

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH042
Name of Service:	Navan Community Childcare CLG
Address of Service:	Beechmount Home Park, Navan, Co. Meath
Eircode:	C15 WCP7
Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Daly
Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
Date 1 of Inspection:	21/05/2024
Date 2 of Inspection:	22/05/2024

No of pre-school children: Day 1	AM	65	PM	38
Day 2	AM	65	PM	38

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Family Resource Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham, D Murray & S Taaffe
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

Navan Community Childcare CLG. is a community based childcare service located in an industrial estate within the local community in Navan. This service was established in 2009 by the Crann Support Group facilitating full day care, part time and sessional pre-school service for children aged 0-6 years. The facilities also include an outdoor preschool and a school aged service. The service operates from 7.45am-6.00pm each weekday. There are five care rooms indoors, the Nursery, 1-2 Room, 2-3 Room, 3-5 Room, and the Indoor Preschool. An Outdoor Pre-School is available catering for children who wish to avail of a pre-school in the outdoor environment. In addition to the outdoor pre-school, outdoor play areas are available and directly accessible from the individual care rooms except the Indoor Preschool room who use the outdoor play area to the front of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider employs a manager, deputy manager and two assistant manager and sixteen childcare practitioners who all work directly with the children (two of whom also provide AIM support to children). Additionally, four staff who work with school aged children only, one receptionist, three staff employed in the kitchen, a bus driver and bus escort are also employed. On the day of inspection eighteen staff members were present who provider direct care to pre-school children, three staff who work with school aged children only, a receptionist, and two kitchen staff which includes the chef. The deputy manager and two assistant managers were present on the days of inspection and had a named person available to deputise as required. The adults working directly with children in the service have completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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.

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 cooperation 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

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) Thirty staff files were reviewed.

(a) & (b) Two written and validated references were available for each of the staff members.

- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff members, which were sought within the required three year timeframe.
- (d) Police vetting was required and was available for four staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) All staff members who provided direct care to children all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.
- (6A) Two staff members were employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model

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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (2) In total 16 staff cared directly for 65 children. The manager and deputy manager provided relief for breaks and nappy changing.
- The adult/child ratio was correct as detailed below. Auxiliary staff including kitchen staff and cleaning staff were present.

Day One

- **Nursery Room:** one adult cared for 3 children aged between 10 months to 1 year 9 months of age, of which 2 children attended for full day care.
- **1 – 2 Room:** two adults cared for 7 children aged between 1 year and 2 years, of which 5 children attended for full day care.
- **2 –3 Room:** two adults cared for 9 children aged between 2 years and 3 years, of which 6 children attended for full day care.
- **3-5 Room:** one adult cared for 4 children aged between 3 years and 5 years, of which 1 child attended for full day care.
- **Indoor Pre-School Room:** Three adults (one adult provided AIM support) cared for 20 children aged between 3 years and 4 years, of which 14 children attended for full day care.
- **Outdoor Pre-school:** Five adults (one adult provided AIM support) cared for 22 children aged between 3 years and 5 years 8 months, of which 9 children attended for full day care.

Day Two

- **Nursery Room:** one adult cared for 2 children aged between 10 months to 1 year 9 months of age, of which 2 children attended for full day care.
- **1 – 2 Room:** two adults cared for 7 children aged between 1 year and 2 years, of which 5 children attended for full day care.
- **2 –3 Room:** two adults cared for 10 children aged between 2 years and 3 years, of which 8 children attended for full day care.
- **3-5 Room:** one adult cared for 4 children aged between 3 years and 5 years, of which 1 child attended for full day care.
- **Indoor Pre-school Room:** Three adults (one adult provided AIM support) cared for 20 children aged between 3 years and 5 years, attending for a sessional service which 11 children attended for full day care.
- **Outdoor Pre-school:** Five adults (one adult provided AIM support) cared for 22 children aged between 3 years and 5 years 8 months, of which 9 children attended for full day care.

(8) The registered provider ensured there were at least two adults always present on the premises, confirmed by staff attendance and documentation.

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

(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 following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- In the Nursery Room and 1-2 Room any child who became upset was comforted and reassured with hugs and gentle soft tones.
- Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions observed. The older children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning with all children observed enjoying meaningful, sustained play with their peers.
- The staff members sat and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required whilst encouraging and supporting language development.
- Sleep practices were child led with some children availing of an early morning nap while the older children were placed to sleep for a scheduled period of rest at the service's designated sleep time after dinner.
- Parents provided all-weather outdoor clothing including waterproof rain gear, wellingtons and sun hats for the children. A heated wet room in the Outdoor Pre-school facilitated mildly damp rain gear to be dried overnight while this clothing was sent home at the end of the day if very wet.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed on “The Family Tree’ in the care rooms.
 - The staff members were observed to be very caring, kind and attentive in their interactions with the children and demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to each child’s individual needs, likes and preferences.
 - Staff members meet the parents at pick-up time and any issues pertaining to the child was discussed.
- Overall, the children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

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.
- (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)(b) The Nursery cot room had 5 cots for children under 2 years requiring sleep. The 1 – 2 room had 10 cots for children under 2 years requiring sleep. Sleep mats were placed on the floor for the children over 2 years to sleep on in the 2 - 3 room. Within the care rooms there were soft furnishings, mats and cushions for children to take a break from activities and rest, if needed.
- (3)(a) An outdoor space was located in front of the building and to the back of the building which was enclosed with fencing, and secure side gates.

