

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY055
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Name of Service:	Cromane Community Childcare Centre
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Address of Service:	Cromane Upper, Cromane, Killorglin, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V93 NV29
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Name of Registered Provider:	Aoife Benton
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	08/05/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	21
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy
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	N/A
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Description of service

Cromane Community Childcare Centre & Creche is a community based service that provides full day care, part-time and sessional care, catering for children between the age of 1 to 6 years. The service operates between the hours of 8:00 am and 6:00 pm Monday to Friday inclusive, incorporating the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme between the hours of 9:00 am and 12 mid-day. The premise is a single storey purpose-built building with 2 care rooms namely the sunshine rainbow room and the sunshine room. There is a designated fully enclosed outdoor play area located to the rear of the premise

Staffing

Currently, there are 14 adults employed by the service, 12 of whom work with the children who attend. The registered provider is not service based and an administration officer is not involved in the direct care of the children. Each of the 12 adults who are employed to work directly with the children have attained a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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.

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, 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) The registered provider had ensured that both a designated person in charge and a deputy person in charge was assigned to the setting.
- (b) When the unannounced inspection commenced, the person in charge and the deputy were on duty at the service. The person in charge remained available to assist with the inspection process.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to each of the fourteen adults attached to the service were inspected.
- (a) Twenty-four references were from previous employers with records of validation were on file.
- (b) Two references were from sources other than previous employers with records of validation on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for fourteen adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Police vetting was available in respect of four of the adults, who had lived outside the jurisdiction.
- (4) Thirteen of the staff members had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), with copies of the relevant qualifications maintained on file. Qualifications were not required in respect of the registered provider who was not working with the children in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a)(b)
- Two adults did not have a second written validated reference on file.
- (d)
- Police vetting was not on file for one adult who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(a) & (b) The staff have provided the written references; they have been verbally validated. All new staff will be asked to provide written references at interview which will be validated before commencement of employment as outlined in the updated recruitment policy.

(d) Police Vetting was obtained and stored in the staff files. The staff files will be reviewed every 6 months. New staff will be asked to obtain and provide management with international Police vetting before commencement of employment as stated in the updated recruitment policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

(a) & (b) Two written references with a record of validation for each one.

(d) Police Vetting in respect in of the one adult.

Summary Comment

The requirement 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) The registered provider did ensure that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times.
- (2) There were 2 playrooms in operation on the day of the inspection.

Rainbow room

There 4 adults caring for 15 children aged between 1 year and 3 years, attending on a part time and on a full day care basis.

Sunshine room

There were 4 adults caring for 19 children aged between 3 and 6 years, 3 children attending on a sessional basis and 17 children attending on a part-time and on a full day care basis.

The adult child ratio was correct.

- (8)(a) The registered provider did ensure that 2 adults are on the premises during the hours of operation.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

Compliance Information

(1) A record was kept in relation to the following in the service:

(h) details of attendance by each of the pre-school children on a daily basis.

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

- The adults caring for the children were observed to be kind and caring towards the children. They were responsive to the children's individual needs and they acknowledged the children for their efforts and comforted and re-assured them when upset.
- The children had access to drinking water during the day should they become thirsty. The individual drinks bottles were accessible in the playrooms on low level shelving.
- Nappy changing was carried out in a timely manner as was required. The inspector observed children's privacy and dignity was respected during nappy changing and toileting with the staff members conversing with the children.
- Children were observed to have unrestricted access to the toilet with the adults on hand to supervise.
- The playrooms were bright, spacious and colourfully decorated with some artwork the children had completed.
- The layout of the playrooms afforded children sufficient space to move about freely and independently explore the range of toys and play materials that were available and accessible on the open shelving.
- The children were observed playing for long periods in the designated outdoor play areas provided. The area had been further developed since the last inspection.

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-

(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)

(b) Comfortable rest areas were available in each playroom consisting of couches, cushions and soft matting. The children attending the service under the age of 2 years were provided with standard cots for sleep. The designated sleep room was located in the rainbow room, a total of 3 cots, each of which was fitted with a waterproof safety mattress. A supply of clean dry linen for the cots was provided.

Stackable beds were provided to meet the sleep requirements of children aged over 2 years with suitable linen.

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 external door was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the building unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premise.
- The outdoor play area was secured with fencing and walls and secure gates.

Infection Control:

- Adequate handwashing facilities that included warm running water, liquid hand soap, paper hand towels and pedal operated lidded bins were accessible at the wash hand basins in the service.
- The children washed their hands after using the toilet and prior to mealtimes for example with the staff assisting the younger children.
- The nappy changing units, their surrounds and mats were observed to be clean and dry. The areas and mats were sanitised down after each use.

