

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY082				
Name of Service:	Dingle Childcare Services Limited T/A Mol an Óige				
Address of Service:	Aiseanna na hOige, Ard na Greine, Dingle, Co. Kerry				
Eircode:	V92 DT44				
Name of Registered Provider:	Gemma Durrant				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	17/02/2026				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>31</td> <td>PM</td> <td>24</td> </tr> </table>	AM	31	PM	24
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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

Dingle Childcare Services Limited is a private early years service that provides full day care, part-time and sessional care, catering for children between the age of 0 to 6 years and school aged care. The service currently caters for children between the age of 1 and 6 years. The service operates between the hours of 8.00 am and 5.30 pm Monday to Friday inclusive. The premise is a single storey purpose built childcare facility. There are 3 playrooms in operation, namely the Toddler, Small ECCE and the Large ECCE rooms. The children's sanitary accommodation is located outside each of the playrooms. There are designated outdoor play areas provided for the children attending.

Staffing

There are currently 13 adults attached to the early years service, this includes the registered provider who does not work in the service, and a student on placement. There were 2 adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. Each of the 10 adults 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. 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 has a designated person in charge and there is a named staff member to deputise in her absence as required.
 - (b) When the announced inspection commenced, the person in charge and the deputy were on duty to facilitate with the inspection process.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that of the 13 adults, 5 new adults that included 1 student on placement had been employed since the previous inspection. A total of 5 files were reviewed.
- In addition, Garda vetting for 4 adults whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

- (a) Of the ten references required, there were ten references from previous employers with records of validation on file.
- (b) Not applicable as the ten validated references required were from past employers
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 5 new adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in regard to the 4 staff who required it.
- (d) Police vetting was on file for 2 adults who required it having lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer of 6 consecutive months.
- (4) All staff working directly with the children had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

1. Police vetting was not on file in respect of 2 adults who required it.
2. The translated Police vetting on file for 1 adult was not transcribed by a certified translator.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The Police vetting's in question have been requested. There is now an in dept checklist in place for new staff members.
2. The Police vetting was carried out by a certified translator.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. The required Police vetting for 1 adult. A written statement in respect of the Police vetting application for the second adult.
2. The Police vetting required from a certified translator was received.

Summary Comment

The requirement for the regulation has been partially met.

Evidence of one application for international police vetting was reviewed; however, a copy of the completed International Police vetting has not been submitted for the one staff member to the inspector to date. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt. The noncompliance in relation to regulation 9(2)(d) remains outstanding.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies, procedures and statements were reviewed and contained all necessary information.

- Behaviour Management Policy

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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The minimum ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day.

The required adult to child ratios were observed in each of the care rooms as follows:

Toddler room

There were 3 staff caring for 7 children aged between 1 and 3 years attending on a part-time and full day care basis. In addition, there was 1 student on a work placement who was not counted in the adult child ratios.

Small ECCE room

There were 3 staff caring for 11 children aged between 2 years and 3 years, 2 children were attending on a sessional basis, and 9 children were attending on a part-time and full day care basis.

Large ECCE Room

There were 4 staff caring for 13 children aged between 3 years and 5 years attending on a part-time and full day care basis.

(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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service was recorded.

Sample records were inspected from each of the 3 playrooms. All the records examined were signed and dated.

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

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs: -

- During the course of the inspection, the snack times observed were relaxed and staff sat and spoke with the children.
- There was a variety of high-level string lighting and battery-operated candles in place in the playrooms, used at the mealtimes for example when the main lighting reduced, observed to provide a relaxed and calm environment to eat.
- There was a selection of crackers, yogurts and fruit served at snack time.
- The staff offered pancakes and a selection of chopped fruit in addition to the food provided for the snack time.
- The staff stated the children had made the pancakes in the centre earlier that day for "pancake Tuesday".
- The children had access to their drink's bottles throughout the day.
- In addition to their drink's bottles, the children in the Large ECCE room had a jug of water and cups accessible to them throughout the session.
- The children had access to cosy /rest areas in each of the playrooms which consisted of soft seating, soft matting and cushions. The children were observed using the areas during the inspection.
- The staff members encouraged the children in developing their independence skills as evidenced in putting on their coats and hats before going to the outdoor area and using the toilets located outside the care rooms with a staff member supervising them.