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 service was equipped with adequate and suitable furniture and play equipment and materials to meet the needs of the children as demonstrated by the following examples:

- In the five indoor care rooms the play materials and equipment were positioned on low level shelving to enable the children to select and replace items of interest.
- The care rooms in the service were spacious and enabled the children to move around the rooms freely. The rooms were laid out with areas of interest including dress up, dolls and buggies, construction areas, jigsaws and arts and crafts areas which supported all areas of development. There was a wide range of natural, recycled and open-ended materials to enhance the children’s play experiences.
- Throughout the care rooms there were a broad range of books available to support the children’s language development located alongside comfortable rest areas.
- An appreciation of the environment, plant and animal life and nature were dominant themes in the Outdoor Pre-school where the children were readily facilitated to engage with the natural world. Multi-sensory experiences in the outdoor play areas provided the children with opportunities for learning, challenge and sensorial play activities under the supervision and support of staff members. For example, three well-tended raised beds provided the children with the opportunity to plant and grow vegetables, with potatoes and peas having recently been planted, thriving rhubarb plants already established, and cabbage plants observed being planted by the children with assistance from a staff member on the first day of inspection. A separate large soil digging patch with hoes, shovels, spades, buckets and diggers was provided, with children observed to busily play in this area during the inspection. The Outdoor Pre-school contained a large number of mature trees, hedging and plants, wooden teepees, large climb-through pipes, and a willow circle and tunnel which facilitated small and large group activities and hide-and-seek games. The Outdoor Pre-school was also well-resourced with a broad range of equipment and structures to support physical and energetic play. These included two climbing frames constructed in the form of a full-sized tractor made from wood with real tractor tyres and a full-sized farm trailer with climbing wall and slides attached, and wooden posts set up as balance beams. A wooden cabin equipped with books,

arts and crafts supplies and a play kitchen was provided for shelter and indoor activities if required during particularly inclement weather conditions. A separate wooden cabin was set up as an enclosed covered sand hut equipped with plenty of sand and digging toys. A room called 'The Den' which was located between the Outdoor Pre-school kitchen and the Indoor Pre-school Room contained child-sized tables and chairs, arts and crafts supplies and books, and child-sized picnic benches were provided outdoors.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The service had a 4-week menu plan with a selection of meals ranging from meat and poultry with a variety of snacks. For the children attending the service on a full day care basis, breakfast was available from 7.45am to 9:30am consisting of a choice of cereals and toast. Snack was served at 10am which consisted of brown bread and banana and apple chunks, children attending the sessional service brought in their own lunch from home. The main meal of the day was served at 12md which was roast chicken fillets, mixed vegetables, mashed potato, and gravy. Strawberry smoothies and rice cakes was served at 15.00pm. Water was the drink of choice with individual bottles/cups for the children in the care 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The main door to the service was secured and the outdoor spaces were enclosed and had secure gates. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor space.
- An outdoor risk assessment was conducted on a daily basis.
- In discussion with the inspectors, staff members demonstrated an awareness of the need to provide appropriate supervision both through sight and sound when the children were engaging in outdoor play in the natural environment to ensure their safety while supporting their development in relation to confidence, coordination and balance.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- Childrens pacifiers were placed in individual boxes and labelled.

Safe Sleep:

- Temperature of the cot room was maintained between 16 to 20⁰C while children were sleeping.

Fire Safety:

The following fire safety measures were observed:

- Fire drills were conducted on a monthly basis.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Thermostatically controlled warm water was not available for hand washing at the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation in the Outdoor Pre-school on the first day of inspection. The water in the three hot taps, in addition to the cold taps, felt cold to touch. Cold water does not support pre-school children to effectively wash their hands.
2. One of the two liquid soap dispensers was empty in the sanitary accommodation adjacent to the outdoor play area accessed by the pre-school children attending the Indoor Pre-school Room on the first day of inspection. This did not facilitate the children to wash their hands effectively.

3. In the Indoor Pre-school Room and the 3 to 5 Room, the children's snacks provided from home, some of which contained meat and dairy produce, were stored in their bags at room temperature on the first day of inspection. This increased the risk of bacteria multiplying in the perishable food items.
4. In the nappy changing area for the 2 to 3 room the bin for disposal of nappies was not pedal operated. The pedal bin in the care room was broke with the lid not lifting. All nappy bins and bins for food and contaminated waste must be pedal operated and have a non-touch mechanism.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

What actions have you taken to **correct** the non-compliance?

1. The boiler has been replaced when we were inspected it had already been ordered and now has been installed.
2. When staff open up in the mornings, they will check the outside toilets for supplies and sign and date a sheet to say they have.
3. When staff intend to bring children outside for lunch, they will store the food in the afterschool's fridge which is in close proximity to the preschool garden.
4. The bins in the nappy room and also the classroom has been replaced.

What actions have you taken to **prevent** the non-compliance in the future?

1. We have implemented a new monthly check system for the boiler to ensure that any signs of wear and tear a new one will be ordered or the current one fixed.
2. Regular inspection of the toilets and to ensure the daily cleaning sheet is being signed.
3. The 3-5 room will no longer permit snacks from home as the space cannot facilitate a fridge.
4. Regular inspection of the bins to ensure they function as supposed too.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photograph of new boiler installed and new checklist to ensure its working.
- Sign in sheets to show toilets have been checked to ensure adequate supply of soap in dispensers.
- Photos of signs reminded staff to place perishable items in the fridge.
- Photograph of new bin in place in nappy changing area.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non compliances in Regulation 23.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) Records demonstrated that the date and time of attendance and departure in respect of each pre-school child is recorded on a daily basis.

(3) (a) All persons are approved by an employee prior to entry to the pre-school.

(b) Visitors are announced and approved by an authorised staff member on arrival, the visitors' details are entered into the visitors' book.

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders training and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and safely stored in the premises.

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.

(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) Records were available to show that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill was on 20/05/2024.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises. The smoke alarms were last serviced in February 2024.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous positions on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a valid insurance certificate for 110 preschool children with an expiry date of 27th March 2025.