

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MN030
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Inis Óg Childcare Ltd
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Glebe, Inniskeen, Co. Monaghan
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A91 XT51
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Fiona Mc Ardle
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	19 January 2023
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<b>Day 2</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	PM
<b>Day 1 19/01/2023</b>	96	60
<b>Day 2 21/04/2023</b>	87	

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Child Wellbeing Centre, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Flood & S. Skinnader
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors
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### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

Inis Óg Childcare Ltd is a privately run childcare service that has been in operation since 2013. The service provides sessional, part-time, and full day care to pre-school children from 0 – 6 years of age. The service operates from 07:30hrs to 18:15hrs each weekday and is registered to cater for a maximum of 116 preschool children. The service is located in a purpose-built building in the village of Inniskeen, Co. Monaghan. There is off road parking for drop offs and pick-ups outside the premises.

There are 6 care rooms in operation, namely The Baby Room, Woddler Room, Toddler Room and Pre-school Rooms 1, 2, & 3. The service has 3 outdoor play areas to the rear and side of the premises where children have access to play equipment. There are 2 separate sleep rooms, 1 off the Baby Room and 1 off the Woddler Room.

### Staffing

On the day of the inspection there were 17 childcare staff observed working directly with the pre-school children. The service manager was also present and provided assistance in the care rooms as required to cover staff breaks. Two additional adults were also present, 1 who was engaged in catering duties and 1 who was carrying out administrative duties.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 19, 22 and 23 however, on inspection an additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulations 20. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation(s) within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance, as a result, the scope of the inspection included The Baby Room, The Woddler Room, The Toddler Room and Preschool Room 3.

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 in respect of a safety concern was issued on the day of the inspection to which a response was received from the service.

An unannounced Inspection review was carried out on 21/04/2023 to assess whether the corrective and preventive actions submitted for non-compliance findings under Regulations 16 and 20 on the inspection dated 19th January 2023 had been effective.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on both days 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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. The service manager who is the designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived on the premises and was present throughout the inspection.

(2) Following a service file review and a discussion with the service manager it was confirmed to the inspectors that there were 4 new staff members present in the service since the last inspection.

The staff files in relation to the 4 new staff members were reviewed on the day of inspection and the following was recorded.

(a) & (b) There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or other source available for all 4 new members of staff in the service.

(c) A processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for 4 new staff members.

(d) Documentary evidence of processed international police vetting was available for the adult who had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of greater than 6 months.

(4) All new staff members who work directly with the preschool children held at least the minimum required qualification in childcare.

### 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 when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service there were five rooms in operation. There was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending each of the care rooms.

(2) On **day 1** of the inspection the following adult: child ratios were noted in the care rooms at 11:00am:

Room Name	Number of Pre-school Children	Number of Adults working directly with the pre-school children
The Baby Room	7	2
The Woddler Room	15	4
Toddler Room	17	4
Preschool Room 1	20	3
Preschool Room 2	20	2
Preschool Room 3	17	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>17</b>

The service manager was also providing relief cover for breaks in the care rooms. One additional adult was also present in the service who was engaged in catering duties.

On **day 2** of the inspection the following adult: child ratios were noted in the care rooms at 11:55am

Room Name	Number of Pre-school Children	Number of Adults working directly with the pre-school children
The Baby Room	7	2 and 1 student
The Woddler Room	14	4
Toddler Room	16	3
Preschool Room 1	15	3
Preschool Room 2	16	2
Preschool Room 3	19	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>18 and 1 student</b>

The service manager was present in the service and provided assistance in the care rooms as required. Two additional adults were also present in the service, one who was engaged in catering duties and the 2<sup>nd</sup> who was engaged in administrative duties.

The adult: child ratios were correct on both days of inspection.

### 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;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(i)

- Documentary evidence of a staff roster was available in the service and was reflective of the staff present on the day of the inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(h) In the Woddler Room accurate details of the children's attendance records were not maintained. Two methods of recording the children's attendance were being used, a paper form and an electronic application system. The 2 methods did not correspond with each other. Nine out of 14 children were documented as been present on the written register and the times for these children did not correspond with the time recorded on the electronic system e.g., one child was documented as being in attendance in the service at 8:40am however this child was recorded on the electronic system as being present from 08:19am.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Actions

(1)(h) The paper attendance logs will now be the accountable attendance records.

The manager is currently looking into investing into a new electronic system that would eliminate the paper attendance logs.

