

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY035
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Name of Service:	Creative Kids Pre-school & Childcare
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Address of Service:	Tiernaboul National School, Tiernaboul, Killarney, Co.Kerry.
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Eircode:	V93 D362
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Name of Registered Provider:	Donna Griffin
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Service type:	Part-time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	04/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	134 Bank Place, Mallow, Cork. P51 EC59
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Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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
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Description of service

Creative Kids Pre-school and Childcare is an early years service in operation since 2015, providing care and education to children on a part-time and sessional basis. The service is registered to take children aged from two years to six years of age and currently children attend aged from 2 years 8 months to 5 years. Opening times are from 9.00 am until 1.30 pm and the Early Years Care and (ECCE) scheme is accommodated between 9.00 am until 12 noon, 38 weeks of the year. A school age care service is in operation from 1.30 pm until 5.00 pm.

Creative Kids Pre-school and Childcare service operates from a classroom within Tiernaboul National School which is located in the rural area of Tiernaboul, 4 km outside Killarney. The service consists of a large classroom off which there is a kitchenette/storage room. Two children's toilets are located in a room enroute to the two secure outdoor play areas and the adult toilet is located within the main school.

Staffing

There are currently two staff members including the registered provider and an AIM (Access and Inclusion Model) Support Worker. A relief staff member was available, if required.

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/facilities. The inspections 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 registered provider, deputy, 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.

(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) The manager was the designated person in charge and a named person was available to deputise, both were available throughout the morning of the inspection.
- (b) The staff roster indicated that the designated person in charge and the deputy were available while the early years children were present in the service.
- (c) A clear management structure was available in the lobby of the service, detailing staff roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Recruitment records in regards to the two staff members and the relief staff member were reviewed.
- (a) (b) There were three validated references from past employers and three validated references from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were on file for the two staff members and the relief staff member.
- (d) An international police vetting disclosure was on file for one staff member who had lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer.
- (4) There was evidence that the two adults, who were working directly with the children, had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications. The relief worker had a letter of Eligibility to Practice from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

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, at all times, an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the service.

(3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was met. There were eleven sessional children, aged from two years eight months to five years of age, in attendance with one staff member and one AIM Support Worker in the morning and six children in attendance with two staff members until 1.30 pm.

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) All records of the fifteen children attending the early years service were reviewed. These were found to contain all of the particulars inclusive of (a)-(i).

(3)

(c) The records of all fifteen early years children in the service were furnished to the inspector for review.

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

BASIC NEEDS:

- The service operated a rolling snack with parents/guardians providing sufficient food for children staying on a part-time basis. The children were observed eating both indoors and outdoors throughout the morning and at lunch time. The food observed being consumed was both healthy and nutritious and included filled sandwiches and rolls, crackers, yogurt drinks, bite size pieces of fruit and vegetables.
- Drinking water was accessible at all times in line with the service's healthy eating policy. Each child had an individual drinking bottle from which they were observed drinking throughout the day.
- The children were observed accessing the toilet independently and adults were nearby to remind children to wash their hands after toileting.

- Handwashing was observed being carried before and after snack and when coming in from playing in the outdoors.
- Children were observed engaging in quiet play in the rest area, throughout the morning. The area consisted of four covered seats and two bookcases with age and stage appropriate books.
- Spare clothes were kept for each child should they require to be changed during the day.
- An individual inclusion plan was observed being implemented in line with one child's needs. A staff member sat with the child on the floor, on a one-to-one basis, working with the child completing a puzzle.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS:

- Staff were respectful and sensitive when a child had a toileting accident. The staff member used the opportunity for one-to-one interactions with the accident being treated in a matter of fact and supportive way.
- The atmosphere in the service was calm and relaxed with children appearing unhurried. Staff sat at tables and on the floor listening to the children's conversations using strategies to extend the children's thinking and learning including explaining, open questioning and modelling.
- Staff were available to support the children and provide encouragement to become more independent with managing tasks. Examples included a staff member sitting with a child who was trying to complete a puzzle, helping a child to collect scissors to cut open his yogurt drink and assisting with handwashing.
- The children were heard being reminded, by staff, on a number of occasions, to communicate their needs and wants to other children by using their words.
- Staff stated they work in partnership with parent's/guardians. The use of the child's records informed staff of information about the child's likes, dislikes, interests and family.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The care room was divided into clearly defined areas providing play opportunities to enhance the learning needs, of all children, across all developmental areas.
- Equipment and toys were clearly organised, labelled and easily accessible from low-level shelving and drawers positioned at the children's height.
- Children availed of natural materials outdoors to create their learning such as using a puddle in which to play a magnetic fishing game with toy ducks. The children were heard singing 5 little ducks unprompted.

