

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX060		
Name of Service:	Kickstart Education + Childcare		
Address of Service:	16 Glen Aoibhinn, Ardamine, Gorey, Co. Wexford		
Eircode:	Y25 HE63		
Name of Registered Provider:	Wynette Reid		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	14/10/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM 3
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspector Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford		
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Ryan		
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

Kickstart Preschool is a full day care service located in Riverchapel, north Gorey. The service currently offers care to children aged between 1 and 6 years of age.

Staffing

There are 17 staff employed in the service including the registered provider. The manager was the designated person in charge and works directly with the children. The registered provider was present on the day. The staff working with the children held the minimum level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care 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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) (7)(a) Management and Recruitment,

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels,

Regulation 17 Information for parents

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

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play
Regulation 22 – Food and drink
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,
Regulation 25 First aid,
Regulation 26 Fire Safety,
Regulation 28 Insurance and
Regulation 29 - Premises
Regulation 30 Minimum Space Requirements.

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 registered provider, 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.*

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

On the day of the inspection the manager was the designated person in charge of the service when the inspector arrived. The registered provider arrived at the service at 11am.

The staff files for all 17 staff working in the service were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a)(b)

There were validated references for all employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.

(4)

Certificates of qualifications for all staff members working directly with the preschool children were available on file.

(7)(a)

The registered provider had appointed a staff member with the responsibility of inducting new staff to the service. Staff induction included making all new staff aware of the policies, procedures and statements of the service. The service held staff monthly meetings, and the registered provider provided staff with information for ongoing training opportunities.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

Police vetting disclosures were not available on file for two staff who had worked or lived outside the state for more than six consecutive months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

Both staff members are in the process of applying for police vetting.

The policy has been amended to ensure this will be obtained before employment commences.

Supporting documentation submitted

Email confirming application for one police vetting.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted a response that was satisfactory to meet the 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)

On the day of inspection adequate numbers of staff were working directly with the children at all times.

(2)

During the morning:

- Literacy room: There were 7 children in the care of 2 staff. (all aged between 3 and 4 years).
- Bunny room: There were 10 babies in the care of 2 staff. (all aged between 3 and 4 years).
- Puppy room: There were 6 children in the care of 2 staff. (4 aged between 1 and 2 years and 2 aged between 2 and 3 years).
- Chimps room: There were 6 children in the care of 2 staff. (All aged between 2 and 3 years of age).

During the afternoon:

- Literacy room: There were 3 preschool children and 7 school aged children in the care of 2 staff. (the early years children were aged between 3 and 4 years).

During the morning there were also two transition year students, one early years childcare student and the registered provider on the premises.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The service had a website for parents with information about the service including contact details and the curriculum. Parents are provided with the opportunity to visit the service also.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The following observations and discussions with staff reflected the children's experience within the service on the day of inspection: The staff gave the children prompts to tidy up time between activities. The staff and children chatted throughout the morning, with staff showing interest and responding kindly to the children.

Children who were toilet trained were observed to use the toilet independently with staff supervising children who needed help, ensuring that children washed their hands. Nappy changing was carried out regularly and as needed in the service.

Children from all rooms enjoyed time in the outdoor area during the day. Staff were observed to use the sensory room for children who felt overwhelmed. The chimp room was bright, spacious and decorated well. The room had a small couch, dress up materials, a kitchen and puppet show stand. Children from the chimp room enjoyed messy imaginative play in the outdoor area making magic potions. Children in the bunny room enjoyed painting during

the day. Children in the literacy room enjoyed making spiders with playdough and pipe cleaners. Children had individual folders with the artwork hanging over their coats and bags in the hall.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The needs of young children were not sufficiently met on the day. For example:

1. A child who was crying and unsettled was given a mobile phone by the staff member and left unattended with the phone to watch cartoons.
2. The dignity of young children was compromised during nappy changing on the day. A staff member brought three children to the bathroom together to change nappies. During the nappy changing, staff from another room brought seven older children into the bathroom to wash their hands.
3. The service mixed age groups in the afternoon with preschool children joining the school age group. This was not facilitated in a way that supported the younger children in the room. Staff did not ensure that younger children had equal opportunities for play and access to materials and the environment became loud and boisterous.

Physical and material environments:

The provision of an adequate material and physical environment for the care, learning and stimulation of the children attending the service was inadequate. The literacy room, bunny room and puppy rooms were limited in materials and resources, which did not provide opportunities for imaginative child-led play. For example:

1. Interest areas were sparsely resourced, with no invitations to play set up for children.
2. The play on the day was predominately adult led, with staff taking out the toys and equipment to direct tabletop activities and play.
3. Chairs were stacked and tables pushed back blocking access to shelves and toys.
4. The kitchen in the puppy room was bare, with the boxes of toys left behind the kitchen.
5. There were limited opportunities for sensory or messy play materials such as sand, water, paint and playdough in the rooms.
6. The puppy room environment was not suitable to the needs of young children. A small child who was not mobile did not have space to crawl or opportunity to pull themselves up to stand. There was no clear floor space and other children, and staff walked through the room to access the outdoor area.
7. There were no age-appropriate toys freely available for the younger children.
8. In the bunny room the kitchen, shop and barber stations were sparsely resourced.

