

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LS035		
Name of Service:	Just 4 Kids Creche		
Address of Service:	Whitefields, Station Road, Portarlinton, Co. Laois		
Eircode:	R32 PO42		
Name of Registered Provider:	Catriona Robinson		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	05/04/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	44	PM 42
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co Offaly.		
Inspection undertaken by:	K. Murphy & C. O'Connor Hughes		
Title:	Early Years Inspectors		

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

The service is registered as a full day care service to accommodate children aged 0 to 6 years of age. The service operates between the hours of 07:30 and 18:15 on a Monday to Friday basis. An Early Education and Care programme (ECCE) operates from 09:00 to 12:00 during term time. The service is operated by an independent provider as part of a multiple.

The Early Years' Service is located in a two-storey purpose-built premises. Six pre-school rooms, a kitchen, a sleep room, two offices and a storeroom are provided. Four pre-school rooms were in operation on the 5 April 2024, the Sun room, the Saturn room, the Mars room, the Jupiter room and the Earth room. The Neptune room was operating for school aged childcare only.

An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the premises. Onsite parking and set down facilities are available. The service is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of the town of Portarlington, County Laois.

Staffing

The registered provider, a designated person in charge, twelve childcare staff, a cook and cleaner were present on the 5 April 2024.

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

The inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1)(2)(3)(4)(7)
- Regulation 10 Policies, Procedures of Pre-School Service.
- Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1)(2)(8)(a)
- Regulation 15 Record of a pre-school child (1)(f)
- Regulation 16 Record of a pre-school service (1) (i)(k)
- Regulation 19 Health Welfare and Development of Child (1)(a) (3)
- Regulation 20 (1)(b) Facilities for Rest and Play
- Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child - General Safety
- Regulation 25 First Aid
- Regulation 27 Supervision
- Regulation 32 Complaints (1)(2)(3)
- Regulation 33 Furnishing of information to Agency

The scope of the inspection included the Saturn room (ECCE) and the Jupiter room (ECCE).

The Neptune room (ECCE) was closed due to the Easter holidays.

The ECCE programme was not in operation on the 5 April 2024 due to the Easter holiday period.

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.

Additional Information

The inspection was informed by information received by TUSLA on the 04 April 2024.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the co-operation of the registered provider, 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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

A designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

The registered provider and one of the two designated persons in charge were present for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

The photograph and the names of the registered provider the two persons in charge were displayed in the entrance hall of the service. The roster included information relating to the persons in charge on identified days and times.

A job description was available and signed in respect of each staff member depending on their role in the service manager, deputy manager, supervisor, room leader or early years practitioner. The job description detailed requirements to maintain appropriate records and documents in compliance with and to adhere to the Child Care 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 as well as any specific roles and responsibilities assigned to the staff member based on their employment.

Twenty-three staff files were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)

The required number of written validated references were available from past employers in respect of the staff members.

(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from a source other than a past employer in respect of the staff members.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the staff members.

The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was available in respect of four staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(3)

The procedures in respect (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) were carried out by the registered provider prior to the employment of new staff in the service.

(4)

All staff members working directly with children held a major award at level 5 to 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(7)(a)

An external company provides human resource software to the service. The new employee welcome pack, the induction training checklist and the induction policy for the service were available for review with evidence included to indicate that staff had read and understood the policies and procedures of the service.

(7)(b)(c)

The registered provider, two designated persons in charge and two early years practitioners held certificates that indicated that they had completed some or all the training modules relating to the Tusla Quality Regulatory

Framework (QRF) as evidence of training undertaken in The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Non-Compliance Information

(7)(b)(c)

In respect of eighteen staff there was no evidence of training undertaken in the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(7)(b)(c)

The registered provider stated in the response that staff are in the process of completing training on the Quality Regulatory Framework (QRF). The managers have repeated the QRF training. All staff will be fully trained in the QRF by the end of summer 2024. QRF training will be conducted as part of induction training for every new member of staff.

Summary Comment

The corrective action should meet the regulatory requirement. The registered provider will submit the evidence to the Early Years Inspector of the completed QRF certificates upon completion.

The regulatory requirement will be met when the registered provider submits the evidence.

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.

Compliance Information

The following policies were available in the service. These policies were reviewed and the content was found to be in keeping with the requirements of Regulation 10 with the exception of the non-compliance identified below.

- Statement of Purpose and Function.
- Complaints Policy.
- Behaviour Management Policy.
- Accident and Incidents Policy.
- Risk Management Policy.
- Staff Training Policy.
- Supervision Policy.