Employees will also be reminded during a staff meeting of the importance of keeping accurate attendance records.

It was added to the manager daily risk assessment to ensure attendance is being recorded correctly.

### Summary Comment

A corrective and preventative action plan was received. During the inspection review carried out on 21/04/23 the documented attendance records reviewed were reflective of the number of children present during the inspection. Based on this information the non-compliance identified under Regulation 16 has been addressed.

## 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,*

### Compliance Information

There were 6 rooms in operation on the day of the inspection namely The Baby Room, The Woddler Room, The Toddler Room and Preschool Rooms 1, 2, & 3. The Baby Room, The Woddler Room, The Toddler Room and Preschool Room 3 are the subject of this report.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service.

#### **BASIC NEEDS:**

- Healthy eating was promoted in the service and there was a menu on display. Food and snacks were provided at regular intervals throughout the day. Young children were encouraged to feed themselves and assistance was also provided if required. In the Baby Room the dinners were of a suitable consistency for the age and development of the children. Mealtimes were observed to be a social occasion with staff observed sitting at the tables and encouraging conversation with the group, and in the Baby Room the staff sat at eye level with the children while feeding them in highchairs. Drinking water was freely available to the children.
- Independence with toileting was promoted for the children who were toilet trained and discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required.

- Nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with lots of friendly interaction observed between children and staff in all rooms.
- The children's care needs were attended to on a regular basis for example, hands were washed before mealtimes and after toileting; soiled clothes were changed promptly.
- Some of the children were observed to access the soft areas in all rooms to sit and read a book, or to take a break from activities.
- The majority of children from the care rooms had a change of environment to the outdoor play areas and were dressed appropriately for going outside.

### Supporting Relationships

- The staff throughout the service were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner. Soft tones and positive language were observed in interactions between the children and staff. For example, In the Woddler Room and the Baby Room the staff were observed to offer reassurance and comfort to the children who were upset by sitting on the floor and comforting them when they needed.
- Parents were informally communicated with at drop off and collection times. The staff reported that telephone calls, newsletters and social media are also used to share information about upcoming activities/ events and to discuss any care related issues. A communication diary was used in the Woddler, Toddler and Baby Rooms to share information between staff about the day to days needs of the care room. The staff informed the inspectors that that most communication with parents is carried out through an electronic interlinked application set up between the service and the parents. Information pertaining to the children's care needs, activities and photographs are shared with parents through this method.
- A key worker system was in place in the service with named staff assigned the responsibility for developing relationships with a designated group of children and their families in all rooms. This promotes the development and sustainment of relationships between the staff and the children and their parents.

### Physical And Material Environment:

- In general, the children attending the service had free movement within their care room.
- In each of the care rooms there was a variety of play materials and equipment. Child sized furniture and equipment was in use throughout the service.

There were defined areas of interest that were supported with play materials and equipment. The equipment was suited to the ages and stages of development of the children present and promoted many areas of child development.

- There was evidence of the children’s artwork on display in each room which was reflective of some of the planned activities displayed e.g. In the Baby Room there were footprint “Little Piggies” and farm animals. In the Toddler Room there were pictures of ‘hot air balloons’ and sticking and gluing pictures of ‘pigs’ were on display in The Toddler Room. In Preschool Room 3 there were paper plate dinosaurs, Gruffalos and fishbowl collages.

### Programme of Activities

- The children attending each of the care rooms were observed to engage in a variety of activities throughout the inspection e.g., table- top activities, story time, free play, sensory play, art activities and outdoor play.
- Documentary evidence was available of ongoing observations which the staff reported were used to inform planning for the curriculum. Many of the activities were child led and the children’s choice was facilitated e.g., in Preschool Room 3 the children wanted to draw on the table-top together and the staff member facilitated this by allowing the children to tape a large piece of paper to the tabletop to draw on.

### Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure that each child’s learning, development, and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service in relation to the following:

#### BASIC NEEDS:

1. Individual child led sleep needs were not facilitated in the Toddler Room. For example, it was observed that a child attending this room was displaying signs of tiredness from approximately 12:37 pm. This was acknowledged by the staff member who stated “ ... you are tired, but we have to wait for your bed“. This child was observed to rub their eyes, cry intermittently and place their head on the staff member’s shoulder. This child was put down to sleep at 1:39 pm when a cot became available. During a discussion with the inspectors the staff further confirmed that additional cots were required.
2. In Preschool Room 3, the privacy and dignity of the child was not maintained during nappy changing as the nappy changing unit was in one of the toilet cubicles, with the door open and directly opposite the sinks. Other children needed to access the toilet facilities during the time while nappies were changed.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Actions

#### **BASIC NEEDS:**

#### **Corrective Action:**

#### **Corrective Actions**

1. An area of the Woddler room is now a designated sleep area when needed.  
Educators were reminded that children over the age of 2 that were present in the room on the day of inspection could have used beds to ensure cots were left available for children under 2.  
Educators will now ensure all children over 2 will use beds in the designated sleep area when needed.
2. The cubicle door will now be closed during nappy changing.

