

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY088				
Name of Service:	Milltown Childcare Centre				
Address of Service:	Lyre Road, Milltown, Killarney, Co. Kerry				
Eircode:	V93 A335				
Name of Registered Provider:	Robert Coffey				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	25/07/2024				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>31</td> <td>PM</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </table>	AM	31	PM	27
AM	31	PM	27		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square, Mallow, Cork. P51 DD5Y				
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel				
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

Milltown Childcare Centre is a community-based early years care and education service in operation since 2003, providing full day, part-time and sessional services. The hours of operation are from 7.30 am until 6.00 pm, and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated from 9.00 am until 12 noon. The service accommodates children aged between 0 and 6 years of age and is opened 51 weeks of the year. A school age service is available between the hours of 1.40 pm and 6.00 pm.

Milltown Childcare Centre is located in the rural village of Milltown in County Kerry. The service operates from a purpose-built two storey building consisting of three care rooms located on the ground floor; Creche, Toddlers and Junior Pre-school along with an office and three sleep rooms. The first floor consists of two care rooms; Senior Pre-school one and Senior Pre-school two along with a sensory room. There are sufficient adult and child sanitary areas available along with nappy changing areas. The service has its own kitchen where the children's meals and snacks are prepared daily. The staff room is located on the grounds, at the front of the service, in a portacabin. There are separate outdoor play areas on the ground floor accessible from each of the care rooms and parking is located at the front of the service.

Staffing

There are thirty-one staff employed by the service, seventeen of whom were working on the day of inspection including three school age care staff, one cook and one office administrator. The registered provider was not service based.

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 and safety. The inspection 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, deputy, 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
- (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 registered provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge, deputy and named persons available on the premises. A named person was available when the inspector arrived and the designated person in charge arrived shortly afterwards, as stated on the staff roster.
 - (b) The staff roster indicated that either the designated person in charge, deputy and/or named persons were on the premises while the early years children were present in the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service. The inspector observed that staff were aware of the supervisors and room leaders in their respective care rooms.

- (2) Recruitment files for the thirty-one staff and the registered provider were reviewed;
- (a)(b) There were fifty-three validated references from previous employers and eleven validated references from sources other than previous employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all thirty-two adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Four adults, for whom international police vetting disclosures were required, as they had lived outside of the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer, had international police disclosures on file.
- (4) There was evidence that twenty adults working directly with the children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent. Four adults who did not have the required qualification had letters of eligibility to practice from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth Affairs and the remaining eight adults did not require childcare qualifications.

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 all times, during the inspection, the registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (2) There were three care rooms in operation on the day of inspection with minimum adult/child ratios

Crèche Room (12 months – 2 years 6 months)

There were nine full day care children and one part-time child in attendance with four adults in the morning and ten children with three adults in the afternoon.

Toddler Room (2 years – 3 years)

There were seven full day care children and two part-time children in attendance with two adults in the morning and seven children with two adults in the afternoon.

Junior and Senior Pre-school Room (3 years – 5 years)

There were ten full day care and two part-time sessional children in attendance with four adults in the morning and ten children with two adults in the afternoon.

(8) a) Viewing of the staff roster confirmed that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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) A sample of twelve children's records were reviewed on the day of inspection. All were found to contain the necessary particulars (a) to (i) above.

(3)

(c) The registered provider ensured that the children's records were available to view in the service by the inspector.

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.

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

- Appropriate cutlery and crockery were available for the various ages and stages of development of the children in each of the care rooms. Children in the Crèche care room were observed being assisted to eat with spoons while children in the Junior/Senior Pre-school care room had access to forks and plates.
- Water was observed to be available at all times in each care room from jugs of water with individual cups.
- Nappy changing was observed being carried out regularly in the Crèche care room with staff availing of the opportunity for positive one to one interactions with the children.
- Children in the Junior/Senior Pre-school care room were observed accessing the toilet area independently with staff available to provide assistance, if required.
- Children in all care rooms were observed to have room to explore and move both in the indoor and outdoor play areas.
- The inspector observed individual sun hats and sun cream available in baskets in the care rooms for each child.
- Children's self-help skills were encouraged with children in the Junior/Senior Pre-school room observed pouring water from an urn by themselves and putting on their jackets for outdoor play.

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-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (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)
- (a) The Crèche, Toddler, Junior/Senior care rooms and outdoor play areas were equipped with developmentally appropriate play materials and toys. Each care room on the ground floor had direct access to a well developed outdoor play area and all children were observed playing in the outdoor play areas throughout the day.
- (b) There were suitable rest facilities on the premises for all of the children. On the day of inspection there were three sleep rooms in operation namely; sleep rooms one and two located within the Crèche care room and a separate sleep room on the ground floor. This room facilitated children from both the Crèche and Toddler care rooms for a sleep after lunch. In total there were six cots, two each in sleep rooms one and two and two in the ground floor sleep room. Each cot was placed 50cms apart and was fitted with a waterproof mattress.
- Ambient lighting was noted in each sleep room and the sleep room temperatures were recorded as 20°C, within the recommended limit. Viewing windows were available in the Crèche sleep rooms.
 - In the ground floor sleep room; there were seven children resting/sleeping on stackable beds, two members of staff were present in the room. A blanket was available for each bed.
 - Each room had a rest/quiet area, with age and stage appropriate soft furnishings, where the children could sit away from noisy activities.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service promoted healthy eating, with food and snacks observed to be prepared by a cook in the service kitchen.

