

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH086				
Name of Service:	KC Childcare Ltd.				
Address of Service:	Kilmainhamwood, Kells, Co. Meath				
Eircode:	AB2 PW72				
Name of Registered Provider:	Orla Vaughan				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	06/03/2024				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>56</td> <td>PM</td> <td>41</td> </tr> </table>	AM	56	PM	41
AM	56	PM	41		
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				
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

KC Childcare Ltd is a community based childcare facility in a rural village of Kilmainhamwood in Co Meath. The service provides a sessional, part-time and full day care service to children from 0-6 years and is registered to operate from 07:00am to 6:30pm. Eligible children participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. The service consists of the following 6 childcare rooms:

The Baby room which catered for children from 6 to 13 months.

The Toddler room facilitated the care of children from 14 months to 2 years.

The Wiggly Fingers room provided care for children from 2 to 3 years.

The Sticky Fingers room (ECCE only) provides care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 5 years with a school age service provided in the afternoons.

The Crafty Fingers and the Busy Fingers Rooms (ECCE full day care) provides care and education to children from 3 to 5 years.

The School Aged room which is exclusively used by school aged children. Other facilities included a kitchen/staff room, sensory room, office, sanitary facilities, and a reception area

Staffing

There are twenty-nine staff members employed in the service which includes the manager and assistant manager, 2 supervisors, 22 childcare practitioners, 2 cooks and a maintenance staff member.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, assistant manager, 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.

(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 inspector arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

Twenty-nine staff files were reviewed, and the following was noted.

(2)(a) Forty-three written and validated references were from a past employers.

(b) Fifteen written and validated references were from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all 29 staff members in the service, adhering to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for the four staff members that had lived outside the jurisdiction for more 6 consecutive months.

(4) All childcare staff members had 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.

(6) (a) Three 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.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-

(a) a sessional pre-school service, and

(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The adult/child ratio was correct;

- **Baby Room:** two adults cared for 5 children of which 4 were attending full day care (aged between 5 months and 1 years 2 months). One child was transitioning into the service for an hour on the day of inspection.
- **Toddler Room:** two adults cared for 8 children, all children were attending full day care (aged between 1 year 2 months to 2 years).
- **Wiggly Fingers:** one adult cared for 6 children attending full day care (aged 2 years to 3 years).
- **Sticky fingers:** four adults two of whom were providing AIM support cared for 13 children, 5 children were attending full day care (aged between 2 years 8 months and 5 years).
- **Crafty Fingers:** one adult cared for 5 children, 3 attending for full day care and 2 attending a part-time service (aged between 2 years and 5 years).
- **Busy Fingers:** three adults of whom 1 was providing AIM support worker cared for 19 children, 15 attending full day care, (aged between 3 years and 5 years).

(8)(a) According to the staff roster, the manager ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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

Basic needs of the children:

- Children were provided with adequate food and drink. Parents provided the snack food for their children. Healthy snacks were observed on the day consisted of fruit, crackers, cheese and sandwiches.
- Children were independent regarding their toileting needs and the registered provider gave gentle reminders regarding handwashing.
- Free movement of the children was facilitated in the daily routine of the service. Short periods of adult initiated activities was interspersed with free play where children could choose their own activity and moved between the different interest areas in the room. The themes of the week were "Mothers Day" and "St Patricks Day" with artwork and crafts displayed to reflect these themes.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning. Children were observed enjoying imaginative, energetic play with both their peers and staff members.

Supporting relationships around the children:

- Children were supported to engage positively with each other with play activities that taught them how to take turns, to listen, to share play resources and be mindful of those around them.
- Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed them by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner. The staff provided the children with comfort when they became upset - holding them and talking to them in soft tones. Individual daily diaries were maintained in the Baby room and daily sheets of the children day were recorded in the Toddler room and shared with parents to aid communication.
- The atmosphere between the children and staff member was relaxed and calm.

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)(b) Two cot rooms were available both with 4 cots each, for the children under 2 years who required sleep. In the Wiggly Fingers and Crafty Fingers rooms stackable beds were available for children over 2 years to sleep on. 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) There was a large outdoor area to the rear of the premises which was divided into 2 areas and enclosed by fencing and walls with 2 secure side gates. A partially sheltered area directly outside the main door permitted outdoor play in all types of weather. Leading on from this area was a soft tiled area extending to the 2 grass areas.

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

- Play materials and equipment in all care rooms incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts and a range of suitable toys. All materials and equipment were visible and easily accessible to the children on open shelving at their height which supported children to have choices in selecting and replacing items of interest. Tables and chairs in each room were appropriate to the age and stage of development of pre-school children attending the specific care rooms. The care rooms were adequately resourced and had areas of interest with supporting equipment materials, art and crafts and toys.
- Equipment in the outdoor areas included small slides, play houses, fairy garden, tyres ,sand pits, climbing tunnel, activity units, a maze made of hedging,see-saw,musical board, wooden train, bus, boat, goal post and an activity unit with a slide and swing.

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 variety of dishes ranging from vegetarian, meat, fish and poultry cooked on site. On the day of inspection, the children had a variety of cereals, fruit and milk or water to drink for breakfast. Morning snack consisted of banana and rice cakes with the children attending the ECCE session having their own healthy lunch brought from home. The main meal of the day was served at 12md to 12:30 pm which consisted of chicken casserole and ice cream for dessert. Evening tea was served at 3:30pm to 4pm which consisted of brown bread and cheese. Additional snacks were available for the children staying until 6pm if required. Water and milk were the drinks of choice.

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 door into the service were electronically secured and controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. The staff members completed indoor and outdoor risk assessments daily to promptly manage any risk(s) identified.

Infection Control:

There was an infection control policy in place. Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towel, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established and observed. Nappy changing was carried out, as observed, in line with the nappy change policy of the service. Gloves, plastic aprons, and nappy sacks were available for hygienic nappy changing practices. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues, nappies and paper towel. Written cleaning schedules were maintained for all room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Safe Sleep:

Staff advised the inspectors that 10-minute sleep check observations were completed on all sleeping children and the colour, position and breathing of sleeping children in their care was documented. The sleep room was ventilated by means of openable windows and air conditioning units to control the environmental room temperature. The sleep room temperature was recorded at 19°C at 11:15am, this was within the recommended temperature of 16-20°C for sleep room environments.

Fire Safety:

Regular monthly fire drills were carried out and records maintained. All fire exits were easily identifiable and unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

In the sanitary facilities off the Sticky Fingers care room there was a foul odour and staining around the base of the toilets.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

A seal was put down at the base of both toilets to prevent odour seeping up from the pipes under them.

Preventive Action

Seals checked for cracks on all toilets monthly, if odours are noticed due to broken seals at any time management will address immediately.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of toilets with a seal around the base of the toilet.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance 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 course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 20/02/2024.

(b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 28/09/2023.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 80 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2023 to 27/03/2024