

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH086
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Name of Service:	KC Childcare Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Kilmainhamwood, Kells, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	AB2 PW72
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Name of Registered Provider:	Noelle Coyne
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	16/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	48	PM	34
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, 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 12:30 pm. The service consists of the following 6 childcare rooms:

The Baby room which catered for children from 6 months to 14 months.

The Toddler room facilitated the care of children from 15 months to 2 years.

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

The Crafty Fingers and the Busy Fingers Rooms (ECCE full day care) provide care and education to children from 2 years 11 months to 5 years.

Additionally, a School Aged room is available which is 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 members employed in the service which includes the manager, supervisor, 22 childcare practitioners and 2 cooks of which one also works with school aged children.

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 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
- (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 inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(c) A clear management structure that identified specific roles of each employee was displayed in the reception area.

Twenty-six staff files were reviewed.

(2) (a)(b) Fifty two validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for all adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for 1 staff member. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Twenty 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

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 attending the pre-school service.

(2) The adult/child ratio was correct;

- **Baby Room:** two adults cared for 4 children of which all children were attending full day care (aged between 11 months and 1 years 2 months).
- **Toddler Room:** two adults cared for 6 children, all children were attending full day care (aged between 1 year 2 months to 2 years).

- **Wiggly Fingers:** Two adults cared for 3 children attending full day care (aged between 15 months and 2 years).
- **Sticky fingers:** Two adults cared for 13 children, 10 children were attending full day care (aged between 2 years 6 months and 4 years). One child was attending parttime hours and 2 child was attending sessional hours.
- **Crafty Fingers:** one adult cared for 8 children, 7 attending for full day care and 1 attending a part-time service (aged between 2 years 11 months and 4 years).
- **Busy Fingers:** three adults cared for 14 children, 4 attending full day care and 10 children attending a sessional service, (aged between 2 years 10 months 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 of Children:

- The adults treated the children in a kind and caring manner and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults conversed with the children in a sensitive and respectful manner, used soft tones of voice, engaged with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance and comfort. The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings and using the toilet. Staff supervised and treated the children in a sensitive manner during nappy changes and toileting. Nappies were changed frequently and on an individual need's basis. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care and nasal care appropriate to their age and level of development. The infants sleep was attended to on an individual basis. The infants were encouraged to feed themselves and promoted to be independent. Appropriate

crockery and feeding utensils were provided in each room and these periods were observed to be relaxed and unhurried. The adults offered praise and encouragement, and children were respected and supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities. The children in each room were offered a range of developmentally challenging play and learning activities and the children were observed to be fully engaged and included in all activities in the indoor and outdoor environment.

- Children were observed enjoying imaginative, energetic and messy outdoor play with both their peers and staff members. Staff supported children’s learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. The curriculum was child led with the themes of the month being “Settling In”, “All About Me” and “Emotions.”

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

- The staff demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge of the children’s preferences, interests, and individual capabilities. The adults followed the children’s lead in the care rooms and the children were supported in individual and group play.
- The rooms accommodated visual routine displays demonstrating photographic illustrations to support and include all children in the programme of care. The children were notified and consulted in advance of changes in the activities. The transitions in the programme of care were completed cohesively in a calm manner in the care rooms. The adults communicated informally with parents/guardians on messaging system and during collection periods.

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 Wiggly Fingers 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 which were divided into different areas of interest.

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, digging area,climbing tunnel, activity units, a maze made of hedging, see-saw, musical board, wooden train, bus, boat, goal post, picnic benches 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 crackerbread and fruit 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 ham served with fresh vegetables and mashed potato with orange segments for dessert. Evening tea was served at 3:30pm to 4pm which consisted of waffles 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 was 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 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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for 1 staff member. However, the vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Corrective Action

Garda Vetting was renewed for the member of staff that was not dated within the previous 3 years. It is currently on file since the 1st of October 2025. A copy of Garda Renewal vetting has been updated and is enclosed with CAPA Form as proof.

Preventive Action:

The manager will check all staff files to ensure that they have will have Renewal of Garda Vetting carried out prior to their 3 years' time line in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Notice EYI-RN12.3

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Garda vetting for the staff member received by the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The response and assurances given from the registered provider has addressed the noncompliance.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) A record was kept of each child's time of arrival and departure on a daily basis by the staff members.

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 was on 18/08/2025.
- (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 fire fighting equipment was last serviced in June 2025. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 13/06/2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed 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 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 28th March 2025 to the 27th March 2026.