

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK040
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Name of Service:	Kells Resource Centre Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Kells Childcare Centre Ltd., Kells, Co. Kilkenny
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Eircode:	R95 VFV0
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Name of Registered Provider:	Deirdre Knox
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	26/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	30
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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

This full daycare service is located in a rural setting in the village of Kells Co. Kilkenny. A preschool service is provided to children aged 6 months to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 8.00pm and 6.00pm (including a sessional service from 9.30am to 12.30pm for 38 weeks of the year). A school age service is also provided. The premises, a purpose-built childcare facility, consists of four preschool rooms; a baby room, toddler room, preschool one located downstairs and preschool two located upstairs. The service has an onsite kitchen and outdoor play areas to the rear and side of the service.

Staffing

There were 11 staff employed in the service. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. All staff who were working directly with the children held an award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1)a, b (2) a,b,c,d, (4).

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2).

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child (1) a,b.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child

Regulation 25 First Aid (1) (2).

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (4).

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 registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 23 Safety. The temperatures recorded in the sleep room attached to the baby room were recorded as higher than 20°C when there was a child under one years of age sleeping in the room. Safe sleep guidelines requires that the temperature of the sleep rooms for children under one are always maintained between 16°C-20°C. It is acknowledged by the inspector that the registered provider responded to the immediate action on 27 March 2024 to address the non-compliance found on the day of inspection.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) (b)

The manager was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 11 staff employed in the service, including the manager. All 11 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(a)

There were 16 written and validated references available on file from past employers.

- (b)
There were 2 written and validated references available on file from reputable sources.
- (c)
There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for all 11 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.
- (d)
There were police vetting available on file for one staff member who had worked in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4)
All staff working directly with the preschool children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(a)(b)
There were two staff in the service who did not have written and validated references available on file in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider will ensure all required references are in place in the service prior to staff commencing work in the service going forward. Two written and validated references are now available on file for the two staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of two written and validated references were received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is satisfactory to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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)

There was an adequate number of staff always working directly with the children during the inspection.

At 10.30am

There were 31 children in the care of 9 staff.

At 2.30pm

There were 23 children in the care of 7 staff

The manager was in the service and available to assist in the preschool rooms as required.

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

(1)(a)

The manager ensured that each child's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of activities during the inspection including playing together in the outdoor areas, engaged in floor play with the babies in the baby room and enjoying tabletop activities in preschool 1.

The children in the baby room were observed enjoying floor play. Staff were kind and attentive to their needs. Staff were prompt picking up on cues for care quickly. For example, when children showed they were tired they were picked up, had their nappies changed and were settled to sleep in the sleep room. Staff demonstrated that they were knowledgeable in relation to the daily routine of the individual children. Their care plans were displayed on the wall of the room. Staff communicated with the children using soft and gentle tones and were observed to promptly comfort children when they became upset. There was a large comfortable nurturing chair for staff to sit in while holding the babies.

Staff were observed playing with the children in the outdoor area. Staff were observed to be constantly engaged with the children. One child who was upset was observed to be comforted by the staff. The inspector heard staff speaking to the child enquiring "What's wrong tell me". Staff were observed to offer different options to the child to soothe. For example, do you want to go inside? would you like to hold my hand? Later the inspector observed the child had settled and was busy playing and sharing with their friends in the outdoor area.

The materials and equipment available throughout the service included a range of developmentally appropriate Montessori equipment, arts and crafts materials and other open-ended materials. The play equipment was well organised and easily accessible to the children. For example, the preschool 1 room downstairs had several large trays at waist height of the children. These trays were filled with various substances for children to play with such as, pasta shapes, rice, and soil.

1(b)

The manager had ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place. The children's hands in the toddler room were washed before their dinner at 12.00pm. The inspector observed that both sleep rooms were dimly lit and well ventilated. Child led sleep was observed in the baby room.

Children were facilitated to sleep when they demonstrated signs, such as rubbing their eyes and becoming upset. Children were observed to settle to sleep quickly in the toddler room when given appropriate support by staff. Staff were observed getting the children ready to sleep in the wobbler room.

Children were encouraged to take off their own clothes to get ready for bed. Staff in the baby and toddler room completed information books to share with parents daily. These books included information such as what the children ate and the number of wet and dirty nappies they had daily.

The children in the baby room were observed enjoying a plate of fruit on the morning of inspection. A selection of bananas, apples and raisins were served to the children on individual plates. Parents provided the snacks for children attending on a sessional basis. Snacks observed which were provided by parents were varied and nutritious in line with the services healthy eating policy. Most children were given water to drink.

