

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN019
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Name of Service:	Crafty Kids Ltd
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Address of Service:	Unit 1 Gortakeegan, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan
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Eircode:	H18 HP20
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Name of Registered Provider:	Clare McEnroe, Eve McCabe
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	04/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	60	PM	54
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84
Inspection undertaken by:	S Mc Kenna & M Mc Donnell
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

Crafty Kidz Ltd is a privately owned service which is registered to provide full day and sessional care to a maximum of 81 pre-school children aged 0 to 6 years and operates from 7.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a two-storey converted industrial unit on the outskirts of Monaghan town. There are 4 care rooms in operation, Preschool Rooms 1 and 2 are located on the first floor. The Toddler Room and the Nursery Room is located on the ground floor. The ancillary accommodation consists of an office, a kitchen, staff room, a sleep room and sanitary areas with nappy changing facilities. There are three outdoor play areas located directly outside the premises. The service is registered for school aged childcare, however currently no school age children attend the service during the school calendar year. There is car parking available outside the premises.

Staffing

The service employs a total of twenty staff which includes the two registered providers. The two registered providers cover in the care rooms when required. Seventeen staff members, one of whom is employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) work directly with the preschool children on a daily basis. One staff member is employed as a cook.

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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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 25 First Aid and Regulation 29 Premises.

However, on inspection, an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 16. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation in this report.

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.

Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on 04 February 2026 in relation to the hot surface temperature of one of the radiators in the Toddler room which was found at 58°C. An adequate response to address the risk identified was received from the registered provider on 04 February 2026.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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, who is the registered provider, and a named person to deputise in their absence.
- (b) Following discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation, the designated person in charge or the named person in charge was on the premises.
- (c) A management structure was in place, which was clearly identifiable through review of the staff roster on display, staff information on display and discussion with the staff team.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on the inspection

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and through discussion with the registered provider onsite, it was determined that 4 new staff members had been employed since the last inspection. The references on file for 16 staff were compliant upon the service's last inspection; therefore, they were not reviewed upon this inspection.

(a) (b) Of the 4 new staff files, review the following was available;

A total of 3 written and validated references from a previous employer were on file.

A total of 5 written and validated references from a reputable source were on file.

(c) Garda vetting for 14 staff reviewed upon the last inspection met regulatory compliance; therefore, they were not reviewed upon this inspection. Four staff members whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal, and the 4 new staff vetting records were reviewed as follows;

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 4 new staff, and a renewal had been obtained for one staff member whose vetting was due for renewal.

The registered provider did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice for 3 out of the 4 staff whose vetting required renewal every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Employment records of 16 staff employed were reviewed at the services' last inspection and regulatory compliance was achieved; therefore, were not reviewed upon this inspection.

A review of the employment history for the 4 newly employed staff demonstrated that no adults had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. Therefore, police vetting was not required.

(4) Documentary evidence reviewed at the last inspection for 15 childcare staff, and upon this inspection for 4 childcare staff, confirmed that the staff employed to work directly with children held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications. A qualification for the cook is not required.

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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 was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at maximum attendance as follows;

- Three adults cared for 14 children aged 1 year 4 months to 2 years in the Nursery, all of whom attended on a full day care basis.
- Three adults cared for 10 children aged 2 to 3 years in the Toddler room, all of whom attended on a full day care basis.
- Three adults cared for 14 children aged 3 years 2 months to 3 years 10 months in Preschool 1 in the morning, of whom 1 attended on a sessional basis, and 13 attended on part time or full-day care basis.
One child from Preschool 2 joined this room in the afternoon when three adults cared for 14 children.
- Three adults cared for 22 children aged 3 years 8 months to 4 years 10 months in Preschool 2 in the morning, of whom 5 attended on a sessional basis, and 17 attended on part time or full day care basis, of whom one child moved to Preschool room 1 in the afternoon and 16 remained in Preschool 2.

In addition to the above, the registered provider was available to assist in care rooms if required.

