

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KE169		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cherish Childcare & Early Learning Centre		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Abbeylands, Barnhill, Castledermot, Co. Kildare		
<b>Eircode:</b>	R14 HF98		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Melanie Watson		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/05/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	52	PM 44
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre Ballymore Eustace Road Naas Co. Kildare W91 X38W		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F. Maher		
<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).

**Conditions if applicable**

N/A

### Description of service

This private service is one of three services operated by the registered provider in Laois, Carlow and Kildare. Full day care, part time and sessional care and education is offered to children between the ages of 0-6 years old. The service opens Monday-Friday from 07:00am-18:15pm.

The service is registered to provide school aged childcare also.

The service is located in a purpose built premises in a private residential estate on the outskirts of Castledermot. Five pre-school rooms, a sleep room, kitchen and office are provided. Play areas are available to the rear and front of the premises.

### Staffing

There were fourteen adults present in the service, this included the person in charge, area manager, ten childcare staff working directly with the pre-school children, one student on work experience and one cook. The registered provider was not present.

### 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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 person in charge, area manager, 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.*

### Compliance Information

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

The records of eighteen staff members employed and/or present in the service including the registered provider were reviewed.

(2)(a),(b)

Thirty six written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source, in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of eighteen adults whose files were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all employed staff members and one workplace student.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Fourteen members of staff employed and who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

### Non-Compliance Information

(d)

Police vetting was required for one adult who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

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

### **Corrective Action**

An International Child Protection Certificate has now been applied for since 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Once received this will replace what we currently hold on file for this staff member which is, the Enhanced Criminal Record Certificate.

### **Preventive Action**

Management will ensure during the recruitment process that the correct certificate is applied for and received from the relevant country.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Document x 1

### **Summary Comment**

The requirement for Regulation 9(d) has been met.

## 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)

There were fifty-two children attending the service being supervised directly by ten adults.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the Inspection. This was confirmed following review of the staff roster for the service.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The five pre-school rooms were bright and spacious for the children to move about, work and play during their time spent in the service. Areas of interest included dress up, kitchen/home corners, mark making and libraries. The outdoor play areas had space for children to use the assortment of ride on equipment that was available and gross motor activities were supported with the provision of two large wooden structures with a climbing wall and slides in the front play area and a playhouse on a wooden platform that was accessed by wooden steps in the rear play area.

(b)

Suitable comfortable rest areas were available in each pre-school room should a child wish to take a break from activities for some quiet time, rest or read a book and consisted of soft, child sized couches or large cushions with floor mats.

One sleep room, with 8 standard cots was provided for the sleep needs of any child under two years old and low level sleep beds were in place for children aged two years and above who availed of a period of sleep during the day when attending on a full or part time basis. Cots were sufficiently spaced to allow staff to easily move between them to care for or attend to the children as required.

## 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

There was a good variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys, materials and equipment available for the children to use and play with during the day. Low level open shelving units displayed the pre-school materials and equipment which ensured the resources were freely available and easily accessible to the children at all times in the rooms. Sand trays and water play was available with a variety of sensory play materials provided for the babies and younger children. There was a small wooden climbing frame and extendable tunnels for the babies and wobblers which encouraged balance and gross motor development and play. A range of stacking and interconnecting equipment and wooden jigsaws/matching materials were also available to engage the babies and wobblers in their respective rooms.

There was plenty of art and craft materials available including, paint, paper, crayons, play dough and materials for gluing, cutting and sticking for the older children and a variety of props for the interest and small world areas. The resources and materials facilitated all types of play and learning and encouraged each child to experiment and use their imagination.

Child sized tables and chairs were maintained in good condition in all rooms and ensured the children could sit comfortably for tabletop activities and when eating their meals and snacks. The tables and chairs in the younger care rooms were sized age appropriately and two highchairs were available for the babies.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and the service provided the meals and snacks to the children attending on a full day care basis. A three-week menu was displayed in the entrance hall of the service and all food was freshly prepared by the onsite cook.

The hot meals provided, as per the three week menu displayed, was observed to be varied and nutritious and included a variety of meat, potatoes and vegetables, casseroles with meat, vegetables and potato and various pasta dishes with meat and vegetables added. Snacks and evening tea included home-made soup, toasted sandwiches, banana bread, carrot cake and scones, scrambled egg and toast, vegetable sticks, crackers, fresh fruit pieces and toasted ham sandwiches. Drinking water was freely available throughout the day in each pre-school room and the older children were encouraged to self-serve water from the drink station in their rooms.

Parents provided the morning snack for their child attending the sessional service and the staff members ensured all food provided was nutritious and suitable. During conversations with staff members, they advised they were very observant of any food provided that had the potential risk of choking and immediately halved or cut food into smaller pieces. The staff members also advised they encouraged healthy eating practices with the children and incorporated discussions about food and food choices on a daily basis.

The person in charge advised that the staff assigned to food preparation were trained in food safety and the kitchen was registered with the relevant health authority.

### 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 main entrance gate and door to the service were secure and controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school service.

Daily indoor room and outdoor risk assessments were completed and maintained to ensure a safe play and work environment for the children and staff.

Staff members in the rooms inspected, advised the inspector they would remove any necklace/beads if observed that a child may be wearing them.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towel, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying and handwashing routines were well established and observed.

Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues, paper towel, nappies and waste. Plastic aprons, disposable gloves and nappy sacks were available for hygienic nappy change practices.

Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

### Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. During conversations with the staff members, they advised they were aware of the procedures to be followed to administer medicine safely to a child if required while attending the service.

### Safe Sleep:

The staff members, caring for sleeping children, in conversation with the inspector, advised that ten minute sleep checks were recorded to check the colour, position and breathing pattern of sleeping children, this was consistent with practices observed and the written records maintained.

### Fire Safety:

Staff advised that regular fire drills take place and all fire exits on the premises were easily recognisable and unobstructed.

## 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)  
Persons were trained First Aid Response (FAR) and paediatric first aid and were immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2)(a)  
The first aid equipment was safely stored in conspicuous positions throughout the service.
- (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes for children were available to 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)  
A written record was available of fire drills which were completed monthly in the service, the last recorded fire drill took place 19 April 2024.
- (b)  
A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire detection system in the premises and were last serviced 1 February 2024.
- (4)  
Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

Children were observed being supervised at all times throughout the inspection by the staff caring for them; this included snack/mealtimes, during periods of sleep and in the sanitary areas.