

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN012
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Name of Service:	Cuddles & Care Crèche
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Address of Service:	Cloonfad, Ballyhaunis, Co. Roscommon
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Eircode:	F35 N288
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Name of Registered Provider:	Patrick Godfrey
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	07/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	49	PM	36
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy
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

This full day care service is located in the village of Cloonfad in County Roscommon. The service is registered to provide childcare service for children aged from 1 -6 years of age between the hours of 07:30-18:00 hrs. A registered school age service is also provided. The premises is a two-storey purpose-built building with the ground floor dedicated to the provision of childcare and a private dwelling on the first floor. There are four playrooms for use by the preschool children, a dedicated sleep room, office, kitchen, staff room and sanitary accommodation provided. An enclosed outdoor play area is provided to the side of the building.

Staffing

There are nine staff working in the service which included the person in charge, childcare staff and a cook. A student was also in attendance on a work placement.

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 Regulations 9,11,23,25,26, 28 and 29. 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 person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A sample of staff attendance records reviewed found that the person in charge or deputy person in charge were available at all times.
- (2) Through discussion with the designated person in charge, it was advised that two new staff were employed and one student was also on a work placement since the most recent focused inspection of the 26th of July 2024.
- (a) &(b) Six of the six written validated references, on file for the two new staff and the student on work placement were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for nine staff members and the student on work placement. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Two of the new staff had worked outside the jurisdiction, for six months or more, while over the age of 18 years of age and had the required police vetting on file.
- (4) The nine staff who were working directly with children, held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), at a Level 5 to 7 in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the nine staff.

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.*
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and*
 - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

Compliance Information

- (1) On the morning of the unannounced inspection there were seven staff working directly with the forty-nine children in attendance in the service. A relief staff member also provided relief cover for breaks.
- (2) The following adult to child ratios were provided during the unannounced inspection in line with the required ratios taking into consideration the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as follows:
- In the baby room: 2 adults cared for seven children aged from 1 to 2 years of age in the morning and 2 adults cared for seven children aged 1 to 2 years in the afternoon,
- In the toddler room two adults cared for nine children aged from 2 years to 2 years nine months in the morning and two adults cared for eight children aged from 2 years to 2 years nine months in the afternoon.
- In the junior playschool room: 2 adults cared fifteen children aged from 2 to 3 years of age in the morning and 2 adults cared for ten children aged from 2-3 years in the afternoon.
- In the senior Montessori room: 2 adults cared for eighteen children aged from 3 to 6 years of age in the morning and 2 adults cared for eleven children aged from 3 to 5 years in the afternoon A relief person was also available to cover breaks and staff lunches.
- (8)(a) There were at least 2 adults present at all times during the unannounced inspection.

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 to the service and the external play areas to the side of the premises were secure so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter.
- The inspector was admitted by staff following production of identification documents.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of children.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.
- Toys and play equipment were in good condition and suitable for the age and developmental stages of the children using them on the day.
- Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.

- Leads, cables, and flexes were wall mounted and secured to prevent any trip or strangulation hazard. The heating system was thermostatically controlled, to ensure the temperature was maintained between 18°C to 22°C.

Infection Control:

- The service was found to be very clean, and staff were observed to clean down surfaces such as tables and highchairs after use.
- Staff kept written records of cleaning procedures carried out in the service.
- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were provided for handwashing and drying purposes with children and staff cleaning their hands regularly.
- Aprons and gloves were used appropriately by staff when changing children's nappies with changing mats cleaned down after use.
- Appropriate bins were used for the disposal of nappies.
- There were separate storage boxes of children's personal items such as nappies and cleansing wipes and change of clothes.
- Individual storage containers were provided for children's soothers. Boxes of tissues were available in the playrooms.
- Windows were opened by staff at times to ventilate the playrooms.

Administration of Medication:

- The staff showed awareness of the correct procedures for the administration and storage of medication. No child was required to have medication given to them during the inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- Standard wooden cots were provided in a separate sleep room and used by the young children in the service.
- The cot mattresses had wipeable coverings and were cleaned appropriately with individual bed linen provided.
- The air temperature of the sleep room where a child was sleeping was recorded at 18.2°C within the required range of 16-20 °C for a child of this age.
- Adequate space was available in the sleep room to allow 50cm of space between each cot.
- The staff were observed to preform regular checks on a sleeping child at least every ten minutes recording observations of their colour, breathing and position.

- Staff demonstrated an awareness of sudden infant death prevention guidance placing children down to sleep on their backs and monitoring sleep room temperatures regularly.

Fire Safety:

- The emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed during the inspection.

Outing:

- It was advised by the person in charge that the older children went on an outing to a pet farm.
- The service had insurance for outings.
- The person in charge ensured that parents had provided consent, a risk assessment was carried out prior to the outing, emergency numbers are brought and there was a staff member with first aid / a first aid box on the outing, in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the Toddler and senior Montessori room, an electric cable from a stereo was not secure and potentially accessible posing a risk of injury to a child.

Infection Control:

2. The surfaces of tables in the senior Montessori room were worn proving difficult to effectively clean.
3. The surface of the skirting board in the sanitary area adjacent to the junior Montessori room was rough and could prove difficult to effectively clean.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The person in charge submitted a written response to the office of the early years inspectorate to advise

1. The electric cables from the stereos have been secured to the wall.

Infection control

2. The surfaces of the tables in the senior Montessori room have been recovered
3. The skirting board in the sanitary area adjacent to the junior Montessori room has been cleaned and varnished.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence was submitted of

1. The secured electric cables in the toddler and senior Montessori room. All leads will be secured going forward and will be checked regularly.

Infection Control:

2. The surfaces of the recovered tables in the senior Montessori room. Tables will be assessed regularly and recovered if required.
3. The cleaned and varnished skirting boards in the sanitary area adjacent to the junior Montessori room. Skirting boards will be smooth and varnished.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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) All staff had completed a first aid responder qualification in November 2024 thereby ensuring a person trained was immediately available.
- (2)(a) The first aid boxes were stored on a high shelf in each of the playrooms in an easily accessible conspicuous position for the staff and inaccessible to the children.
- (b) The first aid boxes had content items within date.

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 firefighting 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) Arrangements were in place to record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated 30th of October 2025.

(b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on file. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated 17th of September 2025. Records indicated that the last maintenance for the fire detection system was dated January 2025.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in each room.

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 certification of adequate insurance which had an expiry date 27th of March 2026.

The insurance for 66 children was for full day care service, included the following: -

- public liability insurance,
- insurance against fire and theft,
- buildings insurance,
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(a) The service was maintained in an appropriate and adequate state of repair.

(b) The entrance into the service and the outdoor play areas were adequately secured to prevent a child exiting and an unauthorised person entering the premises.

(c) The playrooms were adequately lit, ventilated, and heated.

(e) The sanitary facilities were adequate for the needs and requirements of the children attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) A section of the wall and the skirting board at the side of the door frame in the toddler room had evidence of dampness and mould.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The person in charge submitted a written response to advise

(d)The area was cleaned and painted and all areas will be regularly checked, cleaned and repainted if required.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted of the cleaned and repainted section of the wall and skirting board at the side of the door frame in the toddler room.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 29 has been adequately addressed.