

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY017		
Name of Service:	Kilcormac Community Childcare Ltd		
Address of Service:	St. Joseph's Community Centre, Kilcormac, Co. Offaly		
Eircode:	R42 X894		
Name of Registered Provider:	Ann Clavin		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	04/12/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	38	PM 11
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath		
Inspection undertaken by:	C.O' Connor Hughes		
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.		

Description of service

This community service commenced a part time service in September 2024 and operates between the hours of 09:30 and 14:30 on a Monday to Friday basis. An Early Education and Care programme operates from 09:30 to 12:30 and 12:45 to 15:45. The age range of children attending the service is 2 to 6 years of age.

The Early Years' Service is located in a single storey purpose-built premises adjacent to the community hall. Three pre-school rooms, a kitchen and a sensory room are provided.

An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the service. Onsite parking and set down facilities are provided.

The service is located in the town of Kilcormac, County Offaly.

Staffing

Ten adults were working directly with children on the 4 December 2024. One adult present was employed by the community employment scheme. A student was on work experience in the service. A cook was employed and present in the service. The designated person in charge was in attendance and present for the closing meeting.

The registered provider does not work with 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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under

Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

The scope of the inspection included the Blue room (aged 2 years 8 months to 5 years.)

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 co-operation of the person in charge, deputy 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

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)

A designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

The deputy person in charge was present for the duration of the inspection. The designated person in charge arrived to the service shortly after the inspectors arrival.

Eighteen staff files including the registered provider and one student on work experience were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from past employers or from a source other than a past employer in respect of the staff members with the exception of the non-compliance outlined below.

Two written references were available in respect of the registered provider.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the staff files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was available in respect of one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

Six references did not have recorded validations in respect of four staff members and the student on work experience.

(d)

Police vetting was not translated into English in respect of one staff member.

(3)

Completed vetting procedures were not in place prior to the employment of staff in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b)

References have all been marked up as validated as per dates completed. Present employer references have been written up and put on file for four identified members of staff.

Management have put a note at front of HR Folder reminding the importance of completing all items on HR Checklist for each staff member.

(2)(d)

Police vetting was translated and submitted. Management have put a note on HR Folder re anyone who has worked outside the country to have vetting and if not in English have it translated.

(3)

All vetting for all staff and management including registered provider are be placed on file before they start their role. Policies updated in line with current new regulations.

Supporting documentation submitted

References and Police vetting submitted.

Summary Comment

Evidence submitted and reviewed by the Early Years Inspector met the Regulatory requirement.

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;*
- (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.*

Compliance Information

(1)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) and (k).

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)

Blue Room

There was a calm and happy atmosphere in the Blue room as children learned through play. Children enjoyed free sensory, creative and imaginative play during the morning session. Aprons were worn to protect children's clothes while painting. Transitions from one play activity to another were smooth as children were given notice to the change in the activity. Children were encouraged to be independent as they washed their hands before snacks and mealtimes.

A key person system was in operation. The staff were positive towards children and were familiar with each child and their personalities. Staff used children's individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during activities. Children requiring extra assistance were supported by staff. Good teamwork was observed amongst staff. The designated person in charge stated staff meetings are held every month in the service.

A range of developmentally appropriate experiences were available to children. Age and stage appropriate toys and materials were accessible to children on low level shelving. Children's artwork and family photographs were displayed. Children had access to their individual outdoor play areas. An absorbent surface was noted. Toys and equipment included a playhouse, a mud kitchen, a sand box and ride on cars.

The service works in partnership with parents. The parents drop and collect children to the Blue room via the outdoor play area and a verbal handover is given to parents at these times. Communication between parents and the service is also shared on an electronic device and one to one telephone calls as required.

Each child had their own learning story depicting their play and work activities. The children’s child development observations are shared with parents and feedback from parents is welcomed to the service. A group learning story showcasing the children’s group activities was available for review.

The service had made links to the community as the Gardai and Paramedics visited the children and an upcoming visit is planned for Santa to attend the service.

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

A menu plan was available for review. The part time service provides the meals and snacks to the children. At 11:05 children were observed to enjoy a snack of toast with spaghetti hoops and a selection of fruit. Children drank water with their snack. A refrigerator was available in the kitchen for the storage of perishable foods.

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 service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents. The inspector signed the visitors book on arrival.

Infection Control:

Toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed in the Blue room. Warm water, paper hand towel and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. The temperature of the water was recorded at 33.2 degrees Celsius.

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet.

Foot operated pedal bins were available in the sanitary accommodation and in the pre-school room for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Natural ventilation was available through openable windows in the pre-school room. Mechanical ventilation was working in the sanitary accommodation.

Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature and stored safely in the service. Medication was stored correctly in the service. The medication documentation was available and reviewed.

Fire Safety:

Fire exit routes were unobstructed in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

The inner entrance door of the service was open on the inspector's arrival. The premises was accessible to an unauthorised person to enter the service. Upon the inspectors request a corrective action was taken immediately by a staff member, the door was closed which has a coded keypad system in operation.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

A notice was put at front door reminding all staff to keep door closed.
Management have spoken to staff about the importance of keeping the front door closed at all times for safety measures.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Notice to keep door closed.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance has been addressed. The practice stated will be reviewed on the next TUSLA 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)

The records of arrival and departure reviewed verified that each child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by a staff member.

(3)(a)(b)

All entry to the service with the exception of (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) was approved by a staff member.

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)

Five adults were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises for the hours of operation.

(2)(a)

A first aid box was located in the pre-school room.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school service.

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)

There was a record of fire drills carried out in the service. The last fire drill was carried out on the 13 November 2024.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were serviced on the 3 September 2024 and 20 November 2023.

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were noted in conspicuous locations in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service and the expiry date noted was 27 March 2025.