and the maintenance certificate was immediately forwarded to the Inspectorate.

#### Preventive Action

(1)(b) The fire extinguishers will be serviced annually.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- A copy of a maintenance certificate issued from a fire safety company showing the fire extinguisher was serviced on 23/05/2024 was submitted to the Inspectorate on the day on which the servicing took place.

### Summary Comment

The evidence submitted has been reviewed and accepted. The non-compliance observed under Regulation 26(1)(b) has been adequately addressed.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for 22 pre-school children attending the service on a sessional basis, valid until 27/03/2025.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

*(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The pre-school room provided 43.4m<sup>2</sup> of clear floor space which met the space requirements for 22 pre-school children aged 2½ - 6 years all attending the service on a sessional basis, or 18 children attending on a part-time basis.