

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK035
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Name of Service:	Cappagh Community Creche
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Address of Service:	Ballinagrane Cappagh Askeaton Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94K582
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jennifer Bourke
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23 RD April 2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	29
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate TUSLA, Child and Family Agency 2 nd floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan
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

Cappagh Community Creche was established in 2009 and provides sessional, part-time and full day education and care to pre-school children aged 0 - 6 years of age.

A school aged services is also provided to school aged children. The service operates from 07:30hrs to 18:15hrs and the setting caters for a maximum of 80 children.

It operates from a purpose-built building in a rural area. There are 5 care rooms in operation; baby room (6 months- 1 year), wobbler room (1 - 2 years), toddler room (2-3 years), junior montessori (3-4 years) and senior montessori room (4- 5 years). There are 2 sleep rooms with cots for children aged less than 2 years. The service has 4 outdoor play areas located on the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment.

Staffing

There are sixteen staff employed in the service. Twelve staff working directly with the children have childcare qualifications which range from Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. One staff member works with the school aged children.

There is one staff member working in the kitchen with Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) training and two cleaning staff are employed to work each evening. The registered provider does not work on site in the service.

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 9,11,19 and 25.

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.

(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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge were available on the premises on the day of inspection.

(2) There were 16 staff employed in the service with 9 staff working directly with the children in the service on the day. 16 staff files were checked on the day of the inspection.

The person in charge had ensured that each employee working in the service was suitable and competent as the following documents were available on file for all staff members.

- (a) References from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer.
- (b) References from sources other than past employers in the case of a person who had no past employers.
- (c) Vetting disclosures were received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of all staff. All Garda Vetting documentation was dated within the last three years as per

the regulatory notice EYI-RN12.3 renewal of Garda vetting published by the Inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 01 January 2024.

(d) International police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4) All staff working directly with the children had childcare qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 on the national qualifications framework.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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.

Compliance Information

(2) At all times during the period of the inspection, the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. On the day of the inspection, there were 12 staff working directly with 34 pre-school children in the service.

- Baby Room - there were 2 babies (0-1 year) and 1 staff present.
- Wobbler room - there were 8 children (1-2 years) and 2 staff present.
- Toddler Room - there were 11 children (2-3 years) and 2 staff present.
- Junior/Senior Montessori room - there were 13 children (3-5 years) and 2 staff present.

Additional staff were available to cover for staff breaks, office management and food preparation.

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 healthy eating policy of the service detailed a well-balanced and nutritious menu and was displayed in the entrance hallway for parents' information. The full time cook freshly prepared all meals daily, and dinner on the day consisted of sweet and sour chicken with rice. Many of the children were observed to self-feed and were given assistance by staff where required. The younger children were given beakers of water to drink while eating their dinner. Children were closely supervised by staff while they ate their dinner as they sat with them at the tables to assist them where required and to support them to enjoy their food.

Drinking water was available throughout the day in each room if a child was thirsty and needed a drink.

Children who were toilet trained toileted independently, with assistance given to those who needed it. Children in nappies were changed regularly by staff whilst following the nappy changing policy.

Children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day, such as after toileting, on return from outdoor play and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water, paper towels and liquid antibacterial soap. Staff were observed to wash their hands regularly throughout the day.

Children could rest and relax as desired throughout the day in each room in the quiet areas on child sized couches.

Children under 2 years of age slept in traditional type cots and were observed to be checked by staff every 10 minutes in line with the safe sleep policy of the service. Toddlers were observed to sleep on sleep beds in their room with both staff remaining in the room while the children slept.

Babies were observed to be held and cuddled by staff and there was lots of clear floor space for the babies to move around, crawl, sit up and establish their early walking skills.

Photographic displays demonstrated where children enjoyed messy play activities regularly in the service.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within each room and in the outdoor play area. The outdoor play space was used at regular intervals throughout the day and supported children's physical development and social interaction.

The children were encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level of choice of activities. The adults modelled positive behaviour for the children, and the children were praised for their good behaviour.

Relationships around children were supported as the core staff in the service had not changed since the last inspection and children were familiar with staff through the use of the keyperson system in each room. Staff had a good understanding of the benefits of the use of the keyperson system.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

This full day care service was operated from a purpose-built building. The service comprised of five playrooms, sanitary accommodation areas, two sleep rooms and four outdoor play areas.

Adequate and varied play equipment suited to the age and stage of development of the child was available in each room of the service and in the outdoor play area. Surplus play equipment was in storage and used on a rotational basis following cleaning.

The rooms were spacious and bright with shelving available to display play equipment. Defined interest areas included reading areas/rest areas, construction area, home corner, dress up/imaginative play spaces, puzzles, buggies, manipulative play area and small world areas.

The children were observed playing in the secure outdoor play area, which was well resourced with outdoor play equipment. All three outdoor areas had all weather surfaces and most of the play equipment outdoors was fixed for safety reasons. Sensory play materials such as sand and water were available in the outdoor play area.

Children observed playing outdoors were suitably clothed with coats and caps.

Seating was provided for the adults in the outdoor play area which allowed children organise their own play in different groups if they wished. Children were supervised at all times by staff in each room and outdoors by sight or they were within earshot.

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) Twelve staff working in the service had up to date training in first aid for children.
- (2) (a) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the service.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.