

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MO058
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Name of Service:	Keel Community Childcare
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Address of Service:	Crumpaun, Keel, Achill, Co. Mayo
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Eircode:	F28 R6T4
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Name of Registered Provider:	Helena Patten
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	16
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Farrell
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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

Keel Community Childcare is a community operated service located in Achill Island, Co Mayo. The service is registered to provide parttime and sessional services to children aged between one and six years of age from 09:00-13:00 hours. The premise is a detached, purpose-built two storey building with two playrooms, one of which is on the first floor, a kitchen, sanitary accommodation, staff room and office. There are enclosed outdoor play areas with outdoor play equipment provided for the children to play in on the premises.

Staffing

There are seven staff in the service including childcare workers and a cleaning person. The registered provider does not work directly in the service.

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/ safety. 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 inspector wishes 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.*

(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) There was a named designated person in charge and a named deputy in the service.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises during the inspection. A review of a sample of staff attendance records found that the designated person in charge or deputy were recorded on the premises during service opening hours.
- (2)
- It was confirmed by review of documentation and discussion with the designated person in charge that one new staff had started working in the service since the last focused inspection of the 10 December 2021. The vetting information for the remaining staff members had been reviewed on previous inspections. The following vetting documentation and qualifications were available on file for the new staff member:
- (a) There was a written validated references from their most recent employer.
 - (b) A written validated reference from a source other than a past employer was on file for the staff member.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all seven staff including the new staff member. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) International police vetting was not required for the new staff member who had not lived outside of the State for periods of time longer than six months as an adult according to the information on file.
- (4)
- Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available on file for the staff new to the service since the last inspection who worked directly with the children. The qualifications for the remaining staff who worked directly with children in the service had been reviewed on previous inspection and deemed to be compliant.

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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore 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) An adequate number of adults worked directly with the children attending the pre-school service. There were 4 adults working directly with 16 children on the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service on the morning of the inspection.
- (2) and (3)
- The minimum required ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service. The adult: child ratios for sessional services provided in the service of the day were as follows;
- Two adults cared for six children in the Creche playroom.
 - Two adults cared for ten children in the ECCE/Sessional playroom.
- Part-time services were provided with 4 staff directly caring for 16 children between 12:00 hours to 13:00 hours. The minimum required adult to child ratios of 1:5 for children aged from one to two years, 1:6 for children aged between two to three years of age and 1:8 for children aged between three and six years of age were maintained during the provision of the part-time service.
- (8)(a)
- At least two adults were present at all times in the service as found on the day and as indicated in the sample of attendance records reviewed.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) (a) to (i)

A sample of 11 children's records across both playrooms were randomly selected for review by the inspector from the children currently enrolled in the service. The records were found to be compliant during the inspection and contained the required details as laid out under the regulation.

(3) (c)

The required information detailed in paragraph (1) was made readily available for inspection to the inspector by the person in charge on request.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) Written records were kept of the following information in the service:

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the staff members was recorded on file. The following information was available in the folder containing the service’s statement of purpose and function and policies:
- (b) Information on the service types and ages of children that the service is registered to provide services to.
- (c) Details of the adult to child ratios in the service.
- (d) Information on the type of care or programme provided in the service based on a play based emergent curriculum.

- (e) Details of the facilities available in the service.
 - (f) Information regarding the service's hours of opening and fees that was displayed in the service.
 - (g) The service's policies, procedures and statements as required under Regulation 10 that were kept in a service policy folder in the ECCE/Sessional playroom. Relevant information was also included in the parent's handbook in the Creche playroom.
 - (h) The staff kept records of details of the attendance of each pre-school child recorded daily in attendance books in the playrooms.
 - (i) Details of the staff daily working hours were kept on file.
 - (j) There was a medication administration record book available in the ECCE/Sessional playroom for staff to keep details if medication was to be required to be given to a child.
 - (k) An accident and incident record book were available in each playroom for the recording of details of accidents and incidents that had occurred in the playrooms. A sample reviewed found that parents had signed the forms and risk assessments had been undertaken in relation to these events.
- (3)
- The required information was made readily available for inspection to the inspector by the designated person in charge on request.

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 at the front of the building was secured on the inspectors arrival to the premises and was appropriately secured for the duration of the inspection allowing staff to control access to the service. Stair gates were in place at the stairs to the upstairs playroom that was well-lit and had appropriate handrails on place. The staff supervised the children closely when using the stairway. Cleaning products were stored in a secured store upstairs and on high shelving in playrooms and were inaccessible to the children. A large screen was in place upstairs at the end of the hallway to the children's sanitary units to prevent children accessing the staff room area unnoticed. A blind cord in the sleep room had a securing mechanism in place. The outdoor areas were enclosed with securing devices on the gates to prevent children from leaving unnoticed. The toys and play equipment were in satisfactory condition and suitable for the ages and developmental stages of the children using them on the day.

Infection Control:

Children's nappies were changed in a changing area with a nappy changing system waist high to staff. Aprons and gloves were worn by staff when changing nappies and foot pedal operated bins were provided for waste disposal. Warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels were available for handwashing and drying purposes. Child friendly signs were in place to prompt children to wash their hands. Staff members prompted and supervised the children washing their hands at appropriate times such as following painting activities, using the toilet and before eating. Food containing perishable items including yoghurt and cheese provided from home for the children's meals was stored in the service's refrigerators.

Administration of Medication:

The staff told the inspector that none of the children in the service needed medication to be given to them while in attendance in the service.

Safe Sleep:

A separate sleep room beside the Creche playroom with two wooden cots and four stackable beds was available to the children. There was clean linen and cellular blankets provided in the service. The sleep room air temperature was recorded at 18.8°C during the inspection. The staff informed the inspector that at that time no

children needed to sleep when in the service, but the facilities were available should they be required. There was a record book to log observations made by staff of sleeping children. The most recent records of sleep available including observations of colour, breathing and position of a child that were recorded at ten-minute intervals.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exit routes were found to be free from obstruction during the inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) Staff members were found to check the children in and out of the service each day. Accurate attendance times for the children were recorded in handwritten record books by the staff members on the day of inspection.

(3) (a)

The inspector's entry to the service was approved by the designated person in charge with a written record kept.

(b)

A daily written record was kept of visitors to the service which the inspector was requested to complete during the inspection.

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) First Aid Response (FAR) training certificates with expiry dates of the 28 November 2025 were available for five staff working in the service during the inspection.
- (2) (a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored in easily identifiable locations on high shelving in the playrooms out of reach of the children.
- (b) The first aid equipment was readily available if a child required first aid treatment in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had insurance in place valid until the 27 March 2024 for a maximum of 26 children in the service.