

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY080				
Name of Service:	Maureen's Childcare Centre				
Address of Service:	48A Casement Avenue, Upper Rock Street, Tralee, Co. Kerry				
Eircode:	V92 EH39				
Name of Registered Provider:	Susan Quirke Crowley				
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	17/06/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>17</td> <td>PM</td> <td>None</td> </tr> </table>	AM	17	PM	None
AM	17	PM	None		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Aras 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

Maureen's Childcare Centre is an early years service that is registered to provide part-time and sessional care for children aged between 2 years and 6 years. The service is currently operating between the hours of 08.30am and 13:30 pm. The premise consists of 2 playrooms namely the Rose and the Casa De Bambini rooms located within a single-story purpose-built facility. The children's sanitary accommodation is located outside the playrooms, with an office and adjoining adult sanitary accommodation, designated enclosed outdoor play areas available and accessible each day to the children attending.

Staffing

There were 8 adults attached to the service, 5 of whom can work directly with the children including 1 adult who works with the children and is the Designated Parent Liaison Officer. The registered provider does not work with directly with the children in the service and the other 2 adults are attached to another registered early years service in operation by the registered provider.

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 a designated person in charge and there was a named deputy to deputise as required.
- (b) When the announced inspection commenced, the designated person in charge and the deputy were on duty to assist with the inspection process. The designated person in charge of a second registered early years service arrived to the service at 10:10 am and remained on the premise for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) Since the previous inspection on 09 January 2023, it was established that two adults had commenced working in the service. Therefore, the recruitment records in respect of these two adults were assessed.
- (a) There were three validated written references on file from past employers.
- (b) There was one validated written reference on file from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting had been obtained for the two adults. It was also noted that Garda vetting which had expired since the previous inspection had been renewed in respect of six adults. This was in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was on file for one adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 months.
- (4) The eight adults attached to the service had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or a qualification as deemed by the Minister with copies of the relevant qualifications on file.

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 was an adequate number of staff working with the children at all times on the day of the inspection.

(2) There were 6 adults working with 17 children aged between 2 years 10 months and 4 years attending on a part-time basis.

The minimum number of adults was maintained on the day of the inspection.

(8) (a) The registered provider did ensure that a minimum of 2 adults are on the premises at all times while the service is in operation.

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

(1)(a)

BASIC NEEDS

- The service promoted healthy eating and the food served on inspection at the two mealtimes observed was provided by the parents and guardians.
- The children had access to their water bottles on shelving accessible to them with water stations equipped with dispensers full of water and cups in both playrooms.
- The adults were observed speaking with the children during the two mealtimes observed, using the mealtimes as an opportunity to enhance and promote social interaction with the children.
- The mealtimes were unhurried, children who had finished before others went to play with their toys of choice.
- The children's toileting needs were observed to be attended to promptly. The adults accompanied the children to the toilets located outside the playrooms. Independent toileting by the children was encouraged and the adults were observed to assist the children when required with hand washing and hand drying.
- Nappy changing was carried out during the session in a prompt and sensitive manner. The adults were observed speaking freely to the children putting them at ease during nappy changing.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

- On inspection the children enjoyed the blended indoor and outdoor play opportunities for work and play.
- The playrooms were laid out in clearly defined areas with materials and resources that enhanced the development needs of the children.
- The children moved freely between the two playrooms: the adjoining door between the two rooms remained open at all times.
- The toys and play resources were positioned on the floor and on open low-level shelving to allow choice and to encourage the children to independently access them.

- The children had the room to move freely and explore each area within the playrooms.
- The walls were beautifully decorated with the children's artwork, family photographs, photographs from the Community Garda's visit to the centre and themed related activities that included summer flowers.
- The outdoor area used on inspection was the all-weather classroom and the planting areas. The children had access to building blocks, playing basketball with the basketball stand provided, water play, a selection of small vehicles.
- The children were participating in watering the planting boxed with the small watering cans and colouring a large cardboard card for a staff members birthday.

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 doors were secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access in.
- The kitchenette was secured to prevent children accessing it.

Infection Control:

- Children were observed washing their hands after returning from playing outdoors and after using the toilet with the staff members on hand to provide assistance as needed.
- The nappy changing unit, mat and its surrounds were clean and dry.
- The nappy changing unit and mat was cleaned down with antibacterial spray after each nappy change.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The nappy changing practices observed on inspection were inconsistent and at variance with the nappy changing policy in place in the service and posed a risk of cross contamination as follows;
 - The staff returned children to the playroom whilst wearing the used gloves and plastic touching the door handles on the way.
 - The plastic aprons were not changed for each individual nappy change.
 - Not all children's hands were washed after nappy changing was carried out.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The Nappy Changing Policy and Procedure has been updated as part of the service annual review. Staff re-training and revision has been completed with all the team members. This has been signed off to ensure that all steps are followed at each nappy change at all times including inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

The updated Nappy Changing and Policy.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation 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) It was evident from the staff rota that there were five staff members trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) and one staff member with Paediatric First Aid available on the premises at all times.

(2)(a) First aid kits were stored up high, out of reach of children and clearly identifiable in each of the care rooms and in the kitchenette.

(b) The first aid kits were suitably stocked for the number of children attending the service. These were available for staff to attend to the children if required.

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 03.06.'25.
 - (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 16.10.'24 and for the firefighting equipment was 16.10.'24.
 - (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the service.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

- A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated
 - (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and
 - (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

- (c)
- There was adequate and suitable lighting provided artificially with the covered light fittings in place and natural lighting via the windows.
 - There was an adequate means of air circulation provided via the openable windows. The windows were open on inspection.
 - The air temperature of the playroom and the sanitary accommodation was recorded between 18.4 and 20 degrees Celsius.

- (d) The premise appeared clean. There was a routine cleaning schedule in place.
- (e) There were 3 toilets, 1 nappy changing unit provided and 3 wash hand basins and a low-level wash hand basin in the Rose room, the adult toilet and wash hand basin located in the office. There was a supply of warm water at each of the wash hand basins. The temperature of the warm water at each of the wash hand basins was recorded between the range of 36.2 and 36.6 degrees Celsius. A supply of liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels were provided at the wash hand basins.