

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK092
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Name of Service:	St. Colmans childcare services
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Address of Service:	Kilcolman creche, Kilcolman, Ardagh, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V42 YP11
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Name of Registered Provider:	Tara Robinson
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	31/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	50	PM	41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early years Inspectorate, Estuary House , Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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

This community full day childcare service first opened in 2007. It caters for children from six months to six years of age. A school age service is also provided.

It has a maximum capacity for approximately 58 children.

The opening hours are from 07:30 – 18:00 hours, Monday – Friday for 51 weeks of the year.

The premises are a purpose built, single storey childcare facilities located in a rural setting in the town land of Kilcolman, Ardagh, Co Limerick.

The service has 4 playrooms in operation, two sleep rooms, a kitchen, nappy changing and sanitary facilities for children and adults and a number of outdoor play areas to the rear and side of the premises.

Staffing

There were 11 adults present on the day of inspection and of these 10 were working directly with the children.

The manager and 1 additional adult were available on site if required.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11,15,19,25,26, and 29,

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Childrens Records.

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 manager , 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.*
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.*
- (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 manager was present on the day of the inspection. There was a person available who was able to deputise if required.
- (b) During the period of the inspection, the manager was present and the staff roster indicated that a person in charge was always available at the service. A lead person was also available in each room of the service.
- (2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all staff employed at the service.
- (b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from reputable sources available.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff members employed at the service.
- (d) Police vetting was available for the 1 staff who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction.
- (3) All of the above documentation was furnished to the registered provider prior to each staff taking up employment at the facility.
- (4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification 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.

(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

(1) At all times during the period of the inspection the manager ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the preschool children.

(2) On the day of the inspection there were 10 staff working across the 4 care rooms with 50 children present in the morning and 9 staff working across the 4 care rooms with 41 children present in afternoon. During the period of inspection, the minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained and an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children in each care room.

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-

(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,

(b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and

(c) an authorised person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 13 children's registration forms were reviewed with the samples selected from all rooms of the service. There was a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of these children.

(a), (b) (c) (d), (e), (f) (g), (h) (i)

(3) Each record of a preschool child was open for inspection by

(a) A parent or guardian in relation to a record relating to their child.

(b) An employee.

(c) An authorised person.

(4) The registered provider advised the inspectorate that all preschool records were retained for 2 years from the date the child stopped attending 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

Healthy eating was promoted in the service. Parents provided the children with healthy snacks for break times. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator if needed. A nutritious hot meal was prepared on site and was served to the children who stayed for extended hours outside the sessional times at the facility.

Sanitary accommodation was located next to each room in the service. Children in nappies were changed regularly by staff whilst following the nappy changing policy. An adequate number of toilet facilities were provided at the service. All toiletries for the children were safely stored and clearly labelled within easy reach of all staff. Change of clothing, outdoor coats and appropriate outdoor footwear was available for all children at the service.

Rest areas with large couches, cushions and blankets were accessible in all rooms at the service.

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.

Staff encouraged quiet periods during the day to facilitate each child's need for comfort, rest and relaxation.

Children had regular change of environment and throughout all areas of the service had access to long periods exploring the outdoor environment.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN

The service supported children to form and sustain positive relationships with their adult carers with the same staff present with the children each day. All staff throughout each room were observed being actively involved in children's play, where appropriate initiating games and joining in helping when invited by the children. Lots of social conversations between staff and children was evident in all areas of the service.

Personal journals that captured much of the children's learning were created and these were regularly sent home with the children.

Staff regularly held meetings and planned together the themes for learning at the service.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

The physical and the material environment of each room in the service was developed full of activities which were aimed at developing social, emotional, cognitive, physical and interactive skills. The atmosphere in each room was unhurried and encouraging.

A wide range of play-based activities and experiences both indoors and outdoors were available in all areas.

In each room the following activities were available and rotated to suit the changing programme; numerous table-top activities, building and construction play areas, play dough, art with lots of art easels, paint pots and brushes accessible, messy play areas with sand and water play.

Children had opportunities to be outside as often as possible and in all weather conditions. Gross motor play was facilitated outdoors on the play equipment and climbing frames and on the ride on toys in the Astro turf. Lots of opportunities for children to challenge their own capabilities within safe limits were available.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Hand operated bins were in place in many of the playroom instead of the foot operated bins thus increasing the risk of cross infection.

Fire Safety:

2. The emergency fire exit doors in the nappy changing room and the Babys sleep room were blocked with equipment and materials thus posing a safety risk to children and staff at the premises.

3. Fire drills were not practised monthly in the service since August of 2022. The following fire drills were recorded as being practised 14/08/2022, 11/10/2022, 03/03/2023 and 04/05/2023. This posed a risk to both staff and children in the event of a fire emergency.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action:

Infection Control

1. Hand operated bins have been replaced by foot operated bin where needed

Fire Safety

2. Emergency fire exit door in the nappy changing room has been cleared of all storage equipment, thus leaving the area clear for exit in case of emergency. Alternative storage areas are used to store nappies so that exit doors will not be blocked in future with storage units.

3. Fire drills are being practised on a monthly basis, the most recent was the 23/6/2023. Record of fire drills to be updated and checked monthly.

Supporting documentation submitted:

No

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliance identified. This will be reviewed on 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) There were 8 staff on duty who had up to date first aid response training.

(2)(a) There was a first aid box located in each room of the service.

(b) The first aid box was readily available and accessible to all staff if required. A staff member was assigned responsibility to regularly check the contents in each first aid box. All items were removed when expired and all boxes were regularly restocked.

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 of the fire drills which had taken place was available. The last fire drill took place on the 04/05/2023.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed clearly in each of the Preschool rooms. Fire assembly points were clearly visible in the outdoor spaces.

Non-Compliance Information

- (b) There was not an up-to-date record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The last service was dated 2021.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action:

- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on 9th June 2023 and a copy of the fire certificate was submitted to the Early years inspectorate on that day.
- The smoke alarm service was dated the 6th of June 2022 and this is due for renewal.
- The date of the last service of firefighting equipment to be checked regularly.

Supporting documentation submitted:

A copy of the firefighting equipment and the Fire Alarm certificates were submitted to the Early Years inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement for (1)(b).