9. Children's drinks were placed sitting on a shelf on the play shop in the room which was sparsely resourced.
10. The service operates a practice of rotating the children weekly between the rooms, however the rooms are not set up to meet the different needs and ages of the children as they move between rooms.
11. The movement between rooms does not allow for children to develop ownership and a sense of belonging in their environments.
12. There were no family photo walls, no birthday walls or individual artwork within the rooms.
13. Books were on shelves out of reach of children in the literacy room.
14. Shelves for toys were cluttered with papers and used as storage.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b)

1. All staff members are aware that handing a child a phone is unacceptable, and it should not have happened and will not happen again.
2. The nappy-changing policy has been amended to ensure only one child will be brought to the bathroom at a time and unless necessary (a child who needs to go to the toilet) the nappy-changing should be private.
3. After the part-time session the three full-time ECCE children will be brought into a separate room while the junior infants arrive, do homework and have their dinners to ensure these children have equal opportunities for play and access to materials.

Physical and material environment:

The following measures have been taken to address the non-compliances:

The team have now decided to stop rotating between rooms to allow the children a greater sense of belonging.

The rooms are being reorganised to reflect this change.

The puppies will now remain in our large room for the foreseeable future, and it has been reorganised and has lots of resources suitable for young children.

The service has one communal poster showing our children and our families in our drama room.

Staff will ensure children have access to books at all times, we did have books shelves at child height, but they were broken. This will now be replaced. In the meantime, books will always be accessible for all classes.

The service has engaged with Better Start Quality Development Service to enhance quality practice and positive outcomes for the children. The team will work collaboratively with Better Start to identify what is working well

and how we can improve. The team are committed to ensuring we will offer the best possible service in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs from all the room showing developed interest areas. Email confirming engagement with Better Start.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted a response to address the non-compliances. This regulation will be reviewed on next 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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Children had access to outdoor areas to the rear of the premises. These included two covered areas directly off two of the rooms, and a playground with an all-weather soft surface. The outdoor area also had a small shed that was converted into a sensory room. To the front of the premises the grassy area was enclosed and allowed for space for children to run freely. The outdoor areas were well developed with sufficient space and toys for the children to use. All children were provided with an opportunity to go outside on the day of inspection.

(b)

Rest areas were available in the chimp and bunny room. In the bunny room there were two child sized arm chairs and in the chimp room there was a small soft sofa.

Non-Compliance Information

- (b)
- There were inadequate sleep and rest facilities for children who required sleep and or rest during the day:
1. There was no suitable area available for children under two years of age to sleep while attending the service. Staff advised the inspector that young children were placed to sleep on a bed in the room if they required sleep. The room used by children under two years of age on the day of inspection was the sunroom, which had no blinds and was not conducive to ensure comfortable sleep. See regulation 30 Minimum Space requirements.
 2. There were no rest areas in the literacy room and puppy room for children to rest, relax or sit to opt out of an activity if they wished.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

There are now rest areas in all rooms with small child size couches. Puppy room has various areas to rest and relax. All the rooms have curtains except the messy room, which is now used for second year ECCEs who rarely require sleep but facilities to sleep will be offered, if necessary, in another room. There are soft play mats available in every room. Staff will ensure that these rest areas will always be available for all children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of the rest areas.

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

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

The parents supply mid-morning and afternoon snacks for their children. An outside catering company provided the service with the main hot meal which was cooked onsite daily. A 3-week menu plan is emailed to parents who can order dinner for their child. Parents can also send in their own dinner which can be reheated.

Non-Compliance Information

Food served on the day did not have sufficient protein content. Fourteen children received a hot dinner that contained one cocktail sausage each. There were no extra portions available if a child required any extra dinner. Sausages may also pose a choking risk to preschool children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The sausage dish has been taken off the menu. Staff will ensure enough food for seconds will be readily available for all children by now cooking 20 portions for 14 children.

Supporting documentation submitted

New menu.

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

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 door entrance to the premises was secured. The outdoor areas were fully enclosed. Cleaning products were stored in the locked utility room.

Infection Control:

Regular handwashing took place during the day. Nappy changing practices were in line with the services policy.

Administration of Medication:

The service had a form for the administration of medication. An area was identified in the kitchen for the storage of medication.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A staff member's handbag was left on the ground in the sunroom posing a risk to young children gaining access to the contents of the bag.
2. There were no thermometers available for the recording of temperatures when children are sleeping.

