

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH015
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Name of Service:	Children's World
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Address of Service:	Dulargy, Ravensdale, Dundalk, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A91 X272
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Name of Registered Provider:	Catriona McAteer
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	30/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	8
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Flood
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	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Children’s World has been operating as a privately owned childcare service since October 2001. The service provides sessional care and education to preschool children aged 2 years - 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from Monday -Friday. The Service caters for a maximum of 22 preschool children.

The service operates from a community centre building located behind Dulargy National School, in Co. Louth. The service consists of a playroom, sanitary areas, a kitchen and a partially enclosed outdoor area to the rear and side of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider and four childcare staff are employed to work directly with the preschool children.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 23,25 and 26; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulations 8 and 10. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16.

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 would like to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of Change in Circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not notify the agency in writing of a 2nd session prior to its commencement. The 2nd session was observed in operation from 12:00 - 15:00 on the day of the inspection with 8 preschool children in attendance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Actions

A change in circumstances form has been submitted to the registration office. In future the registered provider will ensure any changes are requested within the required timeframe.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of processed Change in Circumstances form.

Summary Comment

Following a referral to the national registration office, the registered provider submitted the required change in circumstances application and commenced the process to amend their registration status in accordance with their current operation. This change in circumstance application has now been approved.

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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge who is also the registered provider and a named deputy person to deputise as required. The deputy person was on the premises when the inspector arrived and was present throughout the inspection. The registered provider arrived on the premises at 11:10 and was present for the remainder of the inspection.

(c) When questioned staff were familiar with the management structure within the service and the roles and responsibilities of the various staff members.

(2) Five staff files were reviewed including files for the registered provider and four childcare staff.

The following was observed:

(a) & (b) There were 2 written references available for the registered provider and 4 staff members with evidence of appropriate validations for 8 out of 10 references.

(c) A processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for all 5 members of staff. 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.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 5 members of staff, including the registered provider who work directly with the preschool children held at least the minimum required level 5 childcare qualification on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) The following vetting procedures were incomplete:

(a)(b) Documentary evidence of validation of 2 references was not available for 1 staff member.

(d) Documentary evidence of international police vetting was not available on file for 1 staff member who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of greater than six months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The references that were not validated for one staff member have now been validated.

The staff member that lived outside the Irish Jurisdiction is currently working with the embassy to acquire Police vetting. The registered provider will follow up on this and have requested it as a matter of urgency.

The registered provider will ensure all references are validated in future and that all vetting processes are in place before employing in future.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of written references

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliances under Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b) have been addressed.

The non-compliance under Regulation 9 (2)(d) remains as documentary evidence of the international police vetting has not been received.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

When questioned the registered provider stated that there was no policy available that included the following infection control measures:

- The infection control measures for nappy changing and toileting procedures.
- The specific measures for the prevention of cross contamination and infection control.
- The management of perishable food.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service now has a step-by-step instruction sheet on the bathroom walls for staff to follow where we have any incidents. This includes prevention of cross contamination. The staff and any new staff going forward will be briefed on these measures to avoid the risk of cross contamination in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control Policy

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliance under Regulation 10 has been addressed.

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced at 10:15 and remained so throughout the inspection. At this time there were 20 preschool children aged 3 to 4 years being cared for by 3 staff members.

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:*
- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
 - (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
 - (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
 - (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (h) Documentary evidence was available of the daily attendance of the preschool children in the service and included the arrival and departure times of each child in the service.
- (k) The service had a record in writing of accidents, injuries and incidents involving children during their attendance in the service. Four of these records for the school year to date were sampled and each included

parental signatures to document that they had been informed and were aware of the relevant incidents. The manager and staff signatures were also detailed indicating that they had reviewed the information.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a) A curriculum vitae was not available on inspection for one member of staff to confirm the qualifications, experience or the requirement of international police vetting if applicable.

(i) Documentary evidence of a daily staff roster was not available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Actions

All staff members now have a C.V in their staff file.

The service displays a weekly staff rota on each new week.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of a staff Roster and curriculum vitae

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliances under Regulation 16 have been addressed.

