

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 of Inspection:	23/05/2023			
No of pre-school children:	AM	58	PM	36
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 9:15 am to 12:15 pm. The service consists of the following 6 childcare rooms:

The **Baby Room** which catered for children from 3 months to 17 months.

The **Toddler Room** facilitated the care of children from 18 months to 2.5 years.

The **Wiggly Fingers Room** provided care for children from 2.6 years 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 Room** and the **Busy Fingers Room** (ECCE full day care) provides care and education to children from 3 years 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-six staff employed in the service of which 5 are full time staff which includes the manager and assistant manager, 3 CE workers, 1 TUS worker, 15 staff are part time, 1 cook 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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19, 20, 21, 22 & 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the following rooms: Baby, Toddler, Wiggly Finger, Crafty Fingers and Busy Fingers Rooms and did not include the Sticky Fingers Room.

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, 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.

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.

(2) The Manager confirmed there were three new staff employed since the last inspection in 2021, these files were reviewed at this inspection.

(a) Three written and validated references were from a past employers.

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

- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the three new staff members in the service.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as neither staff member had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) All three staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 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 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 attending the pre-school service.
- (2) The adult/child ratio was correct;
- **Baby Room:** two adults cared for 4 children attending full day care (aged between 10 months and 1 years 4 months).
 - **Toddler Room:** two adults cared for 8 children, 7 children attending full day care and 1 child attending parttime care(aged between 1 year 6 months to 2 years).
 - **Wiggly Fingers:** one adult cared for 5 children attending full day care (aged 2 years to 2 years 6 months).
 - **Sticky fingers:** three adults and one AIM support worker cared for 20 children all attending a sessional ECCE service (aged between 2 years 8 months and 4 years 5 months).

- **Crafty Fingers:** one adult cared for 7 children, 5 attending for full day care and 2 attending a sessional service (aged between 3 years and 5 years).
- **Busy Fingers:** two adults and 1 AIM support worker cared for 20 children, 15 attending full day care, 2 children attending part time care and 3 attending a sessional service (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

(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:

- The staff members in all care rooms were observed encouraging and collaborating with children in their play activities. They used welcoming facial expressions and gentle vocal tones when engaging with the children and showed a keen interest in what each child was doing.
- Children individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required. In the Baby and Toddler rooms children who became upset or who were settling in were given one to one attention and were nurtured and cuddled. 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.
- Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care.
- The staff members sat and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required whilst encouraging conversation and extending interactions.

- Transitions were handled smoothly with staff members giving the children ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- As the day was warm the staff members applied sun cream and sun hats on the children before going outside.

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 Wall' in the care rooms.
- The children showed confidence around the staff members and an eagerness to engage with them in conversations and play. The themes of the month in the care rooms were insects, nature with the planting of sunflower and graduation.
- 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) Two cot rooms were available both with 4 cots each ,for the children under 2 years who required sleep. In the Toddler room and Wiggly Fingers room 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

- All the care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving at their height which supported children to select and become involved in meaningful, sustained play experiences.
- Equipment in the outdoor areas included small slides, play houses, 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 for breakfast. Morning snack consisted of banana and toast with the children attending the ECCE session having their own healthy lunch brought from home. The main meal of the day was served at 12:30 pm which consisted of minced beef curry with vegetables and rice.. Evening tea was served at 3:30 to 4pm which consisted of waffles and beans. 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The main door to the service was secured with a buzzer system and the outdoor space was enclosed and secured. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- All play materials were placed on stable based shelving units. Play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children present in the service.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- An indoor and outdoor risk assessment was conducted on a daily basis.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- Liquid soap, paper hand towel and warm water not exceeding 43^o C was available at the sinks in the sanitary facilities. The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.

Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- Thermometers were available in the cot room off the Baby room and in the sleep room for the Toddler room to ensure the temperature of the rooms were maintained between 16 to 20^o C while children were sleeping.
- A sleep log on each child recording the position, colour and breathing pattern was recorded at 10 minutes intervals.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. The bin in the sanitary facilities off the Crafty Fingers room was not pedal operated and the nappy bin in the changing room in the staff toilet was not touch free which poses a risk of cross infection. The pedal bin in the Toddler room was broken and therefore required staff and children to handle it to open.
2. In the Busy Fingers Room perishable items including meat and dairy products provided by parents/guardians for the morning snack were stored in the children's bags at room temperature rather than in a fridge. This increased the risk of bacteria multiplying to levels which could result in food poisoning.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

1. A second pedal bin which is hands free was bought and replaced the bin that was in the second toilet changing room. The broken bin in the Toddler room was replaced with a new pedal bin.
2. In Busy Fingers the children's lunch bags are checked daily by staff and any perishable items including meat and dairy products provided by parents for morning snack will be removed and labelled and stored in the kitchen fridge.

Preventative Action:

1. The pedal bins in all the rooms will be checked daily to ensure they are touch free thus reducing the chances of cross infection. Management will be notified immediately when any equipment is not fit for purpose and will be replaced.
2. To reduce the risk of bacteria multiplying all perishable food is provided by parents for their children's morning snack is now removed promptly in the morning from the classroom by staff and stored in the kitchen fridge perishable foods are no longer left in their bags.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider addresses the non-compliances in Regulation 23.

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.*
- (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 was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the day of inspection 23/05/2023.
- (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 was last serviced on 27/07/2022. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 10/01/2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the care rooms.

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.