Infection Control:

3. There was no warm water to encourage effective handwashing. The water was checked on two occasions during the course of the inspection and remained cold.
4. The toilet door was left open for the majority of the day which poses as risk of cross infection.
5. A number of items were stored in the lobby of the toilet, including toys and personal staff belongings. This posed a risk of cross contamination.
6. The tablecloth on the table in the sunroom used for eating and tabletop activities was torn and worn. Therefore, it could not be adequately cleaned and posed a risk of cross infection.
7. The nappy disposal bin was not suitable for a childcare setting. The foot pedal action did not work sufficiently for staff to dispose of nappies and gloves without putting their hand into the bin. Staff were seen putting their hands into the bin to push down nappies and gloves.
8. An open bin, brush and dust pan with dirt on it was left accessible to children in the puppy room.

Fire Safety:

9. Inside the main entrance hall door, the hall was cluttered with tables, chairs and play furniture. This posed as an obstruction risk in the event of an emergency evacuation from the premises.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective & Preventive Action

1. All staff members were asked to ensure their belongings are safely in a cupboard and not left on the floor as a tripping hazard.
2. Each room had a CO2 monitor which records the temperature of the room but to ensure accuracy we have now ordered room thermometers for each room.
3. A sign has been put up all staff members reminded to ensure the toilet door is closed.
4. In the winter the heating heats the hot water and on the day of the inspection the heating was on. It does take a couple of minutes for the water to run warm.
5. The lobby has been cleared of all staff belongings.
6. The tablecloth in the sunroom has been replaced. This should have been replaced and we have now asked the teachers in the room to take over this responsibility.
7. A new nappy disposal unit has been ordered and expected to be delivered early next week.
8. All staff have been asked to ensure no dustpans or brushes are left in the rooms. The bins in each room are lidded and are pedal bins. The open bins in each room are recycling bins and only paper is allowed in these. Staff has also been reminded to ensure the bins are closed at all times.
9. The hallway has been decluttered.

All teachers were reminded to ensure that they are aware that the water has to be run for a while before it runs warm. A staff meeting has been held to remind everyone of the above regulations.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of decluttered areas, new bins receipt for thermometers.

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

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

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

There were no staff members with FAR (first aid responder) available on the premises to children at all times. On the day of inspection, during the morning there was no staff member trained in FAR on the premises. Due to staff rostering, on a Friday there is no staff member with FAR rostered to work.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider provided the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The manager has now completed the FAR course and is awaiting certification. There are now three members of staff with the FAR Certification which will ensure there is always a member of staff available. The manager works full-time

Supporting documentation submitted

Receipt confirming training for one staff

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

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)

The last recorded fire drill was carried out in September 2024.

(1)(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm were serviced in May and September 2024.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Records reviewed on the day of inspection demonstrated that no fire drills were recorded as carried out over the summer months in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The team will ensure all fire drills are recorded in the future for both preschool and school aged children.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

Summary Comments

The requirement of the regulation is met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a certificate of insurance for a full day care service for 36 children.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

(d)

There were cleaning schedules available on the premises. The chimp room was clean and warm. The overall service was clean and maintained.

Non-Compliance Information

(d)

1. Windows and their frames in the puppy room (sunroom) were not clean, with visible marks and dirt on them.
2. The timber frame of the mud kitchen in the outdoor area was rotten and falling apart.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The windows in the building have all been cleaned and are done so on a regular basis. The frames of some of the rooms have sticky residue on them from repeatedly used to hang pictures with tape etc. These are very hard to remove but a deep clean will be done as soon as possible to remove. A through clean has been done.

The mud kitchen will be removed from the garden and in the meantime, a table has been placed in front of it to prevent the children from playing with it.

Staff will ensure the windows are regularly washed and maintained. The windows and frames have been washed down, but there is still the residue of tape marks. These will be sorted within a couple of weeks.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

(1)(2)

The Literacy room (front room) measures 17.9 m² and had space for the 7 children attending on a sessional basis during the morning on the day.

The Bunny room (middle room) measures 20 m² and had space for the 10 children attending on a sessional basis during the morning.

The Chimp room (big room) measures 24 m² and had space for 6 children attending as part time and full day care on the day.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

There was insufficient space available in the puppy room (sunroom) for the number of children attending on the day. A further review of the attendance records indicated that an additional four children were to commence in the room in the coming weeks which would have further reduced the space capacity.

Rooms:	Ages:	Space Requirement:	Space Required:	Space available:
Puppies Room AM	1-2 years x 4	2.8 m ²	15.9 m²	13.8 m ²
	2-3 years x 2	2.35 m ²		

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The puppies have now been moved to a larger room.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of the new room

Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.