

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY094
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Name of Service:	Cahir Bears Childcare Centre
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Address of Service:	Duneske, Farranlahassery, Cahir, Co. Tipperary
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Eircode:	E21 NH96
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Name of Registered Provider:	Aoife Wade
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	19/07/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	40	PM	39
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Tipperary.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Cullen
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

Cahir Bears Childcare Centre is a full day care service located in the urban setting of Cahir, Co. Tipperary. A service is provided for children aged between 6 months and 6 years of age. The service is open 49 weeks per year, Monday to Friday 08:00 to 17:30, including a sessional Early childhood Care and education (ECCE) session during term time.

The premises is a purpose-built single-story building. There are five early years rooms: baby room, junior toddler room, senior toddler room, full day care preschool and sessional preschool rooms. The sessional preschool room was closed on the day of inspection. The service has two dedicated sleep rooms, sanitary accommodation, and staff areas. To the rear and side of the building there are enclosed outdoor play spaces, which are accessed directly from the classrooms.

Staffing

The service currently employs twenty-four staff members, which includes staff working directly with children and a cleaner, caretaker, chef and a volunteer. The manager is the designated person in charge. The registered provider does not work directly with children in the service. Relevant staff members held qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5, 6, and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 25, 26, and 28. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 20 and 22. As a result, the scope of the inspection included baby, senior toddler and full day care preschool rooms.

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, 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)(c) There was a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named person was available to deputise as required. An organisational chart provided details of the management and reporting structures within the service. Information was available detailing the role of each staff member and specific responsibilities such as fire officer and designated liaison person for example.

Documentation was reviewed for twenty-four staff members employed by the service and one volunteer.

(2)(a)(b) Two validated references were available for each staff member from either a past employer, or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member.

(d) Police vetting was available for staff members who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) A certificate of qualification was available on file demonstrating that the twenty staff members working directly with children held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff were working directly with the children at all times. There were 40 children with 12 staff members directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection.

(2) On the morning of the inspection, the staff to child ratios were maintained as follows throughout the service:

- In the baby room, there were 5 children aged 13 to 19 months old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the junior toddler room, there were 9 children aged 20 months to 30 months old being cared for by 3 staff.
- In the senior toddler room, there were 11 children aged 2 to 3 years old being cared for by 3 staff.
- The full day care preschool room, there were 15 children aged 3 to 5 years old being cared for by 4 staff.
- The sessional preschool room was closed on the day of 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-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(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.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

Compliance Information

(1)(a) There were adequate and suitable facilities available for the numbers of children attending the service. The four early years rooms open on the day of inspection were well maintained. There was consideration given to the layout of the rooms, specific to the interests and abilities of children. There was space for children to play together in groups or individually. Children’s play and learning was supported through well-defined areas of interest and adequate materials and resources. Transition areas in each room supported the children to move seamlessly from the indoor to outdoor environments.

(b) There were two sleep rooms available for children under two years of age in the service. The first accessed directly from the baby room and the second accessed from the junior toddler room. The sessional preschool room was used by children over two years of age for sleep after lunch. There was an adequate number of cots and low-level beds available to facilitate child led sleep in the service.

(3)(a) Children could directly access the enclosed outdoor play areas from each early years room. On the day of inspection all children were observed spending time outdoors. Each area consisted of soft fall surfaces, artificial grass and had a covered section to ensure children could avail of outdoor play in all weathers. Defined areas of interest were present, consisting of well-resourced mud kitchens, sand pits, water and construction play. Climbing walls, ladders and rails supported gross motor development for all children.

Raised beds and pots were used to grow a large range of vegetables, trees and flowers. The play spaces were free from hazards and equipment was safe for use by the age groups of children in attendance.

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

Food and drinks were provided by the service and made onsite by the service chef. A bi-weekly menu was used which detailed a broad range of foods offered. The following meals and snacks were offered on the day of inspection. Crackers, cucumber and tomato between 10:00 and 10:30, a hot lunch of pasta bolognaise was served between 12:00 and 12:30. Between 3:00 and 3:30 cheese and toast and an evening snack of a banana was served. Extra portions were available if children required extra food.

Food and drinks were supplied by parents for children attending the baby room. There were refrigerators available on the premises for storage of perishable food items. The service was subject to a boil water notice during the inspection and had suitable actions taken to ensure safe drinking water was available.

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) There were sixteen staff members trained in first aid available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b) There were suitably equipped first aid boxes stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in each early years room. They were available for the use of the children attending the early years 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 monthly fire drills which had taken place in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 01 June 2023.

(b) There was a record available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 19 December 2022 and the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 24 May 2023.

(4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed beside each emergency exit door on the premises.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service demonstrated insurance cover for a full day care service for 70 children. The insurance policy commenced 28 March 2023 and will expire 27 March 2024.