

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015LM021

Name of Service: Kiltubrid Playgroup

Address of Service: Drumcong, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim

Eircode: N41 RD63

Name of Registered Provider: April Gilmartin

Service type: Sessional

Date of Inspection: 28/01/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello
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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

The sessional service operates from a converted bungalow with four care rooms operating as one space. The service has a kitchen and sanitary accommodation. The office is located in a cabin on the grounds of the surface. A large outdoor area to the side and back of the premises is in operation. The sessional service operates from 09.30 to 12.30. A school aged service is also provided.

Staffing

There are four adults employed in the service to work directly with the preschool children. The registered provider did not work in the service.

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 and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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, 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.

(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) (b)

There was a person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(c)

There was a clear management structure in place, where staff were aware of their role and responsibilities.

(2) (a) (b)

The records of all four adults in the service were reviewed. Seven validated past employer references and one validated reference from another source was available.

(c)

Garda vetting was available for all four adults in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the early years inspectorate directive to renew garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was available for the two adults who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.

(3)

The required vetting procedures were completed prior to the adults having access to a preschool child.

(4)

All four adults employed in the service attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.

(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) There were four adults working directly with 16 children on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service. One adult employed as an AIM worker supported one child with additional needs.

(3) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time the children remained in the sessional service.

(8)

A review of the roster demonstrated that there is 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.*

(2) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or of 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 particulars specified in subparagraphs (a), (d), (e) and (f) of paragraph (1).

(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.*

(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-g, i)

Ten random sample children's records were reviewed. The required information including the name and address of next of kin, authorisation to collect and the contact details of the General Practitioner were available.

(3) (c)

The service ensured that these records were available on the day for the authorised person.

(4)

The registered provider is aware of the requirement to retain these records for the timeframe set out in legislation.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (h)

Two records reviewed did not adequately record if a child had been vaccinated. The absence of this information could pose a safety risk to the child in the event of an outbreak.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

In a written response the registered provider stated:

Corrective and Preventive Action

Parents of named children have been asked to sign a vaccination waiver confirming their child is unvaccinated and that they are aware of risks. The waiver form will be incorporated into the immunisation paragraph in the enrolment and the service will be aware of anybody that is unvaccinated.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence submitted

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection.

This regulation is now compliant.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1) (a)

The service operates out of a converted house with four care rooms that operate as an open space where children can move freely around directing their own sense of play. The reception room has limited furniture ensuring there is ample clear floor space for various activities. On the day this area was used for circle time, exercise and music. Open shelving in this room contained puzzles and activities that children could use throughout the day. The three remaining rooms were structured in specific interest areas. One room was the play area, where home corners equipped with kitchens, dolls, dress up and construction areas facilitated imaginative and role play. A room equipped with floor to ceiling shelving of arts and crafts and sensory activities allowed for creativity. A third room with a variety of puzzles, numeracy and literacy games allowed for opportunities of learning and development of fine motor skills.

On the day of inspection, the outdoor area was not in operation due to a recent storm and the person in charge had a clean-up plan in operation. The reception room in the service ensured that movement and exercise was facilitated while the outdoor area was being maintained.

The service placed a strong emphasis on inclusion and diversity, this was demonstrated throughout the service where visual aids were provided in five different languages. The service ensured that children with additional needs or language difficulties were included in all aspects of the curriculum by breaking down tasks and using picture visual prompts to support children to complete various tasks. This included completing puzzles, washing hands and using the bathroom.

(1) (b)

The staff members were observed to be kind and caring in their interactions with the preschool children. The children appeared happy and content in the presence of the staff members supporting them and lots of laughter

and conversation between the staff and children were observed. The service promoted independence, and this was observed when children completing jigsaws and puzzles, were prompted and encouraged to complete with lots of praise and recognition of the task completed.

Mealtimes were observed to be a pleasurable experience where children and staff sat together in two rooms. The children were divided by age and sat alongside their friends at snack time. Snacks were observed to be healthy with a variety of yoghurts, sandwiches and fruits. The service showed evidence of the visual prompt given to parents on enrolment to ensure lunches are healthy. In the home corner of the playroom, a poster containing healthy food reinforced the importance of healthy nutrition.

Children attending the service were toilet trained, and independence was promoted in the service with the staff prompting from a distance if required. A visual aid in the bathroom outlined the steps to take for independence in toileting.

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 service was secure on inspectors unannounced arrival to the service.
- Risk assessments were in place after the recent storm which precluded access to the outdoors until a tidy up could commence.
- Windows were risk assessed and fitted with security mechanisms.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the preschool child.
- Toys and materials in the care rooms were well maintained.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were provided for safe hand hygiene.
- Rooms were visibly clean with cleaning schedules displayed on the walls of the care rooms.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes and after messy play.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was administered on the day of inspection. On interview staff members were aware of the medication policy and steps to follow in the event medication is required to be administered.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors and emergency evacuation routes remained clear for the duration of the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. A pink leather chair in the playroom was ripped with exposed foam. This may pose an infection control risk as it cannot be cleaned effectively.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

In a written response the registered provider stated:

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The pink leather chair has been removed from the area and been disposed off

We will ensure that all equipment/material will be showing any sign of rip will be disposed of and immediately replaced if necessary

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Documentary evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately addressed the non-compliance found on inspection and this regulation is now compliant.

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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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) (b)

The service completed monthly fire evacuation drills, the most recent occurring on the 21st of January 2025. Regular maintenance of the firefighting equipment in the service was provided with the most recent maintenance date of the 10th of January 2025.

(2) (c)

Records of evacuation drills and maintenance checks were made available to the inspector on the day.

(3)

The registered provider is aware of the regulatory requirement to retain these records for a period of five years.

(4)

Fire emergency evacuation procedures were displayed on the walls of all care rooms in the service.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service provided an insurance certificate demonstrating adequate insurance for 22 preschool children in a sessional service.