

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LS080
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Name of Service:	Kolbe Pre-School
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Address of Service:	48 Glenbarrow, Ballyfin Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois
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Eircode:	R32 NP77
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mairead Sheedy
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	15/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	2	PM	2
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
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Inspection undertaken by:	K. Murphy
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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 part of a multiple service operated by the Muiriosa Foundation Ltd. The age range of children that the service is registered to accommodate is two to six years. The regular hours of operation for the service are between 09:00 and 15:00 on a Monday to Friday basis. The children currently enrolled in the service are attending between the hours of 09:30 – 13:30.

The Early Years' Service is located in a single storey purposely adapted residential premises. Set down and onsite parking facilities are available. The premises currently provide three multi-function rooms, a kitchen/dining room, a utility room and an office. An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the service. The service is urban in its location in a residential area on the outskirts of the town of Portlaoise, County Laois.

Staffing

Six adults are employed for the service. The designated person in charge and four other staff members were present during the inspection. The registered provider is not part of the staff complement 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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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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 II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Compliance Information

Since the last inspection on the 19 January 2023 the registered provider submitted change in circumstances to the Agency in respect of a new designated person in charge (18.07.24) and a change to the age range of children that the service can accommodate (24.03.25). These changes were approved by Tusla.

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.

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

(b)

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

Six files including the file of the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available in respect of the files reviewed from past employers or from a source other than a past employer.

- (c)
A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)
Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4)
Staff working directly with children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at levels 5 to 8 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 exceeded during the inspection.
- (2)
There were two children attending the service supervised directly by five staff members including the designated person in charge.
- (8)(a)

The staff roster and attendance records reviewed indicated that at least two adults are present throughout the opening hours of the service.

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)(i)(j) 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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Staff provide one to one care to each child ensuring that their needs are promptly identified and addressed. A multidisciplinary approach is used to develop a detailed individual care plan for each child attending the service.

The staff present were observed offering choices to the children, using the child's name, making eye contact and speaking in a positive tone to the children. Staff were observed responding promptly to the non-verbal and verbal cues of each child. Staff constantly praised each child present for their efforts and achievements.

The staff worked well together as a team organising activities and implementing the daily routine which included all aspects of care, development and education. Visual schedules, objects of reference and Lámh were incorporated into all activities to support individual children to predict activities and promote emotional security through routine.

Individual preferences were accommodated as to what and how long children wish to engage with specific chosen activities. As part of themed activity for the Autumn season and as part of Halloween events the two children supported by three staff members went on an outing to the "Pumpkin Patch Kildare" this was a source of joy and excitement to the children.

The service operated in partnership with parents and guardians and exchange of information and an update on the child's day is provided in person at drop off and collection time, during regular scheduled phones calls and meetings.

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-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(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.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable and adequate play and work equipment were provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for sensory play, tabletop activities and arts and crafts.

(b)

A height adjustable motorised bed and low-level beds were in place in the service if any child who required sleep. Soft furnishings in the pre-school rooms supported rest and relaxation for the children. No child is currently availing of sleep in the service.

(3) (a)

An outdoor play area with a natural grass and all-weather absorbent surface areas is attached to the rear of the service and accessed directly by a ramp from the utility room located to the rear of the service. The outdoor play area was equipped with a double swing unit and a stationary wooden train for use as an imaginative play resource and as a sheltered seating area.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The three pre-school rooms had low level shelving with equipment and materials accessible to the children. Individually designed chairs and work equipment were used in the service. A range of therapeutic and developmentally appropriate play materials and equipment to stimulate each area of the child's development were available. All materials were organised with pictures and words in a manner to be appealing, visible and accessible to the children.

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 to ensure the safety of the children within. Visitor access was controlled. The inspector signed the visitor book on arrival. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. The pre-school rooms and the sanitary accommodation were ventilated by natural ventilation with windows open.

Warm water, hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. The temperature of the water recorded at the wash hand basins was approximately 33 degrees Celsius.

A refrigerator was available for the storage of beverages and perishable foods in the kitchen/ dining area.

Foot operated pedal bins were available in the service for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available if a child presented with a high temperature and was stored safely in the service.

Fire Safety:

Fire exit routes were unobstructed and a fire assembly point was located to the front of the premises. Personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPS) were in place in respect of each child.

Outing:

Risk assessment and checklists relating to the outings carried out from the service were available for review.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The records of arrival and departure reviewed verified that each child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by a nominated staff member.

(3)(a)

All entry to the service with the exception of (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) has to be approved by a staff member.

(b)
A visitor log was in place to record the details and purpose of all visitors to the service.

(4)
The visitor log is retained throughout the annual operation of 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)
The designated person in charge and one other staff member were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)
A fully equipped first aid box were readily available in the service.

(b)
A first aid box was accessible to the adults caring for the 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 29 September 2025.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced in January 2025. The smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in August 2025.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in conspicuous positions throughout the service.

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 insurance cover for the number of children and the activities of the organisation and associated services.

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 designated person in charge provided the records and information necessary for the inspection.