

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL139
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Kidz Zone
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Mulhuddart Community Centre, Church Road, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D15 R2VF
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Ciara Morris
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	13/08/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	10
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Hosford
<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

Kidz Zone is a community childcare service located in Mulhuddart, Dublin 15. The service provides full day, part time and a sessional service for children aged 2 to 5 years and is open from 8.30am-5.00pm weekdays.

The service operates from Mulhuddart local community centre and it consists of two care rooms in the morning and one care room in the afternoon. The Berry room is located within the community centre and caters for children between 2 to 3 years in the morning. The Tree House room is in a prefabricated building beside the community centre and provides care for children between 2 to 5 years in the morning and afternoon. The service has two outdoor play areas, a playground and a football pitch with an artificial grass surface which children have access to on daily basis for outdoor play

### Staffing

The service employs seven adults to include the registered provider who is the designated person in charge, a deputy person in charge and five childcare staff, two of whom provide care under the Access and Inclusion Model. Two additional staff are employed under the Community Employment (CE) scheme.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,15,19,23,25 and 26.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15. On the day of inspection, the Berry room was closed, and the children were accommodated in the Tree House room.

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

An Immediate Action notice was issued to the service on the 13 August 2025 in relation to the Regulation 23-Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.

On the 15 August 2025 the registered provider responded to the immediate action notice outlining the measures implemented within the service to address safety concerns. Following this submission the service was requested for additional assurances that the non-compliance was addressed. Further information and evidence were received from the registered provider on the 18 August 2025. Please see details in the body of the inspection report.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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.*

*(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

(2) The files of seven staff employed in the service and two staff employed under the community employment scheme were reviewed.

(a) Four validated written references were available from a past employer.

(b) Thirteen validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.

1. (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for seven staff members employed in the service and two community employment staff. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed.

(d) International police vetting was available from four countries for staff who had lived outside of the state for six months or more as adults.

(4) On review of documentation available seven employees employed in the service and working directly with the children had evidence to demonstrate that 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 staff member employed in the service did not have a second validated written reference on file for inspection.

(d) International police vetting was not available from two countries for staff who had lived outside of the state for six months or more as adults.

(3) Evidence was not available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2)(a)(b) and (d) were carried out prior to three adults being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) In response to the non-compliances the registered provider has stated the following.

(a)(b) The reference has been obtained and validated for one staff member.

(d) The staff members have contacted the relevant embassies to enquire about police vetting.

(3) The personnel file checklist has been updated to include a CV screening checklist, when assessing candidates for interview.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b) Validated written reference for one staff member.

(d) Evidence of email sent to relevant embassies.

(3) Updated staff file checklist.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. Although the non-compliance in relation to Regulation 9(2)(a) and (b) have been addressed, the non-compliance under Regulation 9(2)(d) remains outstanding as police vetting has not yet been obtained for two staff members. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt.

### 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.*

*(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 adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there were 4 adults working with 14 children in the morning and 4 adults working with 10 children in the afternoon.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection.

(8)(a) On discussion with staff and on review of available documentation it was confirmed that two adults were present 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.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The records maintained for the total number of 12 children attending the service were inspected and all were found to be appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

(3)(c) The children's records were open to inspection as requested by the inspector as an authorised person.

## 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)

#### Basic Needs:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service with children provided with a breakfast of cereal and milk, a morning snack from home which consisted of fruit, yogurts, cheese and sandwiches. An afternoon meal from an external food company consisted of meatballs, potatoes and vegetables. An afternoon snack from the service was fruit and yogurts. Drinking water was freely available to the children throughout the day while they played in the care room and outdoor area. The staff members sat with the children at snack time encouraging conversations and extending interactions to create a relaxed and sociable environment.
- Staff members were observed to be kind and attentive in their interactions with the children and the atmosphere in the service was warm and child centred.
- The children were observed using the toilet under supervision, with assistance provided by a staff member when necessary.
- Children were observed moving freely within the care room and outdoor area and taking a break from activities and relaxing in a rest area in the care room which was equipped with soft matting, and books.

#### Physical and Material Environment:

- The care room was well resourced with a range of equipment, toys and materials to support the children's independent thinking and extend their learning and natural curiosity.
- All equipment and materials in the care room were appropriate to the age and development of the children. The furniture provided in the room was low level and age appropriate with toys and play materials accessible.
- Two outdoor areas were available to the service, one to side of the Treehouse room and one to the rear of the Berry room. During the inspection the children accessed the area to the side of the Treehouse

room which was enclosed and surfaced in grass. The area had space for games and football, a sheltered area with tables and chairs along with water and sand trays. The children had access to outdoor play during the inspection and for extended periods.

### Supporting Relationships:

- The staff members demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's individual needs, likes and preferences, and frequently initiated conversations with the children, responded meaningfully to their verbal and non-verbal cues and provided regular praise and encouragement using a gentle tone of voice.
- The children were encouraged by the adults to take turns with their friends and share equipment and toys. Children were observed eagerly participating in the preparation for snack time and going outside to play.
- Staff members were familiar with the children's parents who could speak with staff at drop off and collection. The service engaged with parents via text message and updated them on planned activities, pictures of the children throughout the day and information regarding the service and upcoming events.
- Staff worked well together in supporting the children and were aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding maintaining flexibility with the daily routine to ensure the care was child led.

## 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 premises and outdoor play area were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised people from gaining access to the service.
- The care room was observed to be suitable and safe with all cleaning agents, sharp implements, blind cords and flexes out of children's reach.
- The 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 in attendance.
- Staff maintained a daily record of each child's arrival and departure to the service.

### Infection Control:

- Adequate hand washing facilities were available in the sanitary facilities used by the children, these included thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, paper towels and bins.  
Children were supported to wash their hands before lunch and after using the toilet.
- A refrigerator was available in the care room to refrigerate perishable food items from home.
- The service was observed to be clean and well maintained with cleaning schedules in operation within the care room and sanitary facility.
- Children that required sleep were facilitated in low beds which were placed with a minimum space of 50cm apart to reduce the potential risk of cross infection.

### Safe Sleep:

- Staff maintained ten-minute sleep checks on all sleeping children to include their colour, breathing and position. A room thermometer was present in the room and staff recorded the temperature in the morning and when children slept in the afternoon.

### Fire Safety:

- Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were completed in the service and all fire equipment to include fire extinguishers and smoke detectors were serviced yearly. The designated fire exits were illuminated and clear of any obstructions throughout the inspection.

### Outing:

- On discussion with staff, it was confirmed that any outing to the local park or public playground are conducted in line with the service Outing policy. For example, parental pre consent was obtained prior to the outing, children and staff wear high visibility vests, regular headcounts are completed, items such as mobile phone, contact details of parents and a first aid box accompanied staff. Staff were aware of the procedures in place in the event of a child going missing on an outing.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Safe Sleep:

1. The temperature of the Treehouse room was not maintained between the recommended temperature of 18 -22 °C while children slept. The temperature was recorded as 27 °C at 1.53pm. An Immediate Action notice was issued in relation to safety concerns to the person in charge on the 13 August 2025.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Safe Sleep:

1. In response to the non-compliance the registered provider has stated that a mobile air conditioning unit is in the room to cool the room in warm weather when needed. Staff will continue to monitor the room temperature and have also added the temperature into the sleep chart record sheet.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Safe Sleep:

1. Evidence of mobile air conditioning unit in the care room, updated sleep record template and daily room temperature template.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance under Regulation 23 has 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 registered provider ensured that staff members were trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and were available to the children attending the service.

(a) and (b) A first aid box was available in the service and suitably equipped and accessible to the adults responsible for caring for the children attending the service

## 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 last recorded fire drill that took place in the service was on the 31 July 2025.
  - (b) The number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was present in the service, the fire extinguishers were serviced in June 2025 and the smoke alarms on the 15 July 2025.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (4) A notice of the fire procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were not clearly displayed in the care rooms to ensure the safe and effective evacuation of staff and children in the event of an emergency.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (4) In response the registered provider has stated that clear instructions are now in place on the walls of where fire safety point is and clear staff roles and responsibilities in the event of a fire/drill. Management will complete a weekly morning check to ensure that fire safety procedures are clearly displayed in all rooms.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- (4) Photographic evidence and template for managers weekly check of care rooms.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance under Regulation 26 has been addressed.