- Both the indoor and outdoor environments offered opportunities for fine and gross motor skills. Examples included the children threading spools at a table indoors and children outdoors having access to balance bikes, cars and scooters.
- The outdoor environment offered alternative play environments with the children having access to two separate secure areas, adjoining each other, one of which had a covered area facilitating outdoor play in all weathers. In the covered area picnic tables and chairs were available for the children to have their snack/lunch. A range of developmentally appropriate equipment including construction, sand, mark making materials and imaginary play resources, including a large mud kitchen with a wide range of pots and pans, were readily accessible.
- In addition, in the second outdoor play area, opportunities were available for children to initiate and design their own play opportunities from the layout out of the environment and materials. Examples included a large collection of growing willows which offered endless imaginary play opportunities and a large stone pit in which one child was happily digging a big hole using a long-handled spade.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES:

- There was an emphasis placed on children's language and literacy which was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling. A staff member was heard reading "Little Raindrops" and a discussion ensued with the children answering questions about the natural water cycle and how rain is formed. In a second activity, during circle time, the children each had the opportunity to take a symbol from a bag which represented a song, one child chose a bus and the children were heard singing "the wheels on the bus".

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:

- Entry to the service was available at the main entrance to the school. There was a buzzer and keypad specifically for the service, which was answered by the registered provider, ensuring unauthorised adults could not gain entry.
- Both internal doors were secured to prevent the children leaving the service unsupervised.
- The six large window openings in the care room were located high up on the walls, out of the children's reach, preventing children from exiting or falling.
- The indoor and outdoor toys and equipment appeared in good condition.
- Cupboards and furniture were secured with brackets to prevent them tipping or falling on the children.
- The kitchen area was made inaccessible to the children by way of a wooden gate with a bolt on the opposite side to the children.

Infection Control:

- All sinks in use in the service were fitted with thermostatically controlled hot water (ranging from 35°C to 39.2°C), dispensing soap, paper roll, and a pedal operated bin for the disposal of waste.
- Staff stated two different mops were in use, one for the care room and one for the toilet, helping to prevent cross infection.
- Completed cleaning schedules with specific areas for cleaning in the classroom, sanitary areas and outdoors were found to be up to date.
- Children were observed using tissues and placing them in the nearby pedal operated bin.
- Children took off their outdoor boots before entering the care room preventing the spread of infection.

Administration of Medication:

- Anti-febrile medications were available for individual children, stored in original containers, and secured in a locked box in the kitchenette.
- The last written records recording the administration of medication were completed in 2018.

Safe Sleep:

- A comfortable rest area was available for the children, if required.

Fire Safety:

- All fire/emergency doors were unobstructed.
- There were two visible fire assembly points, one located at the back of the outdoor play area and one in the school yard, both were a suitable distance from the service.

Outing:

- The service stated that they did not go on outings.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- (1) Trailing flexes from the tall lava lamp, cd player and the printer were loose, posing safety hazards should the children accidentally pull on them or catch their clothing causing the items to tip or fall on the children.

Infection Control:

- (2) The outdoor bin for tissues was not pedal operated, posing a risk from cross infection from children coming in to contact with used tissues at the top of the bin.
- (3) An air vent, located on the ceiling of the children's toilet, was filled with dust, preventing the circulation of fresh air.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statements were received from the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- (1) The trailing flexes from the cd player and the printer have been secured and the lava lamp has been repositioned. In future, all flexes will be secured to ensure the safety of the children.

Infection Control:

- (2) A new pedal bin has been purchased for the disposal of tissues and waste.
- (3) The air vent was cleaned and is now free from dust. The vents will be cleaned on a regular basis

The following photographic evidence was received in the office of the inspectorate:

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- (1) The flexes from the cd player and the printer secured and the lava lamp repositioned.

Infection Control:

- (2) The new pedal operated bin with lining and a secure lid.
- (3) The clean air vent free from dust.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances under Regulation 23 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) Certificates were on file to evidence that both the registered provider and the deputy were trained as First Aid Responders (FAR). Both adults were available while the children were present in the service.
- (2)
- (a) (b) The well-equipped first aid box was readily available at all times and was located on a shelf, at the back door, easily accessible to the adults

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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 the monthly fire drills that took place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on 26 September 2023.
 - (b) Written records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the service. The firefighting equipment certificate was dated 29 March 2023 and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 28 August 2023.
- (2)
- (c) The above records were open to inspection by the inspector on the day.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was located on the notice board at the back door of the service on the way out to the outdoor play areas.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was insured. A written record was available with the expiry date recorded as 27 March 2024. The service was insured for 22 part-time early years children. Information included details such as including public liability, outings, fire brigade and employer's liability. In addition, the service provider had separate motor insurance for dropping children to the childminder when the service had finished.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required*

Compliance Information

- (a) The service appeared to be of sound and stable structure.
- (b) All doors, inside and outside the service, were appropriately secured and the perimeter of the outdoor play areas was secured with wooden fencing.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) An open attic door was positioned precariously above one of the children's toilet cubicles, posing a safety risk should it fall on a child. In conversation, the registered provider stated that a tradesperson had been in carrying out a repair and had left it open.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) The attic door has been secured in place and will not be left opened while the children are in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) A photograph of the closed and secured attic door was received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance under Regulation 29 has been addressed.