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(8) A review of the staff roster demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

Non-Compliance Information

(h) Records reviewed at 11.58am in the Nursery room did not adequately reflect each child's attendance on the day of the inspection. Upon review, the record of attendance book did not have any children signed in on the day, and there was no sign-in or out times for the day before the inspection. It is acknowledged that when the inspector brought this to the staff's attention, the records for the day previous (Monday) and the day of the inspection were completed retrospectively.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(h) The attendance records for the day prior to the inspection and the day of the inspection were completed immediately when this was brought to the attention of the staff. Staff were reminded of the requirement that each child's attendance must be recorded daily with accurate sign in and sign out times. The procedure for completing daily attendance records has been reviewed with the staff team to ensure that attendance records are completed in real time throughout the day. The person in charge and room leaders will monitor attendance records daily to ensure they are maintained accurately and in line with regulatory requirements.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of completed child attendance records.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered providers and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliance.

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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

The following examples demonstrate how children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs

Snack and meal times were observed be relaxed and used as opportunities for the adults to sit with the children and engage in conversations. The staff were observed to feed younger babies where required, while encouraging children's independence to feed themselves where they were capable.

The children's drink bottles were available to them throughout their day. A hot meal of chicken curry and rice with vegetables was served to the children at 1.30 pm. Meal options are adjusted where dietary requirements are present.

The children's nappies were changed in line with their daily routines. The older children were observed to use the toilet independently, and support was provided by staff when needed. Spare clothing was available for each child, and children were changed when required. Aprons were available for messy play activities and observed in use in the Toddler room during a painting activity.

The children in Preschool 1 and Preschool 2 were observed to play outdoors during the inspection and were dressed appropriately for the weather on the day of the inspection.

The individual sleep needs of babies and younger children were met; this was observed on the day when younger babies were placed to sleep in the cot room before dinner time. Older children in the Nursery slept at a later time in the day, both in the cot room and in a sectioned off area of the care room on floor beds. The children in the Toddler room slept on stackable beds in an area set up suitable for sleep before dinner time. Rest areas were available in each of the care rooms.

Younger babies were observed to crawl, lay and roll on soft floor areas in a section of the Nursery room. A second section was set up with highchairs and low-level tables and chairs used for meal times and table-top

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activities. A third area was available for use where children availed of floor play, with adults observed to sit with them and look at books and play with materials such as dolls and peg boards. Opportunities for free-flowing movement between the two play areas were provided, and children were observed to demonstrate to staff that they wanted to change from one area to the next, which was facilitated by the staff.

Staff were aware of children who required additional support. Staff were observed supporting children in line with their individual needs as described by staff members and outlined in plans and observations.

Supporting Relationships

The atmosphere upon the inspector's arrival was warm and welcoming. The children in each care room were observed engaged in activities, and the children in Preschool 2 were playing outdoors.

The children appeared familiar with the staff who cared for them. The staff were observed to work well together in each of the care room ensuring transitions were smooth for the children.

The staff used gentle encouragement for children to be mindful of other children's feelings and were observed to promote positive behaviour for example, encouraging children to share the water toys whilst playing in the outdoor area.

The staff were observed to demonstrate sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for children and their families, through respecting parental wishes whilst also acknowledging the children's individual preferences and choice. The staff were observed to communicate using soft, gentle tones while interacting with the young babies and children within their care.

Communication with parents is in person at arrival and collection times. A written daily log and diary is maintained in the Nursery and Toddler rooms for each child detailing sleep, food and toilet/nappy changing times for each child.

Physical And Material Environment

The indoor care rooms were well laid out to suit the needs of the children in attendance. The children in each care room were observed to engage in activities of their choice, and activities were also facilitated by staff. The materials were laid out and available in designated interest areas, and children were observed to retrieve and return toys and play materials of their choice. The children in the Nursery were observed to enjoy soft play, and staff sat with the children reading books and singing. The children used the soft foam shapes to climb up onto and over and were observed laughing and smiling and saying "Oh Oh" when they would jump or roll off the low-level shapes. The children in the Toddler room appeared content in their care room and explored all area of play

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at their time of choosing. They were observed to enjoy listening to music, caring for dolls, playing with sensory activities such as sand, playdough and painting with glitter and paint.

In Preschool 1, sensory materials were readily available to children. Children were observed choosing to play with the sand and toys both with their peers and a staff member, whilst other children built puzzles and played with cars, trucks and dolls.

The children in Preschool 2 were observed enjoying free-choice activities following their return from outdoor play and as they finished their lunches. Children played in the home corner, which had an office 'Google Area', and were observed to enjoy the sensory tray which contained a mix of flour and glitter and played with puzzles. There are three outdoor areas with a ground surface of concrete, surrounded by wooden fencing concrete walls and lockable gates. The outdoor areas were pleasant and safe, and laid out to accommodate the needs of the children present. Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment were available to include ride on trucks, rockers, balls, child seats and a water tray with toys and buckets.

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 main entrance door was secured upon the inspector's arrival. The entrance doors remained locked at all times during the inspection, ensuring no unauthorised person could enter the building or no child could leave the building unsupervised. A visitor log was maintained, and inspectors were requested to sign in and out. Ground surfacing, both indoor and outdoor were maintained in a good state of repair with no trip hazards observed. Stairways were maintained in good condition with suitable handrails present. Storage areas were inaccessible to children. Cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children. Play equipment and resources were observed to be maintained in good condition. The children were observed to be adequately supervised by staff throughout the inspection process. The outdoor areas are surrounded by fences and lockable gates to prevent a pre-school child from gaining unsupervised access to a roadway or other source of danger. Risk assessments were available for review and completed up to date. Windows on the first floor had window restrictors fitted. Blind cords were fitted and secured out of reach of children. Fire exits remained free from obstruction during the inspection.

Infection Control:

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Handwashing was observed to take place after the children used the toilet, after messy play activities and before snack and meal times. Warm water, hand soap, pedal-operated bins, and paper towels were available at each wash hand basin. The care rooms were well ventilated and maintained between the required temperatures of 18°C - 22°C. The care rooms and sanitary areas were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic manner. Cleaning schedules were in place, up to date and completed by staff. Nappy changing procedures are carried out in line with the service's policy. Care rooms and sanitary areas are ventilated through means such as openable windows and mechanical ventilation. Tables were cleaned before and after meals, and where children take in food from home, it was stored in the fridge in the care rooms. External waste bins were stored in an area not accessible to the children.

Administration of Medication:

Information for children on prescription medication was available for review.

Medication records reviewed detailed prior parental consent to administer medication, the name of the medication given to the child, dosage, time administered and two staff signatures.

Safe Sleep:

A sleep room was located directly off the Nursery room. Within the sleep room, a total of 7 cots with safety labelled mattresses and waterproof coverings were provided. Children who are transitioning from cots to floor beds are facilitated to sleep on floor beds in a cordoned-off area in the Nursery room at the children's sleep time. Individual bed sheets and blankets were used and stored in individual boxes for each child. The bed linen is washed at least once a week in the service, and more frequently if required.

Stackable beds were provided for children aged over 2 years who availed of a sleep in the Toddler room. One side of the care room was suitably set up for sleep time.

Sleep records were maintained for the children who slept in the Nursery and Toddler room on the day of inspection, which detailed children's names, 10-minute interval checks of their position, skin colour and breathing pattern.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. An immediate action notice was issued in relation to the hot surface temperature of one of the radiators in the Toddler care room, which was recorded at 58°C at 11:09 am, posing a risk of injury to a child. It is acknowledged that when the inspector brought this to the attention of the registered provider, the radiator was adjusted and the temperature was recorded at 38.7 °C at 11:14 am.

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2. In respect of 3 out of 20 staff members, the service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years, as a period in excess of 3 years had elapsed since their Garda vetting disclosures were issued.

Administration of Medication:

3. Three out of fourteen medication records reviewed in the Toddler room did not contain a parent's signature following administration of medication in the preschool service. This does not ensure that parents are provided with up-to-date daily information on the administration of medication to their child on a daily basis. It is acknowledged that prior parental consent had been obtained.
4. In Preschool 2 there were records for the administration of a prescribed medication. The administration record contained blank rows which had been signed by a parent. The pre-signing of the records does not provide staff with the opportunity to verify that the parent has been informed on the day the medication has been administered.

Safe Sleep:

5. Safe sleep practices were not always implemented in the Nursery room in line with Tusla's safe sleep guidelines for children under 24 months.
- One child aged 1 year 11 months is placed to sleep on a stackable bed. The stackable bed was not suitable for a child aged under 24 months, in line with Tusla's Early Learning and Care sleep provision guidance for children under 24 months, which requires a floor bed to be fitted with a mattress of at least 6cm in thickness.
 - A sleep plan was not in place for the one child aged under 24 months who was not sleeping in a cot. This is at variance with the guidelines that state a child can sleep in an approved alternative to a cot, provided it is agreed with parents, and a sleep plan is established and signed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The service acknowledges that an immediate action notice was issued in relation to the temperature of a radiator within the Toddler room. The radiator temperature was adjusted immediately at the time of the inspection to a safe level. Since the inspection, surface temperature checks have been carried out regularly and recorded to ensure that all radiators remain within a safe temperature range. Evidence of these temperature checks has been submitted to Tusla. A monitoring system has been implemented whereby radiator surface temperatures are checked and recorded at regular intervals throughout the day. In addition,

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a wooden radiator cover has been ordered and will be installed to provide a permanent protective barrier and eliminate the risk of contact with hot surfaces. The Person in Charge will continue to oversee and review these control measures as part of the service's health and safety procedures.

2. Re - vetting time frames had not been adhered to. Garda vetting renewal applications for the staff members were identified and submitted following the inspection. A Garda Vetting monitoring system has been implemented within the service compliance records. Renewal dates are now logged and tracked to ensure all vetting disclosures are renewed within the timeframe required. The person in charge will review these records regularly as part of ongoing governance and compliance monitoring.

Administration of Medication:

3. Medication records currently in use have been reviewed to ensure that they are completed properly. The Medication administration has been reviewed with the staff team to reinforce correct practice.
4. A meeting was held with all staff to remind them of the requirement that parents/guardians must be informed and sign the medication administration record on the collection following administration. Room leaders will carry out routine checks of medication records to ensure all documentation is completed accurately and in line with service policy and regulatory requirements.

Safe Sleep:

5. All children are now using the cots provided in line with Tulsa safe sleep guidance for children under 24 months. All staff have reviewed Tulsa's safe sleep guidance, and the service policy has been reinforced with the team. Safe sleep practices will continue to be monitored by the person in charge and room leaders to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence of the monitoring systems' records of radiator temperatures.

Evidence of completed Garda vetting for one staff member was received. An application for two Garda vetting renewals for two staff members was received.

Administration of Medication:

Photographic evidence of completed medication records.

Safe Sleep:

The registered providers confirmed by email that children aged under 2 years will remain in cots until they turn 2 years of age.

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Summary Comment

The response from the registered providers and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 23 at points 1, 3, 4 and 5 above.

In relation to non-compliance point 2 of Regulation 23, the response from the registered providers and supporting documentation submitted has partially addressed this finding as completed Garda vetting disclosures for 1 out of 3 staff members were submitted. Therefore, this non-compliance remains outstanding. The registered providers must submit the two Garda vetting disclosures to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate when received.

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 registered provider ensured that a person who held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. The registered provider and four staff members held in-date FAR training certificates, three of whom were rostered to work on the day of inspection.

(2) (a) & (b) Two suitably equipped first aid boxes were available on the ground floor of the premises and were stored in accessible and conspicuous locations out of the reach of children.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

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Compliance Information

- (d)
Cleaning schedules were available and in place, and the premises were maintained in a clean condition. The floor surfacing in the four care rooms was maintained in good condition. The Nursery floor had been re-covered since the last inspection.
- (e) The sanitary facilities in the service were adequately equipped with wash hand basins and toilets for the number of adults and children that will be in attendance. There were 4 toilets and 4 wash hand basins available for children located on the first floor. There was one toilet and a wash hand basin, and three nappy changing units and three wash and basins available for children located on the ground floor. Thermostatically controlled warm, and cold water was available in all hand-wash sinks. There were 2 toilets and 2 wash hand basins available for staff use.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) A hole in the wall in the Nursery sanitary area, which was a non-compliance upon the last inspection, was present upon this inspection. The registered provider's corrective and preventive actions of "a wipeable wall panel and seal the hole, to ensure that this cannot happen again" were not observed to have been carried out.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The wall area has now been repaired and sealed with a suitable wipeable panel to ensure the surface is smooth, durable and easily cleanable in line with hygiene requirements. The premises maintenance procedures have been reviewed to ensure that any repair works are identified are completed in a timely manner. The Person in Charge will include routine checks of the physical environment as part of a regular health and safety inspections to ensure that all surfaces remain in good repair and suitable for cleaning and hygiene purposes.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of a panel on the wall.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered providers and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 29 (d).