

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK034
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Name of Service:	Caherelly Kids
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Address of Service:	Caherelly, Grange, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V35 Y296
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Name of Registered Provider:	Helen O'Riordan
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate Offices, 2 nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan
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

Caherelly Kids is a private preschool service located in a rural setting in Caherelly, Co. Limerick. It offers a morning sessional service from 9.10 to 12.10pm, Monday to Friday each week. A part-time service is available for children from 12.10pm to 2pm. A service for school aged children is provided each afternoon.

The service operates from a purpose build premises located on the grounds of the provider's family home. A converted room in the providers home is also used by the service. There are sanitary facilities and nappy changing amenities located next to all of the pre-school rooms. Children have access to a large well-resourced outdoor play area on the grounds of the pre-school. A sheltered outdoor area ensures children get to spend long periods of time outside each day regardless of weather.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge of running the service. There are three additional staff employed to work at the school. All staff members have the appropriate qualifications 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 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 registered provider, 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 was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and there was a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a) There were written references, from past employers, available in respect of each staff working at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not provided, references from reputable sources such as former schools and colleges were furnished.

(c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available in respect of each staff working at the service. However, in the case of 1 staff member, 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) No police vetting was required as none of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(4) Each staff working at the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) The service operates a morning session from 9.10am to 12.10pm. On the day of the inspection there were 18 pre-school children present with 3 staff members. The adult child ratio was compliant with the requirements of Regulation 11.

(3) At all times the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

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

BASIC NEEDS:

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service. Parents provided children with a healthy snack and drinks each day for their lunch. All perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator until required each morning.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets located next to the pre-school rooms. Low level sinks, hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were accessible to promote hygienic washing of hands. An electronic

controlled nappy changing unit was available if required. All children were toilet trained and all were independently using the bathroom facilities.

A rest area was accessible in the library corner with comfortable soft seating providing the children with a space to rest when tired.

Children spend long periods outside each day where they could move from a garden located at the rear of the building to a playground area adjacent. An overhead canopy covered a large space outside providing shelter if needed.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service operated from large preschool room, a second smaller room adjacent and 3 large well-resourced outdoor play spaces. All areas were clearly laid out to accommodate the needs of the children. Low level tables and chairs were available for tabletop activities and for dining at snack time. A library area with a range of reading material next to a large comfortable couch provided a relaxation/rest space. Sensory play was accommodated with easy access to both sand and water play. Lots of imaginative play was accommodated in the home corner area. Montessori play materials were easily accessible to the children on low level open shelving units. Lots of children's artwork and items of interest were displayed at children's eye level. Posters on "moving to primary school", "Me and my community", and poster displaying each child's birthday were all on display. Photographs displayed on a large journal for parents to view, showed many seasonal activities the children enjoyed throughout each term.

Children spend a lot of time outdoors where they had lots of space for active play time. Children had access to lots of ride on toys. A large natural garden was accessible with all play equipment made from timber. Here children had opportunities to master their skills in climbing, running and balancing. A large grasses area at the rear of the premises was used for ball sports.

The indoor and the outdoor areas was continuously reviewed, changed, and enhanced to suit the children's ever-changing interests, capabilities and preferences along with the themes and curriculum plans of the service.

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:

Children were supervised primarily by sight and by sound when independently using the sanitary facilities.

All emergency exits and fire doors were unobstructed.

There was no blind or curtain cords unsecured on any window.

All toys, furniture and play equipment were in good condition and free from sharp edges or corners.

No flexes or cables were located within reach of children.

Infection Control:

Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were accessible to ensure hygienic hand washing for all staff and children. Foot pedal operated lidded bins were located in all rooms to ensure the safe disposal of all waste materials.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for all staff members, however for 1 staff member, their vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- Garda vetting renewal application was forwarded for the required staff member and a copy of the new disclosure was received.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- A copy of the updated Garda vetting was forwarded to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified has been adequately addressed.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (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

(a) The building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally and no obvious defects were noted on inspection.

(b) The premises appeared safe and secured. Electric gates at the entrance to the premises ensured that only authorised people gained access to the premises. A buzzer system on the entrance door ensured all who entered the building were checked in by a member of staff. The outdoor area was well secured preventing any unauthorised access to or exit from this area of the service.

(c) All areas were well lit by natural light and by artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation.

(d) The areas outside were all well maintained and routine cleaning schedules were in place for all internal and external areas. An external company was employed to ensure the area was rodent proofed.

(e) There were an adequate number of toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing areas available in the service.