

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY119
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Name of Service:	Kilcash Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Kilcash N.S., Kilcash, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary
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Name of Registered Provider:	Marion O'Neill
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	26/09/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	N/A
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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

Kilcash Pre-school is a community service located in a rural village in Co. Tipperary. The service operates a sessional programme from 09.00am to 12.00pm, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks per year. The service is registered for children 2 to 6 years of age. It is a detached building in the grounds of Kilcash national school. The building was erected in 2016 comprising of a classroom, children's toilets, storage room and a kitchenette area. The service has use of the outdoor play spaces on the grounds of the national school.

Staffing

The service currently employs four staff members, three of whom work directly with children daily and a fourth as relief cover. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. Staff members held qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5, and 6 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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 (2)(4) – Management and Recruitment, 11 (1)(3) – Staffing levels, 16 (1) - Record in relation to pre-school service, 19 (1)(a) - Health, welfare and development of child, and 28 – Insurance. However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed

significant risk was identified under Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 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 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

(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

Documentation was reviewed for the four staff members employed by the service.

(2)(a)(b) Eight references were available from either a past employer, or from a reputable source. Four of the references were validated by the registered provider or designated person in charge.

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

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) Four references available for two staff members, had not been validated prior to the commencement of staff members in the service.

(4) A certificate of qualification confirming completion of a full major award at level 5 or above was not available for one staff member who was observed working directly with children on the day of inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) Two references have now been validated for one staff member. The second staff member for which validations were not available no longer works in the service. All references will be validated going forward.

(4) The staff member has committed to undertaking a level 6 qualification in 2024 with a recognised training college. They will no longer be working directly with the children but will be responsible for the administration function. The service has met with a support organisation to assist in sourcing training. Staff members will have a level 5 minimum qualification going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Validations of two references for current staff member.

Summary Comment

The interim actions detailed for subsection (4) above meet the requirements of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

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.*
- (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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children.
- (3) The staff to child ratios were maintained as follows: There were 12 children aged 2 to 6 years being cared for by 3 staff.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) – (k)

The registered provider ensured that all relevant information was accessible and available for inspection by authorised persons. Documentation reviewed included: the service’s statement of purpose and function, parent’s handbook, policies and procedures, child attendance records. No accident or incident records or administration of medication records had been documented in the previous twelve months.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) A record of experience was not available for one staff member employed by the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff member is no longer employed in the service. All staff CV’s with their experience will be submitted on appointment.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The requirements of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 have been met.

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

The classroom was bright and well-lit though natural light. Children's identity and belonging was fostered through the display of works of art and their recent learning. A wall display documented recent experiments carried out by the group. The children's links with their local community were evidenced through displays of local landmarks and their community. The children attending the service had been learning about two local donkeys – Neddy and Teddy who lived in a field neighbouring the service. These display and accounts of learning provided children with the opportunity to reflect and discuss their experiences in a meaningful way.

Several low-level open shelving units were used to create areas of interest. Children could freely access materials and resources from the well-resourced shelves, promoting independence and choice making. A range of play-based materials were offered in the home corner, small world play, and fine motor areas of the room. A large selection of wooden play props such as a farm, garage, and car track along with suitable resources provided opportunity for children to develop play skills individually or in small groups. Children's literacy development was promoted with a well-resourced and laid out library area.

Outdoors children were observed to play in the maze area of the play space. Children navigated the maze, picked flowers and engaged in climbing activities. Additional play spaces such as a messy play area, grass play area and small role play area were also available to the children.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

The toilet cubicle was used to store an open cardboard box of library books and three stacked children's chairs. Toilet areas should not be used for storage of equipment and materials due to the potential risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The open cardboard box of library books and three stacked children's chairs were removed from the toilet cubicle. The manager will ensure that no material is stored in the toilet cubicle.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photograph of toilet cubicle.

Summary Comment

All evidence submitted meets the requirements Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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 sessional programme for 22 children. The insurance policy commenced 28 March 2023 and will expire 27 March 2024.