- For nappy changing the staff wore single-use disposable gloves, single use disposable aprons which were removed after each use. The staff washed their hands and assisted the children to wash their hands afterwards.
- A fridge was provided in each of the care rooms for the storage of children’s perishable food items.

Safe Sleep:

- Regular physical sleep checks of sleeping children in the designated sleep room with 4 standard cots were conducted. The records were noted to include the children’s position, breathing pattern and skin colour and the room temperature.
- The older children observed resting on the low-level stackable beds in the rainbow room had one adult caring for them whilst resting. The area of the playroom where the beds were positioned had the lighting turned off and the curtains closed to create a restful environment.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting disclosures were available for fourteen adults. However, six Garda vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice ‘EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting’.
2. The corner of the low-level black shelving unit in the sunshine room was sharp and posed a risk of injury to the children should they come in contact with it.
3. There was an unsecured ventilation unit located in the sunshine room posing a risk of children catching their fingers in the grid on top of the unit causing injury and the unsecured cable attached to the unit posing a risk of strangulation.
4. Within the sleep room there was an open plastic bag of play items stored directly on the floor posing a risk of suffocation to children.
5. In the sanitary accommodation serving the rainbow room there were bottles of sunscreens, bottles of antibacterial sprays and open plastic bags of nappies accessible to the children posing an injury to children.
6. Within the rainbow room there was there was a blister pack of throat lozenges and a phone cable charger accessible to the children on a low-level shelf posing a risk of injury.
- 7.. The steering wheel of an outdoor tractor in use on the day of the inspection was broken with sharp edges posing a risk of injury to the children.

Infection Control:

8. The floor brush and floor cleaner were stored behind the door in the sanitary accommodation serving the sunshine room posing a risk of cross infection.

Fire Safety:

9.. The maintenance certification on file for the smoke alarm demonstrated that it was last serviced on 01/04/2022. It was acknowledged the inspector was furnished with an email detailing the call booked for the service week beginning 13/05/2024. The certification in respect of the service for the smoke alarm completed on 13/5/'24 was submitted to the early years inspector.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The garda vetting was updated for the employees. Staff files will be reviewed every six months.
2. The unit was removed from the room. Safety risk assessments of the care rooms and equipment will be conducted each month by the room leaders.
3. The ventilation unit has been removed from the room until a secure guard has been purchased.
4. All unnecessary items have been removed from the sleep room. The sleep room will no longer be used to store un-necessary items and the staff have been made aware of this. Safety checks for the sleep room will be conducted.
5. Within the sanitary accommodation the bottles of sunscreen are stored up high out of the reach of the children, hooks are in place to hang anti-bacterial spray out of the reach of the children. The cupboard has been fixed and all the plastic bags of nappies are now stored in the closed locked unit.
6. All staff are aware that personal items must be stored outside of the care rooms and not accessible to the children.
7. The tractor has been disposed of. Safety risk assessments of the care rooms and the equipment will be conducted on a monthly basis by the room leaders. Broken materials will be disposed of.

Infection Control:

8. The floor brushes are stored in the care room on a wall hook. Staff are aware that brushes and mops will not be stored in the sanitary accommodation.

Fire Safety:

9. The certification in respect of the service for the smoke alarm completed on 13/5/'24 was submitted to the early year's inspectorate.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Processed Garda vetting for each of the six adults was received.
2. A photograph of the room demonstrating the unit was removed.
3. A photograph of the room demonstrating the ventilation unit was removed.
4. A photograph of the sleep room floor without the open plastic bag of play items.
5. Photographs demonstrating the storage of the bottles of sunscreen in a high-level press, the antibacterial sprays on a high-level hook and the low-level cupboard with a secure child lock in place where the plastic bags of nappies are stored.
6. The statement is accepted as evidence.
7. The statement is accepted as evidence.

Infection Control:

8. The statement is accepted as evidence.

Fire Safety:

9. Certification in respect of the maintenance of the smoke alarm carried out on 13/5/'24.

Summary Comment

The requirement has been met.

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 Inspector was informed of the adults working directly with the children who had current First Aid Responder (FAR) training and the certifications were furnished to the inspector.

(2)

- (a) Each playroom had a first aid bag stored in a secure high-level location.
- (b) The first aid bags were accessible to the adults and out of the reach of the children

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) The service had maintained in writing a record of the following: -
- (a) A template to record each fire drill that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 12/04/2024 for the children attending the sunshine room and on 23/04/2024 for children attending the rainbow room.
 - (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance checks of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm. The records on file demonstrated the last check for the smoke alarm was 01/04/2022 and the firefighting equipment was 16.01.2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the service

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certification for the service was furnished to the inspector.

The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- the contact details for the insurance provider
- the name and address of the service insured.
- the category of insurance cover for the service, that is full day care.
- the number of children covered by the insurance was for 38 children.
- The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27/03/'25.