

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015LS078

Name of Service: Kiddiecare Childcare

Address of Service: Harbour Street, Mountmellick, Co. Laois

Eircode: R32 KV25

Name of Registered Provider: Michelle Bowes

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 24/10/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	45	PM	11

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Inspectorate
Child & Family Agency
Suite 7, Vista Primary Care
Ballymore Eustace road
Naas, Co. Kildare
W91 X38W.

Inspection undertaken by: F. Maher, S. Murray

Title: Early Years Inspector and Inspection Registration Manager

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

Kiddiecare Childcare is one of three services operated by the registered provider in counties Laois and Dublin and full day care, part time and sessional care and education is offered to children aged 1-6 years. Opening hours are from 08:00-18:00hrs, Monday-Friday. The service operates from a purpose built, single storey premises, located on the grounds of the Laois/Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB) premises in Mountmellick. Three pre-school rooms, a sleep room and kitchen are provided. A standalone unit to the rear of the premises has an office and large staff room. Several play areas are located to the rear and side of the building and carparking is available outside the service.

Staffing

There were nine adults present in the service on the day of the inspection; this included six staff members working directly with pre-school children. The registered provider was present and available to assist in the rooms as required, the office administrator and a member of the household staff was also present.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

Regulation 9(2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3), (4), (7)(a) - Management and Recruitment

Regulation 10 - Policies Procedures etc. of Pre-school Service

Regulation 11(1), (2), (8)(a) - Staffing Level

Regulation 19(1)(a), (3) - Health Welfare and Development of Child

Regulation 32 - Complaints

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 triggered following receipt of information to the inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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

© 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,
- © 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.

(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;

Compliance Information

(1)(a), (b)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required; the registered provider was the person in charge on the day of inspection.

© There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability, this information was also displayed in the entrance foyer of the service.

The record for 1 staff member, employed since the last inspection 10/07/2025, was reviewed.

(2)(a), (b)

Two written and verified references from a past employer or a reputable source were available as required in respect of the staff member whose records were reviewed.

© Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all employed staff members.

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

(d) Police vetting was not required for 1 newly employed adult who had not lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

One adult, recently employed to work directly with pre-school children, held a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(7)(a)

The registered provider advised the inspectors there was a comprehensive induction programme completed by all staff on commencement in the service and included all policies and procedures of the service. During the probationary period, individual meetings are held at three and six-monthly intervals for new staff members, this was confirmed by the registered provider.

There was documentary evidence provided to indicate that all staff must sign to confirm they had read the service policies and procedures.

Team meetings had taken place, and the documented agenda/minutes were reviewed on inspection, a team meeting was scheduled for November 2025. All staff had completed training in child protection as evidenced by the supporting documentation on file.

Supporting documentation indicated staff support and supervision meetings had commenced.

The person in charge on the day of inspection demonstrated their knowledge of their role and function in relation to child protection and their role as the designated liaison person. Staff members in the pre-school rooms also advised the inspectors they were aware of the designated liaison person and their role as staff members in relation to child protection and reporting processes within the service.

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 registered provider ensured that the required written policies, procedures, and statements specified in schedule 5 were in place in the service.

The content of the following policies was reviewed and met the requirement of the regulations:

- Behaviour management
- Complaints
- Accidents and Incidents
- Supervision of staff

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)

There were 45 children attending the service being supervised directly by 6 adults.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the Inspection.

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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(k) The service maintained accident and incident books which contained a record of accidents, injuries and incidents involving preschool children attending the service. A sample size of 26 accident and incident reports were assessed and contained all the relevant information and details, including staff and parental signatures and the completion of a risk assessment as necessary.

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

(1)(a)

Communication with parents occurred on a daily basis at the drop off and collection times. The registered provider also used a mobile phone application to update parents on day-to-day activities and included photographs posted to each individual family of their child engaging in activities as consented. Regular newsletters were also distributed to parents to provide information on upcoming events and face to face meetings can be arranged at any time as required.

Parents are invited into the service throughout the year and a Christmas ‘extravaganza’ is celebrated every year with the children and their parents.

(3)
The children were observed happy, content and relaxed within their pre-school room environments. Staff were observed being respectful towards the children in their care and gentle touch and voice tones were used. Children’s first names were used by the staff and there was emphasis on positive praise and encouragement. The staff in all rooms, in conversation with the inspectors, were very clear on what are and are not acceptable ways of responding to and caring for children and babies and described how they would comfort and reassure any child if they became upset, tired or distressed. The staff advised they were aware of the prohibited practices not to engage with when caring for children.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) (a),(b),(c)
The complaints policy referred to and documented the procedures to be followed as outlined in (1)(a),(b),(c). The registered provider advised that any complaint brought to their attention or to the attention of any staff member in relation to any aspect of the service, must be submitted in writing in adherence with the complaints policy of the service.