#### **Preventive Actions:**

1. With regards to sleep, a new room is in the process of being updated to facilitate an additional sleep area. This room is adjacent to the current Woddler room sleep room and will be able to cater for 5 cots when needed. This will provide 10 cots daily for the Woddler room plus the additional beds that we can use in the designated sleep area of the Woddler room.
2. Staff will be reminded during a staff meeting of the importance to ensure privacy when changing nappies. Refresher training on nappy changing will also be carried out for all employees. The bathroom risk assessment policy was also updated.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence i.e. updated policies submitted to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Photographic evidence of sleep area in the Woddler Room

## Summary Comment

A corrective and preventative action plan was received. Further information was requested and was submitted via email on 30/03/2023. A review inspection carried out on 21/04/2023 observed a designated sleep area with day beds in use in the Woddler Room. Based on this information and the observations made the non-compliances identified under Regulation 19 have been addressed.

### 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

All children attending the service had their meals and snacks provided by the services resident cook. On the day of the inspection the lunch time food provided was observed to include beef casserole, vegetables, potatoes, and gravy. Breakfast was reported to consist of breakfast cereal and snacks included fresh fruit and yoghurts. The afternoon meal was reported to consist of pasta and a tomato sauce. Potable drinking water was available for the children to access as required.

In the Baby Room the staff reported that bottles of formula are brought in by the parents already prepared.

### 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

It was observed that the registered provider has taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service including:

##### General safety:

- The external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- All emergency exits were clear and unobstructed.
- Highchairs were observed in use in the Baby room and Woddler Rooms and had harnesses attached.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.

##### Infection Control:

- Children's soothers were stored in individual labelled and lidded containers and when questioned staff were familiar with the care and maintenance procedures.
- There was a constant supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and single use paper hand towels available to support effective hand washing.

- Pedal operated bins were in use in the service and were appropriately maintained.
- It was observed that the premises play equipment and materials were in a clean condition.

## Safe Sleep

- Physical sleep observations were observed being carried out at least the minimum required 10-minute interval on all sleeping children in the sleep rooms and designated sleep areas.

## Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate was not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service. The following observation were made:

### General Safety:

1. The surface temperature of a radiator in the Woddler Room was hot to touch and exceeded the recommended safe surface temperature of 50 °C. A surface temperature of 58.1 °C was recorded at the radiator in the play area of this room and this went unnoticed by the staff members present until it was brought to their attention by the inspector at 11:40am.

This is a recurring non-compliance from the last inspection and is at variance with the previous action plan response from the registered provider which stated “The thermostats on the radiators and the boiler were adjusted to ensure surface temperature of radiators do not exceed 50 degrees. Checking surface temperatures was added to the daily assessments. Management will also randomly check surface temperatures throughout the day.”

### Infection Control:

2. In the Woddler Room, one staff member did not wash their hands following a nappy changing procedure and was observed to apply skin cream for a child. It is acknowledged that a clean pair of disposable gloves was used by the staff member. This practice is a cross infection risk and the use of disposable gloves does not negate the need the requirement to wash hands.
3. The polythene gloves observed in use for nappy changing were unsuitable as per best practice guidance.
4. In the Baby Room, 1 staff member was observed to not wash their hands or the child’s hands after changing a nappy.

5. In Preschool Room 3, the staff member did not change their apron after each nappy change and the nappy changing mat was not wiped clean in between each nappy change. It is acknowledged it was cleaned after all the nappy changes were finished. These are cross infection risks.
6. In the Baby Room the same basin of warm soapy water was used to wash all the children's hands before lunch, this is a cross contamination risk.
7. In the Baby Room the lid of the pedal operated bin for general waste was broken and there the lid had to be lifted by hand thus an infection control risk.
8. One of the cot mattress covers in the Baby Room was torn and this does not allow for effective cleaning.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Actions:

##### **General Safety:**

1. The radiator cover is now permanently left on the radiator.

##### **Infection Control:**

2. Extra visuals aids were put up to remind staff of the nappy changing policy.
3. Powder free vinyl single use disposable gloves were reintroduced.
4. Extra visuals aids were put up to remind staff to wash their hands after nappy changing.
5. Extra visuals aids were put up to remind staff to change their apron and clean mat between nappy changing.
6. The water will be changed between hand washing.
7. The bin was replaced with a new pedal operated bin .
8. The cot mattress was replaced with a new mattress.