Non-Compliance Information

The following policies were found not to be in keeping with the requirements of Regulation 10.

1. The Risk Management policy did not state the following information:
 - That risk assessments completed by the service are documented.
 - That the risk management strategy will be included in the service's safety statement.
 - That the risk assessment record must show who is involved in the risk assessment process.
 - It sets out how long the risk management records will be kept.
2. The staff training policy did not state the following information:
 - How staff training needs are identified and addressed.
 - The resources that are provided for training.
 - The availability of ongoing training and professional development.
 - Details the staff training records kept in the service.
3. The Supervision policy did not state the following information:
 - That the employees, unpaid workers and contractors are supervised and supported in the service in relation to their work practices.
 - The records that will be kept for supervision, where records will be stored and how long they will be kept for.
 - The supervision of relevant staff, contractors or trainees where appropriate.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated in the response that the risk management policy, staff training policy and supervision policy have all been updated to be in line with the requirements (Revised policies included).

All Policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated on a more regular basis.

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective action taken documentary evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and deemed 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.

(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.

(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)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was in place during the inspection.

(2)

There were forty-four children attending the service supervised directly by twelve adults.

(8)(a)

The staff roster indicated that two adults are 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:

(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;

Compliance Information

(1)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 15 (1) (f).

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:

(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)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1) (i) and (k).

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

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

The focus of the inspection was the Saturn and Jupiter rooms and the following was observed by the Inspector.

(1)(a)

Children enjoyed the daily routine of activities which included extended outdoor play time, free play, dress up, sensory play and imaginative play supported by staff.

Children went to the toilet independently and washed their hands prior to snacks and meals.

Meals and snacks were prepared on site by the cook. At mid-day the children were served ham sandwiches and fruit with water to drink. Staff supported children at mealtimes as they encouraged conversations and interactions with the children.

The staff were positive towards children and were familiar with each child, their personalities and their daily routines. Staff were observed to give comfort and reassurance to the children. Staff used individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities, toileting and mealtimes.

Individual care plans are in place for children requiring additional support and supervision.

Seamless transitions were noted as the children were given a five-minute lead in time to change from one activity to another in the Saturn room.

The two pre-school rooms were bright and colourful with children's artwork displayed depicting the Easter theme.

A range of developmentally appropriate experiences to meet children's learning needs was available in the pre-school rooms. Areas of interest included a home area, dress up, construction area and sensory trays.

Age and stage appropriate toys and materials were accessible to children on low level shelving. Children were observed to relax in the cosy rest areas established in the two rooms.

The service works in partnership with parents and guardians. A parent notice board is displayed in the reception area of the service. Communication between parents and the service was shared via an electronic application depicting the child's daily routine, play activities and child development observations. Each child had their own learning journal depicting their play and work activities. This learning journal is shared with parents.

(3)
Upon discussion with the Inspector, staff demonstrated knowledge of the behaviour management policy in place in the service. Positive behaviour strategies were observed during the inspection. Staff used a calm approach using soft language tones, giving positive praise and encouragement to children. Occasional episodes of behaviour that challenged was managed in a positive caring manner. Redirection, reassurance and calming techniques were used where appropriate by staff.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)
Low level beds were available for children to rest and sleep in the Saturn and Jupiter rooms. Cosy rest areas consisting of soft furnishings were noted in both rooms.

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 entrance to the service was secure. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents in the Saturn and Jupiter room. Indoor and outdoor risk assessments were reviewed in the Saturn and Jupiter rooms. Inspectors signed the visitors book on arrival.

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)
Three adults were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation as per the staff roster. Eleven adults were qualified in Paediatric First Aid (PFA).

(2)(a)
First aid boxes were available in accessible and conspicuous location in the premises.

(b)
A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Children were supervised by staff in the Saturn room and the Jupiter room during play activities both indoors and outdoors during the inspection. Staff members supervised the children’s use of the toilet and handwashing.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
- (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider’s complaints policy.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-

- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
- (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1)
The service’s “management of complaints” policy was available and reviewed. The relevant details in respect of (a)(b)(c) were noted in the policy.

(2)
The service kept and maintained written records of information in respect of (a) and (b).

(3)
The service kept and maintained written records that were open to inspection in accordance with (a) and (b).

Part IX - Inspection and Enforcement

Regulation 33 – Furnishing of information to agency

A registered provider shall furnish the Agency with such information as the Agency may reasonably require for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations and the information shall be in such form, if any, as may be specified by the Agency.

Compliance Information

The registered provider furnished all information as reasonably required by the Agency for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations.