

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Not appl TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO007
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Name of Service:	Cosy Cats ChildCare Ltd
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Address of Service:	The Mall, Sligo, Co. Sligo
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Eircode:	F91 YY61
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Name of Registered Provider:	Breda Roberts
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	07/11/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	8
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F95 XK94
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello
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

Cosy Cats is a community run full day care early years' service. The service caters for children aged 2 years 6 months to 6 years operating from 7:30am to 6pm five days per week. The service operates from a converted basement area of a church in Sligo town. There are two care rooms, a dining room, a kitchen, an office and sanitary accommodation for children and adults. An outdoor play area is available to the front of the building.

Staffing

Seven adults are employed to work directly with the children, to include one Aim support worker. The registered provider does not work in the service. On the day there was one adult student present on inspection who was in the process of completing a level 5 qualification in early childhood and education.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16k, 23, 25, 26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the, 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*
- (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.*
- (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) (b)

There was a person in charge and a person to deputise as required. On the day of inspection, the deputy person was in charge.

(c)

Adults were aware of the governance structure in the service with room leaders and educators identified.

(2) (a) (b)

The records of all eight adults employed in the service were reviewed.

Thirteen written and verified past employer references and three references from an other source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all eight adults employed in the service.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for eight staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)

International police vetting was available for the three adults who had lived outside of Ireland for a period of six months or more.

- (4) Seven adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service.

There were five adults working directly with 30 children in the morning of the unannounced inspection and two adults working directly with eight children in the afternoon.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

- Voyager care room, three adults cared for 15 children aged between 4-5 years of age.
- Explorer care room: Two adults cared for 14 children aged 3 -4 years of age.

In the afternoon at 13:00 the rooms had merged.

- Voyager care room: Two adults cared for eight children aged between 3 – 5 years of age.

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.

(2) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or of 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 particulars specified in subparagraphs (a), (d), (e) and (f) of paragraph (1).

(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.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

1) (a-i)

Ten records of the children attending the service were reviewed. The required information including the authorisation to collect the child, details of illness or special needs of the child, the emergency contact and record of immunisation if any were fully completed for each child.

(3) (a)

The records in writing were available for inspection on the day by the authorised officer.

(4)

The person in charge confirmed that the records are retained for the required period as set out in the regulations

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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends 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.

(4) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises by a parent or guardian of a child but only in respect of information concerning that child.

Compliance Information

(1) (k)

A review of eleven incidents or accidents that took place in the service from June 2024 to November 2024 were reviewed. The service demonstrated that where required first aid was applied in a timely manner.

All incidents had been reviewed by the management and risk assessments completed where required.

(2) Accident and incident records were retained in the service for the appropriate time set out by regulation as demonstrated by files available from 2017 to present.

(3) These records were made available to the authorised person for inspection on the day.

(4) The registered provider demonstrated that these records were made available to the parent or guardian of the preschool child for review as evidenced by the parents' signature.

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 door to the service was secure on arrival, therefore ensuring that there is no unauthorised access to the service or unsupervised egress from the service.
- Toys and resources were well maintained with no evidence of damage.
- Cleaning products were kept out of the reach of preschool children.
- The service Kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Flexes and leads were secure to the wall and out of reach of the preschool children.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available for effective hand hygiene.
- Children were observed washing hands prior to meals and snacks and after messy play or outdoor play.
- Waste bins in all areas were the required pedal foot operated bins.
- Care rooms were observed to be clean with cleaning schedules in place.

Safe Sleep:

- Stackable floor beds were available for the children in full day care who required rest times.
- Room temperatures on the day was in the required safe sleep limits.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors remained free from obstruction on the day of inspection.
- The fire assembly point was clearly visible in the car park of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- (1) Garda vetting was available for eight staff members. However, one of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting renewal has been applied for and received.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- Garda vetting submitted dated the 25/11/2024

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now complaint.

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 demonstrated that a person trained in first aid responder was available to the preschool children during the operational hours of the service.

(2) (a) (b)

First aid boxes were available in both care rooms stocked with appropriate and sufficient equipment suitable to the needs of preschool children. These first aid boxes were easily available to the children in the case of an emergency.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (b) an employee, and
- (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) (b)

The registered provider ensured that fire evacuation drills take place monthly the most recent fire evacuation drill was dated the 16th of October 2025. Fire detection maintenance records were available the most recent service date of the 8th of October 2025, while the firefighting equipment had a maintenance check on the 1st of March 2024.

(2) (c)

These records were made available on the day to the authorised person.

(4) Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms and hallways.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The children were appropriately supervised at all times while attending the preschool service.

In the care rooms the staff members supervised the children by sight. Good communication was observed between the staff members, who positioned themselves strategically to ensure to always have all children in view. At mealtimes, the staff members sat alongside the children promoting independence and supporting if required. Independence was promoted when toileting and staff members remained in ear shot to assist the children if required.

In the outdoors the staff members positioned themselves to ensure that all areas of the outdoor area could be always seen. Where children needed to go back inside, staff members were observed to communicate with each other and state how many children they were bringing. Head counts were completed regularly ensuring all children were accounted for.

During sleep, two staff members remained in the care room, monitoring the children and completing physical checks every ten minutes.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider demonstrated that the preschool service had adequate insurance for a maximum of 50 preschool children in a full day care service valid till the 8th of October 2025.