##### **General Safety:**

1. Staff were reminded to ensure temperature checks are carried out throughout the day. Management will also continue to monitor temperatures.

##### **Infection Control:**

2. Refresher training on nappy changing will be carried out for all staff.
3. Management will continue to check current products to ensure they are suitable for the propose intended.
4. Refresher training on nappy changing will be carried out for all staff.

5. Refresher training on nappy changing will be carried out for all staff.
6. Refresher training on nappy changing will be carried out for all staff. A meeting with the builder also took place and an agreed reconstruction of the nappy changing care area has been agreed.
7. Staff were reminded when carrying out risk assessments to report on broken bins in order to get them replaced immediately. Management will also continue to check items during daily risk assessment.
8. Staff were reminded when carrying out the daily sleep room risk assessments to inspect mattresses, sheets and protectors in detail to ensure they are safe and fit for purpose. Safe sleep refresher training will also take place for all staff.

### Supporting Documentation submitted

Documentary & Photographic evidence of updated Infection Control policies, radiator protector, risk assessment documents, new mattresses and visual aids were submitted to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

An Immediate Action Notice was issued in respect of the excessive radiator surface temperature, to which an acceptable response was received and accepted.

A corrective and preventative action plan was received. During a review inspection on 21/04/2023 it was observed that a radiator protector cover was in place in the Woddler Room, however the radiator was cold to touch during this inspection. Based on the information submitted and observations made the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been addressed. Implementation and sustainment of the actions detailed will require further assessment at the next inspection.

### 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.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- Following a review of the children's attendance records and facilities available, there were inadequate cots available to meet the sleep needs of the children attending the Woddler Room.  
For example, on the day of the inspection there were 15 children aged 1-2 years attending the Woddler Room, a minimum of 7 cots were required for this number of children however only 5 were available.  
On 18/01/2023 the staff confirmed that 20 children were in attendance aged 1-2 years. A minimum of 11 cots were required to meet the children's sleep needs however only 5 cots were available.
- Two mattresses in the sleep room off the Baby room and 1 mattress in the Woddler Room were ill-fitting and there were footholds in each of the cots. While it is acknowledged that a documented risk assessment was available for each of the sleep rooms, this risk assessment did not identify the presence of a foothold.
- Two cot mattresses in the sleep room off the Baby Room had no safety labels.
- Fleece blankets were in use in 2 of the cots in the sleep room off the Baby Room.
- There were accumulations of dirt and dust particles on some of the cot frames in the Baby Room and there was a stained sheet in one of the cots which was not changed prior to a child being put down to sleep in this cot.

#### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

- An additional room will now be used to provide an additional sleep area.  
Children over the age of 2 will use beds to ensure children under 2 can avail of cots.
- 2&3. New mattresses, protectors and sheets were purchased to replace mattress with no safety labels.
- Fleece blankets were removed from the service.
- A deep clean was carried out to remove dust particles. All sheets are inspected before children are put down for a sleep and added to risk assessments.

1. Management will ensure that correct number of cots and bed are available to children to ensure sleep needs are met.

The manager has also engaged with a builder who will amend an existing room to become an additional sleep room.

Safe sleep refresher training will also take place for all staff.

2,3,4 & 5

Safe sleep refresher training will be carried out for all staff.

Employees were reminded to carry out risk assessment accurately as they currently include inspection of cleanliness, mattresses, sheets and protectors.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence for purchase of new mattresses and covers.

Sleep room risk assessment templates

### **Summary Comment**

A corrective and preventative action plan was received. Further information was requested and received by email on 30/03/2023. A review inspection was carried out on 21/04/2023 to assess the provision of additional sleep facilities in the service. During this inspection the children's attendance records and age profiles were reviewed and an adequate number of cots and day beds were available for the children who required them. An additional room containing 5 new cots has been developed and will also be available if required. Based on the information submitted and the observations made the non-compliances identified under Regulation 20 have been addressed.