- The staff responded without delay to children's cues to use the toilet as evidenced on inspection.
- The playrooms were laid out to allow for children to move about freely and choose the activities they wished to play with.
- The walls of the care rooms were colourfully decorated with a variety of St. Valentine's decorations and children's artwork and family photographs for example.
- Outdoor play time was observed when children from the small ECCE room played in the outdoor play area located at the front of the building.
- The area had a soft matting surface enclosed with secure fencing and gate.
- The children were observed playing with balls and using ride on toys for example.

Supporting Relationships:

- The staff provide a daily account for the younger children's time spent in the service each day via electronically. It includes for example, food eaten, nappy changes and sleep times for example.
- The service worked in partnership with the parents and supporting agencies and had individual care plans and observation tools in place for children care needs.
- The staff caring for the children during the inspection were kind and caring. They spoke to the children in a calm and relaxed tone of voice.
- The staff issued gentle reminders, coming down to the children's level, to take turns and share when using the ride on toys in the outdoor area.

(3)

On the day of the inspection the inspector did not observe any practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful towards the children in the service. In conversation with the staff, they demonstrated an awareness of the practices in the service that were prohibited and positive behaviour management strategies that they used in practice.

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 to the building were secured. Entry for visitors was by means of a buzzer system, linked into each of the playrooms.
- The cleaning agents seen on inspection were stored out of the reach of the children, on high level shelving.
- The medication observed in the large ECCE room was stored in a secured high level medicine press.

Infection Control:

- There was warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels at the sinks to promote effective handwashing by the adults and the children to reduce the risk of cross infection.
- There was a supply of single use disposable gloves, single use plastic aprons and a sealed, lined, pedal operated lidded bin for the hygienic disposal of used nappies.
- The staff stated the nappy bin is emptied twice daily and in between as is required as was observed on inspection.
- The opened windows, mechanical ventilation and air purifiers provided ventilation in the playrooms, sanitary accommodation and in the sleep rooms.
- In conversation with staff regarding the nappy changing procedure, they wash their hands before and after changing nappies. They wear single use plastic gloves and aprons whilst talking to the children and assisting with washing the children's hands afterwards.
- The nappy changing vinyl mat, the changing units and the surrounds in the designated nappy changing room were observed to be in a clean condition.
- The children's individually barrier creams were stored on a high-level shelf out of the reach of the children in the nappy changing room.
- The staff stated each child had an adequate supply of toiletries including nappies and wipes as observed on the shelving in the nappy changing room.
- The staff had a system in place for re-plenishing the children's nappies, barrier creams and wipes when required. A written label stated that nappies, wipes, barrier creams were running low, this was attached to the children's bags when leaving the service as well as verbally informing the parent/guardian.

Safe Sleep:

- The staff stated that children sleeping were physically checked every 10 mins, a record of the position, colour and breathing was recorded in an allocated sleep record book and electronically for the parents as evidenced on inspection.
- During the course of the inspection the sleep room number 1 was used, with the children put to sleep in the standard cots.
- The children's names, sleep times and preferences for soothers were displayed above each of the cots in both sleep rooms.
- The staff stated each of the sleep rooms are aired each day prior to use, as evidenced on inspection with the opened windows, a fan and air purifier in both rooms.
- The air temperature of the sleep room 1 was recorded at 19.1 degrees Celsius.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The cot sheets observed in place and some of the sheets on the floor beds were too large for the mattresses posing a risk of suffocation. It was acknowledged once it was brought to the attention of the staff, all the sheets were replaced with correct fitting sheets prior to any child went down to sleep.
2. The children's wipes were stored on low level open shelving in the nappy changing room posing a risk of injury to children should they gain unsupervised access to the room.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The cot sheets have been discarded and new ones purchased. Two separate baskets were purchased to store the sheet sizes apart.
2. All the children's wipes for each room have been placed in boxes and are stored up high and out of the reach of the children.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. The statement is accepted as evidence.
2. A photograph of the labelled boxes with children's wipes on high level shelving.

Summary Comment

The requirement for the 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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- The in-date certifications for First Aid Responder (FAR) training were furnished to the inspector to evidence that 5 adults attached to the service had completed (FAR) training. There was an adult available at all times during the opening times in the service.
 - The person in charge informed the inspector, she is waiting for a date for some adults to complete refresher FAR and some to complete FAR training.

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

It was evident throughout the day of inspection that children are supervised at all times, this was observed by staff engaging in supervision by sight and sound.

The adults supported children when required as observed on inspection, in the indoor area and in the area outdoors used by the children attending the small ECCE room.