

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY074
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Name of Service:	Cortoon Community Childcare
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Address of Service:	Cortoon, Tuam, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H54 CP74
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Name of Registered Provider:	Michael McCabe
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	16/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	41	PM	27
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla - Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A- (1 st Floor-Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Co. Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan and F. Kelly
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
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Description of service

The early years' service is located on its own grounds adjacent to the community hall in a rural setting of Cortoon, Co. Galway and was first established in 2007. The service offers the option of full day care and part time care provision from 8.00 am to 6:15 pm and an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme from 09.30 am to 12.30 pm, from Monday to Friday. The service also offers a school aged service from 2 pm to 6:15 pm.

There are 5 playrooms – the Baby room, Toddler room, Wobbler room, ECCE room 1 and ECCE room 2. The service has 2 designated sleep rooms - 1 adjacent to the Baby Wobbler room with 4 cots and opposite the ECCE 1 room there are 3 cots for children. Additionally, stackable beds are available for children over 2 years of age requiring sleep. The pre-school children have access to secure outdoor play areas to the rear of the premises for play activities, exploration and fresh air.

Staffing

The registered provider is supernumerary and not on the premises on the day of inspection. There was a total of 17 adults working in the service which includes a manager, chef, administrator and 13 of these were working directly with children. There were 2 staff assigned to working with school aged children.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 11, 15, 19, 23, 25. On inspection additional non-compliance which posed risk were identified under Regulation 9,29 and 23. 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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

(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.

(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 service manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspection, the manager was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.

It was confirmed that there were 17 members of staff employed in the service.

These files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

- (2)(a) There were 29 written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer for 6 adults working in the service.
- (b) There were 5 written and appropriately validated references available from a source other than recent employer for the adults working in the service.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the staff working in the service.
- (d) Police Vetting disclosure was available for 4 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) There were 13 adults working directly with children who had obtained at least an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.
- (7) The manager on the day confirmed to the inspectors, that they had given a copy of updated policies and procedures for the service to the staff members.
Evidence of additional training that the staff attended (staff induction and 1 to 1 supervision training) was also available for inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(d) Police Vetting disclosure was not available for 4 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response that:

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(d) Police vetting for 1 adult has been received and the other 3 adults have applied and is in process. We will ensure in future that no adult will be employed prior to working directly with the children.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted evidence of 1 adults police vetting and the application forms for the other 3 adults to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

Regulation (2)(d) remains outstanding as evidence that 3 adults employed to work with the children have the required Police vetting has not been obtained. Evidence has not been submitted to the Inspectorate that these adults are not working unsupervised has not been received.

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) The adult/child ratio was correct on the day of the inspection.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to.

On the morning of the inspection, when the inspectors arrived there were 41 preschool children present with 11 adults directly caring and supervising them. In the afternoon there were 27 preschool children being cared for by 9 adults.

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.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g),(h) and (i).

The service manager developed, maintained and retained records about each child attending the service.

A sample of the children’s records were reviewed by the inspectors, of the 69 children attending the service, a total of 15 records were reviewed, the records contained the elements (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i,) as outlined below.

The entries reviewed were factual, consistent, and accurate.

The 15 records of children contain the following:

- The name and date of birth of the child.
- The date on which the child first attended the service.
- The date on which the child stopped attending the service (where relevant).

- The name and address of the child’s parent or guardian, and a telephone number where that parent or guardian (or a relative or friend of the parent or child) can be contacted during the hours of operation.
- Written authorisation / permissions for collecting the child.
- Details are recorded of any illness, allergy, or additional need(s) the child had, together with all the information relevant to the provision of specific care or attention.
- The name and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner.
- A record of any immunisations the child has had.
- Written parental or guardian consent was included to allow the child to have appropriate medical treatment if there was / is an emergency.

(4) The registered provider advised and documentary evidence from file review indicated, that all relevant children’s records were kept for 2 years from the date a child stops attending the service

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

19(1)(a) and (b)

Basic Needs

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and nutritious meals and snacks were served at regular times, but there was flexibility. The children had fruit and sandwiches for the morning snack. At 12:30 pm the older children had spaghetti bolognaise with cheese and the younger children had cottage pie. In the afternoon children were offered scones with cheese, ham and soup.