A freshly prepared hot meal was served to the children at 12.00pm. The meal consisted of spaghetti bolognese which was observed to be enjoyed by the children. Extra food was available if requested. Staff sat with the children and chatted to them while they were supported to feed themselves. Water was offered with food and was always available to the children in the room.

The children's nappies were changed regularly. Nappy changing was observed. Staff were observed to be kind and attentive to the children while changing their nappies.

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

The manager had taken the following steps to ensure the safety of the children attending the service.

General safety:

Access to the service was gained through the front door directly beside the office. There was a call bell system in place where parents rang the bell to gain access to the service. Staff could see who was seeking to gain access to the service.

Infection control:

The service appeared to be clean on the day of inspection. Cleaning templates were available in the service to document the regular cleaning of the preschool rooms and toilet areas. There were fridges available in the service to store the perishable food provided by the parents for the children attending the ECCE scheme.

All sinks for hand washing in the service were equipped with warm thermostatically controlled water, liquid soap, and foot operated pedal bins. The temperature of the hot water flowing from the wash hand basin in the toilets beside preschool room 1 downstairs was recorded at 32°C on the day of inspection.

Safe sleep

The service had a safe sleep policy. The sleeping children's colour, breathing and position were observed and recorded every 10 minutes on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

1.

During the inspection, the room temperatures recorded in the baby room were above the recommended range of 16-20°C while one child under one was sleeping. The temperatures recorded on the day of inspection are detailed below.

Sleep room attached to Baby Room	Recorded temperature	Temperature on room thermometer	Children sleeping
2.45pm	22.7°C	19.0°C	One child under one
3.15pm	23.8°C	19.0°C	One child under one

The temperatures recorded while the child was sleeping did not adhere to the services safe sleep policy, which states the temperature of the sleep room should be always maintained between 16-20°C when the children are sleeping. This measure is in line with safe sleep guidance. An immediate action notice was issued to the service in relation to the high temperatures recorded in the sleep room on the day of the inspection.

An immediate action notice was also issued to the registered provider following the previous inspection on 26 June 2023 in relation to the high temperatures recorded in the sleep room during that inspection. The registered provider completed a corrective and preventive response following that inspection, however that response did not prevent a reoccurrence of the non-compliance on this inspection.

2.

The services thermometer which was fixed on the wall of the sleep room was not accurate on the day of inspection. The temperatures recorded by the inspector were consistently recorded as higher than the temperatures noted on the service's own thermometers. This non-compliance was also found on inspection 26 June 2023.

3.

The thermostat to maintain the temperature of the underfloor heating in the sleep room was not accurate. The thermostat for the underfloor heating was set to maintain the room temperature at 19.0°C. However, as the chart above demonstrates the temperatures recorded on the day of inspection were recorded as higher than this temperature.

4.

The registered provider did not ensure that regular fire drills were undertaken to provide for the safe evacuation of children in the event of a fire. The last fire drill was recorded in November 2023. The absence of regular fire drills in the service posed a risk to the safety of the children attending the service. This non-compliance was also found on inspection on 26 June 2023.

5.

There were no toilet seats on the toilets attached to toddler room 1. The attachments to fix the toilet seats were in place and posed a risk of injury to a child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

1.2.

An electronic thermometer is now in use in the sleep room. Staff will continue to check the thermometer at regular intervals to ensure the sleep room temperatures are maintained within 16-20°C at all times for sleeping babies under one years of age.

3.

The thermostat and under floor heating system has been reviewed by a competent professional.

4.

The absence of fire drills in the service has been discussed with staff. A designated fire officer has been appointed in the service to ensure monthly fire drills are carried out in the service. Monthly fire drills have been carried out in the service since the last inspection.

5.

Parts to replace the broken toilet seats have been sourced by the service. They will be replaced as soon as delivery is received.

Supporting documentation submitted

1.2.

A photo of the electronic thermostat now in use in the sleep room was received by the inspector.

3.

A report from a competent professional stating that the heating system and internal thermostats were reviewed in the service was received by the inspector.

4.

Copies of the recent fire drills carried out in the service since the inspection were received by the inspector.

5.

A copy of the of the order to replace broken toilet seats was received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is satisfactory to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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)

There was a person trained in first aid responder course immediately available to the children attending the preschool service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises which was available to the children attending the preschool 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 firefighting 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) There was a template in place in the service to record any fire drill in the service.

(b) There was a record available on file stating the firefighting equipment was last serviced in March 2024. The smoke alarm was last serviced in March 23.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance of the service.