

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL137
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Name of Service:	Kids of Life
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Address of Service:	Unit 8, Columba House, Airside Retail Park, Swords, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K67 V0P1
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sharon Farrell
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	16/01/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	24	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne
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

Kids of Life is a sessional service operates from 09.00 – 12.30 hrs and caters for children aged 2.5 – 5 years of age. There are currently 40 children attend the service. The service is located in a large purpose-built indoor activity play centre situated in a business park in Swords in north Co. Dublin. There are 2 preschool rooms in operation namely the Naionra on the ground floor and the Preschool Room on the first floor. The sanitary accommodation is located on the ground floor of the premises. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) over the course of the school year.

Staffing

The registered provider, who does not work in the service, employs seven staff within the service to include the general manager, the deputy person in charge, three childcare staff and two chefs. The general manager who arrived at 12.00pm, attended the feedback meeting with the deputy person in charge at the end of the inspection.

Methodology

Tusla 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations as follows:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4)

Regulation 11 Staffing Levels (1)(3)

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.

Regulation 25 First Aid.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included both rooms of the service - the Naionra and Preschool 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the general manager, 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

(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

(2) The files of the seven staff working in the service were reviewed.

(a) Two validated written references were available for four staff employed from past employers.

One validated written reference was available for three staff employed for a past employer.

(b) One validated written reference was available for the two staff employed from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for seven staff employed within the service. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting for one staff member who had resided outside of the state for six months or more as an adult was available for inspection.

(4) Five staff members employed within the service to provide direct care to the children had evidence to confirm they held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(a)(b) One written and validated reference was not available for one staff member.
- (d) Police vetting was not available for one staff member who had resided outside of the state for six months or more as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(a)(b) Reference has since been provided. Two references will be requested at the beginning of employment for staff.
- (2)(d) Police vetting has since been applied for and received. Police vetting will be requested at the beginning of employment for staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)(a)(b) Copy of written and validated reference
- (2)(d) Police vetting

Summary Comment

Under Regulation 9, the non-compliances outlined above have been 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.*
- (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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children, as there were four adults working with 24 children for the morning session, ensuring ratios were maintained on the day of inspection.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection, as follows:

Room Name	Age profile	Morning
Naionra Room	3 years to 5 years	2 adults to 18 children
Preschool Room	2 year 8 months to 5 years	1 adult to 6 children

The deputy person in charge was available for support to the two care rooms.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The rooms were bright and inviting play spaces to enable children to explore their environment.
- In the Naionra and Preschool rooms, a range of play materials and equipment were present and suitable to the age and stage of development of the children attending each room nurturing children's independence, ability to make decisions, enabling exploration and develop their play opportunities.
- The furniture provided in each care room was low level and suitable to the needs and age of the children. There were sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played and ate in each care room.
- Artwork was present on the walls of both care rooms, for example for the theme of Winter / Snow, art creations of igloos, penguins and seals were displayed.
- Displays of pictures of the children who were attending with their families and their birthdays were displayed in the service which supported children's well-being and identity and belonging.
- The preschool children that attend the service between 9.00am and 9.30am had access to the play centre which was equipped with ball pools, age-appropriate slides, large soft building blocks, covered foam wedges and shapes.
- The children of both care rooms were provided with the opportunity of outdoor play time in the enclosed outdoor play area which consisted of a soft artificial surface and artificial grass with a mud kitchen with supporting quipment, a slide, a hoola hoop and a ball available.

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:

- Access to the service rooms was gained via a keypad on the doors and was monitored by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and preventing children from leaving the service unsupervised. The outdoor play area was secure, while children played outside.
- Children attendance books were monitored accurately to ensure staff knew how many children were present in the two care rooms or during outdoor play.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- The ambient room temperatures of each care room were maintained between the recommended temperatures of 18°C and 22°C.

Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition throughout, with the premises and equipment observed to be visually clean.
- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included liquid soap, and paper towels and thermostatically controlled warm water.
- Children were observed to wash their hands after toilet visits, after outdoor play and before lunch.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for one staff member. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. There were trailing flexes from a stereo in the Naionra room and a tablet charger in the Preschool room accessible to children, leading to a risk of injury.

Infection Control:

3. Perishable food items such as cold meats, cheese and yogurts, brought from home, consumed by the children were not refrigerated on arrival to the service. This increased the potential risk of food borne infection.

- Lidded pedal operated bins were not available in the Naionra room and in two of the sanitary facilities, leading to poor infection control.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- Garda vetting was updated immediately and evidence sent to the inspectorate. Garda vetting will be updated every two years for all staff members in future.
- Stereos have been replaced with Bluetooth speakers and chargers have been removed from the rooms and will only be charged in our office spaces.

Infection Control:

- Children are no longer bringing in their own lunches as we provide both snack and dinner. Lunches will not be brought in by parents going forward.
- Lidded pedal bins have now been obtained, and broken bins have been replaced in all areas. Broken items will be addressed straight away in future.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Renewed Garda Vetting.
- Photographic evidence

Infection Control:

- Note issued to parents
- Photographic Evidence

Summary Comment

It is acknowledged that a renewed Garda vetting disclosure for this staff member was completed 17 January 2025 and submitted to the agency on the 21 January 2025.

Under Regulation 23, the non-compliances outlined above have been addressed.

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 service provided evidence that two adults trained in First Aid Response were available to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2) (a) (b) A first aid box was stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in each care room and was available to the adults responsible for the children.

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) A written record was reviewed by the inspector for fire drills completed and the last fire drill in the Naionra room was recorded as being carried out on the 15 January 2025 and in the Preschool room was recorded as being carried out on the 19 December 2024.
- (b) The number type and maintenance record for the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available. Firefighting equipment were last serviced in October 2024 and the smoke alarms were last serviced in November 2024.
- (4) The fire drill procedure was displayed in the premises and observed by the Inspector.