

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LS042		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cherish Childcare		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Springhill Road, Graiguecullen, Co. Laois		
<b>Eircode:</b>	R93 XH60		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Melanie Watson		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	16/08/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	50	PM 52
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	K. Murphy & C. O'Connor Hughes		
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	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 is registered to operate between the hours of 07:00 and 18:15 on a Monday to Friday basis. The service is operated by an independent provider as part of a multiple.

The Early Years' Service is located in an adapted two storey residential building. Six pre-school rooms, a sleep room, a kitchen, a laundry room, an office and a reception area are provided. Outdoor play areas are attached to the rear and side of the premises. The service is located in an urban setting in a residential area in Graiguecullen, County Laois.

### Staffing

The group general manager and twelve childcare staff were present and working directly with children. A support staff was available. Two staff were working with school age children. A cook was employed by the service and present during the inspection. The designated person in charge who was on annual leave arrived at the service shortly after the inspection had commenced and remained on site for the inspection and the closing meeting. The registered provider does not work directly with children and was not present during the inspection.

### 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.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the co-operation of the group general manager, designated 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.

(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)

A designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available in the service.

(b)

The general manager was the designated person in charge and was present for the duration of the inspection.

The files of the twenty-six staff members were reviewed, and the following was noted;

(2)(a)

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

(b)

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

(c)

Garda Vetting disclosures were available in respect of staff members.

(d)

Police vetting was available in respect of five staff members 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 staff.

(4)

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

### 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 adhered to during the inspection.

(2)

There were fifty pre-school children and eighteen school age children attending the service supervised directly by sixteen adults.

(8)(a)

The staff roster reviewed indicated that two adults are on the premises at all times.

### 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:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (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)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h) and (i).

### 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)

Children enjoyed arts and crafts, tabletop activities, free play, story time and outdoor play during the inspection.

Children made choices as to what they played with and what activity to participate in supported by staff.

All meals and snacks are freshly prepared by the cook. The daily menu plan reflected the provision of the food for breakfast, morning snack, dinner and afternoon snack. Children's dietary needs are catered for. A hot meal consisting of pasta, boiled ham, carbonara sauce and grated cheese was provided to the children between 12:00 and 13:00. Water and milk to drink were offered to children.

Children went to the toilet independently and were assisted where necessary. Staff reminded children to wash their hands after toileting. Regular nappy changes were carried out.

The pre-school rooms were laid out with low level tables and chairs. Materials were accessible to children on low level wooden shelving and included books, jigsaws, bricks, blocks, dolls, prams, arts and crafts and fine motor skill toys. Improvements in the physical and material environments and the lay out of the equipment and materials met the learning and developmental needs in the junior and senior playrooms since the last inspection on the 13 July 2022.

Good teamwork was observed amongst staff. Positive interactions were observed between staff and children. Eye contact was maintained, soft language tones were used and positive praise given to children on the completion of activities. Staff were familiar with children and their personalities. Staff worked in partnership with parents. A verbal handover was given on collection. A communication diary depicting the child's eating, sleeping and nappy changing routine was shared with parents.

## 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 main entrance door to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. Parents ring a bell to alert a staff member to gain access to the service.

##### Infection Control:

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after toileting. The nappy changing procedure was carried out correctly as per the service's nappy changing procedure. Children's items were labelled individually in storage baskets in the sanitary accommodation.

Fridges were available for the storage of perishable goods. Soothers and feeding bottles were individually identified and stored correctly.

##### Administration of Medication:

No medication was administered at the time of the inspection. Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature. The administration of medicine records showed that the administration of prescribed and non-prescription medication to a pre-school child was witnessed and carried out by two staff members.

##### Safe Sleep:

A separate sleep room was available in the service equipped with standard cots. A wall mounted thermometer and an electronic colour changing digital thermometer were in place to monitor the temperature of the sleep room. A cooler unit was in place and the temperature of the sleep room was recorded at 19°C. A record of the colour, position and breathing of sleeping children was noted in a sleep log. Children in the sleep room were physically checked every ten minutes. Low level beds were available to children over the age of two who required rest or sleep. Additional soft furnishings were available in the service for any child who required rest.

##### Fire Safety:

Emergency exits were unobstructed throughout the service.

## Outing:

Risk assessment documentation and checklists were in place in respect of outings conducted from the service.

## 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)

Five adults present were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available in the premises.

(2)(a)

Two first aid boxes were available in accessible and conspicuous locations in the service.

(b)

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

### 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 written record for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 12 July 2023.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms were serviced in February and May 2023 respectively.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service and the expiry date noted as 27 March 2024.

### 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 premises consists of a two-storey adapted residential building and a separate single storey unit located to the rear of the premises for school aged childcare. The structures visually appear to be stable in structure.
- (b)  
The main entrance door to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. The inspectors signed the visitor book on arrival at the service. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.
- (c)  
Openable windows provide both natural light and ventilation in the pre-school rooms. Wall vents were in place. The environmental room temperatures recorded were approximately 20 degrees Celsius. The light fittings were covered and fully operational to provide adequate artificial light to the rooms and sanitary accommodation.
- (d)  
The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. Evidence was available that the premises was rodent proofed on the 3 August 2023.  
The outdoor grass area to the rear of the service had been repaired and renovated since the last inspection on 13 July 2022.
- (e)  
Suitable sanitary accommodation was available for the number of children in attendance. Two separate staff toilets are available in the service. The sanitary accommodation and nappy changing area were ventilated by openable windows on the first floor and natural and mechanical ventilation on the ground floor. The sanitary accommodation was stocked with a sufficient supply of liquid soap and paper hand towel.

The water temperature at the wash hand basins was recorded at 38°C. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the pre-school rooms and in the associated sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

*(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

(2)  
The measurement of the rooms recorded for fifty children present indicated that there was sufficient space per child available as outlined below:

Baby Room (1)		
Age of Child	Space Required	Total Space Required
0 – 1 years	1 PT/ FDC @ (3.5 m2)	3.5m2
Total Space Available		14.178m2

Wobbler Room (2)		
Age of Child	Space Required	Total Space Required
1 – 2 years	2 PT/ FDC @ (2.8 m2)	5.6m2
Total Space Available		21.421m2

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Toddler Room (3)		
Age of Child	Space Required	Total Space Required
2 – 3 years	2 PT/ FDC @ (2.35 m2)	4.7m2
1 – 2 years	5 PT/ FDC @ (2.8 m2)	14.0m2
Total Space Available		27.888m2

  

Pre-School Room (4)		
Age of Child	Space Required	Total Space Required
3 – 6 years	18 PT/ FDC @ (2.3 m2)	41.4m2
Total Space Available		43.192m2

  

Playschool - Junior Room (5)		
Age of Child	Space Required	Total Space Required
2-3 years	10 PT/ FDC @ (2.35 m2)	23.50m2
Total Space Available		37.171m2