- Mealtimes were observed to be relax, sociable and staff engaged in a positive way with children.
- The tables and chairs were suitable for the children’s ages and stages of development.
- The children were encouraged to be independent at toileting and supported by staff as required.
- Children who wore nappies had their nappies changed on a regular basis, in a timely manner by staff in the designated nappy changing area.
- All the children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment, both indoors and outdoors.
- There were 11 highchairs in the Baby room and Toddler Wobbler room in use on the day of inspection. The infants and children were not in a highchair or other piece of equipment that constrains their movement, for longer than fifteen minutes, other than at meals or snack times.

Supporting Relationships

- Staff communicated with parents on an informal basis at drop off and collections times and through the service’s childcare application device.
- All the children had the opportunity to play outside for physical exercise and movement.
- Staff responded to infants in a timely and appropriate way when they cried or became upset.
- The children in the playrooms were observed listening to stories, singing action songs, exploring letters, numbers, arts and crafts. The children also engaged in tabletop activities, imaginary play and building blocks. The children were observed playing in the playhouse, mud kitchen, running, chasing, playing ball, and pedalling in foot-controlled cars in the outdoor play areas.
- The service had a community wall identifying key buildings and people in the community.
- Children transitions were supported within the service and to the local primary school. There was evidence that these were well planned and organised by staff to make the transition comfortable and as easy as possible.

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 was appropriately secured with a keypad, bell operated system at the entrance door. The internal and external entry and exit points prevented children exiting or unauthorised persons accessing the service.
- All storage cupboards, adult only areas were secured, and cleaning agents stored out of reach of the children.
- The materials and equipment throughout the service were maintained in good condition.
- Safety harnesses were available on the highchairs used for the children.
- The outdoor area was secured with a concrete wall, fencing and gates.

Infection Control:

- Hand washing facilities were provided with warm water, liquid soap, and disposable paper hand towels. Thermostatically controlled warm water was available for use by the children to facilitate hygienic hand washing with a temperature less than the recommended reading of 43°C.
- During the inspection, the children were assisted and encouraged to wash their hands prior to eating, after toileting, after using a tissue, after outdoor play, and prior to going home.
- There was evidence of a daily cleaning schedules and staff were observed cleaning tables after tabletop activities and after mealtimes.
- There was designated nappy changing area which was situated on the main corridor beside the Baby room with a wash hand basin, foot pedalled lidded bin and an airtight sealable bin for the storage of nappies.
- A fridge was available for the storage of perishable items from the children's lunch boxes/ bags.
- The playrooms were adequately ventilated with windows left open whilst maintaining the room temperature at the required level.
- The sanitary vents were maintained in a clean condition.

Administration of Medication:

- No child was on medication.
- The adults advised that they had a system for regularly checking expiry dates for the contents of the first aid box stored in the entrance to the service.
- The correct method of recording medication administered was in line with best practice and the service policy was explained by staff.

Safe Sleep:

- As per the service safe sleep policy sleeping children were monitored and a sleep log was maintained.
- Children under 2 years of age and children were observed sleeping in standard cots and children over 2 years of age were observed going down to sleep on stackable beds on demand.

Fire Safety:

- Documented evidence of monthly fire drills was available for inspection.

Outing:

- The manager informed the inspectors that the service carries out outings once a year.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- There were trailing cables for speakers in both sleep rooms which may pose as a safety risk to preschool children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider responded to say:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- Trunking has been fitted to the trailing cables and secured to the walls in both sleep rooms.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The Early Years Inspector has reviewed the evidence and has deemed it has met the regulatory requirements of this part of the Regulations.

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 did provide evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available to the children attending the pre-school service 6 adults had current training in first aid with documentary evidence advising that a childcare module was included in the training.
- (2)(a) The first aid boxes were wall mounted easily accessible and in a conspicuous position in the lobby and in the office.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Non-Compliance Information

- The service had 15 children in nappies on the day of inspection and only had 1 nappy changing unit, when 2 were required. The service requires one nappy changing unit, including a wash hand basin and changing mat for every 11 children requiring nappy changing.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider responded to say:

Corrective and Preventive Action

A second nappy changing area has been fitted in the service to accommodate the extra children requiring nappy changing.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The Early Years Inspector has reviewed the evidence has deemed it has met the requirements.