- The food observed being served regularly throughout the day looked healthy and nutritious. Staff stated breakfast, consisting of a variety of cereals, toast, water and milk, is available from 7.30 am until 9.00am.
- Mid-morning snack was observed in the Crèche care room from 10.00 am onwards where children were observed eating brown bread and butter, a selection of fruit cut into bite sized pieces, and cheese.
- Lunch was served at 11.45 am in the Toddler care room and was noted to consist of mashed potato, ham, corn and peas. Children were offered additional portions when they had finished their main meal, if requested. Staff stated that afternoon snack is available from 3.00 pm onwards.
- Children’s milk bottles in the Crèche care room were observed to be stored in the fridge.
- A weekly menu plan was available for the inspector to view.

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 main entrance door to the service was secured upon arrival. It was operated with buzzers for each care room which were observed to be answered by a staff member, preventing unauthorised adults from entering the building.
- Windows were fitted with restrictors to prevent children from exiting from them.
- Blind cords in the sleep rooms were secured and not accessible to the children.
- The staircase was fitted with two children’s railings and adult handrails enabling the children to walk safely down the stairs.

- Lighting for the staircase was provided both naturally, from the six sky light windows on the roof, and from artificial lighting on the ceiling, ensuring clear visibility at all times.
- The stair floor covering was non-slip and in good condition.
- Indoor and outdoor toys were observed to be in good condition and well maintained.
- Storage cupboards were secured with child proof catches.
- Cleaning agents were stored on high shelving, out of the reach of the children.
- The outdoor perimeter of the play areas was secured with high metal fencing and each individual area was secured with metal and wooden fencing and gates with sliding bolts. New fencing had been erected in the area since the last inspection.

Infection Control:

- Adults and children in each care room had access to thermostatically controlled hot water, dispensing soap and foam, paper towels from a dispenser, and pedal operated bins to dispose of paper waste.
- Handwashing was observed before the serving of food, after toileting and outdoor play.
- Cleaning checklists in the care rooms and sanitary areas were completed and noted to be up to date.
- Staff in the Crèche nappy changing area were observed wearing disposable gloves and aprons between each nappy change and sanitising the mat and changing station after use.
- Windows in all of the care rooms were open facilitating the circulation of fresh air.
- Sweeping brushes and dustpans were stored off the floor areas, inaccessible by the children.
- Children's milk was stored in the fridge in the Crèche care room, preventing the milk from spoiling.
- A sterilising unit was observed in use in the Crèche care room for the effective cleaning of used soothers.
- All cleaning schedules were noted to be completed and up to date.
- Staff were observed sweeping the floors and disinfecting the tables after use, keeping the areas safe and hygienic for use.
- Children's coats were stored on hooks, off the floor area.

Administration of Medication:

- Anti-febrile medication, stored out of reach and in their original containers, was available in the service.

Safe Sleep:

- Adequate sleep and rest areas were provided for each care room.
- Physical sleep checks were observed to be carried out in each sleep room and were furnished to the inspector to view. These demonstrated that staff were monitoring the position, colour and breathing of each child every ten minutes and also included the temperatures of each sleep room.

Fire Safety:

- All emergency fire exit doors were unobstructed.
- The fire assembly points were clearly visible in the outdoor car park area, a suitable distance from the service.
- Fire extinguishers were secured with brackets on the walls of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. An adult sized doll's house in use in the Junior/Senior care room was not anchored to the wall, posing a safety risk from it tipping or falling onto a child.
2. Two water butts, which collect water from the runways on the roof of the covered outdoor play areas, were in use in the outdoor play by the children, posing a risk from contaminants.

Infection Control:

3. Children's personal belongings in the Toddler changing area were stored in open areas near the sanitary area, posing a risk of cross contamination.
4. A mechanical vent in the Toddler changing area was noted to be covered in dust impeding the removal of stale air and the circulation of fresh air.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The doll's house in the Junior/Senior care room has been removed. Should it be requested for use in the future it will be secured.
2. Staff have been made aware of the restrictions of use of the water coming from the water butts. Pictures have been added to the butts to ensure that everyone is aware that water is not to be used with the children.

Infection Control:

3. All personal belongings have been removed or covered to ensure that they have no contact with the germs or bacteria from the toilet.
4. The mechanical vent in the Toddler changing area was cleaned and has been added to the cleaning list.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. A photograph of the Junior/Senior care room with the doll's house removed was received in the office of the inspectorate.
2. A picture of the visual signs attached to the water butts was received in the office of the inspectorate. The statement from the manager that staff have been made aware of not using the water with the children has been accepted.

Infection Control:

3. A photograph of the sanitary area with the children's uncovered personal items removed was received in the office of the inspectorate.
4. A photograph of a clean mechanical vent was received in the office of the inspectorate along with a copy of the revised cleaning list.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the manager have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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 available to evidence that at least twenty adults in the service had First Aid Responder (FAR) training completed. The roster indicated that there were two adults available at opening time in the morning and four adults at closing time in the evening who had first aid responder training completed.
- (2) (a) (b) First aid bags were suitably equipped, available at all times, and easily accessible to the adults in each of the care rooms.

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.
- (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) Written records of regular monthly fire drills were available in the service. The last record for the Crèche care room was dated 28 June 2024.
 - (b) Written records detailing the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available. The firefighting equipment certificate was dated 24 October 2023 and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 8 December 2023.
- (2)
- (c) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to review by the inspector.
- (4) Fire evacuation procedures were noted on the walls, next to the fire exit doors of the care rooms, throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A certificate was available to evidence that the registered provider had insurance for the service. The policy stated that the service is insured for 100 children on a full day care basis and the expiry date was noted as 27 March 2025.