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

It was observed that the registered provider has taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service:

General Safety:

- The external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

- The outdoor area was enclosed and secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The cleaning agents were stored in a locked cupboard or on high shelving and were inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- The television was wall mounted and out of the reach of children. All wires and leads were inaccessible.

Infection Control:

- There was a constant supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and single use paper hand towels available to support effective hand washing practices.
- Effective hand washing practices for the children were observed during the inspection, after toileting and outdoor play and prior to snack time.
- The pedal operated bins observed in use in the service, were appropriately maintained.

Administration Of Medication:

- The registered provider confirmed that no medications have been administered in the service. Medication administration sheets were available for documentation should they be required.
- Written parental consent was available for the administration of temperature reducing medications should the need arise.

Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection:

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for 5 staff members including the registered provider. However, 1 of these vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. Some of the surface temperature of the radiators in the service were hot to touch. When checked by the inspector at 11:45 the surface temperature of 2 radiators, one in the playroom and one in sanitary area beside the kitchen exceeded the maximum recommended safe surface temperature of 50 °C. The following surface temperatures were recorded; The playroom radiator was recorded at 58.3°C and the sanitary area radiator was recorded at 62.6 °C. These elevated temperatures went unnoticed by the staff present and it was brought to the attention of the registered provider by the inspector.

3. A number of low-level sharp corners were exposed in the playroom and outdoor areas, including low sharp corners on the shelving units in the playroom and sharp metal corners at the base of the posts in the partially covered outdoor area. These are a potential injury risk.

Infection Control:

4. One staff member did not wear a disposable apron when changing a child following a toileting accident in accordance with best practice guidelines. Additionally, the staff member did not remove their used gloves after the procedure and continued to wear the used gloves to assist another child and also touched multiple surfaces/ door handles and the kettle in the kitchen area. The gloves were only removed after the toilet area was cleaned and hands were then washed.
5. The children's lunches containing perishable items were stored in their bags on the coat hangers and not as required in a refrigerator.

Fire Safety:

6. An adequate means of smoke detection was not provided in the service. The battery-operated smoke detection system in use in the service is considered inadequate.
7. The documentary evidence available indicates that the frequency of the fire drills being carried out is inadequate and not every month as is recommended under best practice guidelines.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Actions

Garda vetting is in place and up to date for all staff members.

Temperatures will be checked daily as part of our risk assessment.

The protectors will be replaced when necessary.

The registered provider will continue to remind staff of the changing procedures. Staff have been briefed on the changing a child procedure including the importance of disposable gloves and aprons. Staff will be reminded regularly on good infection control practice in preschool.

A staff member has been assigned to place all lunches in fridge each morning.

The registered provider has been in contact with a company to fit electric smoke alarms and break glass boxes at fire doors. The company have advised it will be complete in the coming weeks. The registered provider will send evidence as soon as work is complete. The service will carry out yearly fire checks, extinguishers etc and will add the service of new smoke alarms to this.

Fire drills are carried out once a month in accordance with best practice. The registered provider will ensure all fire drill details are recorded each month.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of fire alarm panel, emergency panel and new smoke detection unit.

Maintenance receipt for fire extinguishers.

Photograph of corner foam protectors on unit

Infection control policy.

An email from the registered provider stating that the staff member who requires their Garda vetting disclosure renewed will not be present in the service until this process is complete.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. The required updated Garda Vetting disclosure has not been received by the inspectorate to date, however the registered provider has given assurances this staff member will not be present in the service until this process is completed.

Regarding the non-compliances relating to fire safety, the registered provider has provided assurances that smoke detection equipment has been installed and has provided photographic evidence of this.

The CAPA response and evidence in relation to the other non-compliances were accepted.

Therefore, based on the information submitted and the assurances given by the registered provider, the non-compliances under Regulation 23 have been addressed. These will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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 registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid for children was at all times available to the children attending the service. Documentary evidence was available of an up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) qualification for one adult in the service.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was adequately stocked and was stored in a conspicuous location where it was easily accessible in the event of an emergency.

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.*
- (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 record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. the last recorded being April 2023.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated the 12/2023.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises