

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2016KE011

Name of Service: Sugradh Kilberry

Address of Service: Kilberry National School, Kilberry, Athy, Co. Kildare

Eircode: R14 EY05

Name of Registered Provider: Michael O'Sullivan

Service type: Sessional

Date of Inspection: 30/04/2025

No of pre-school children: AM 21 PM NA

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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas Co. Kildare W91 X38W |
| Inspection undertaken by: | R. Flynn and F. Maher |
| Title: | Early Years Inspectors |

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

Sugradh Kilberry pre-school is located in a rural setting in the townland of Kilberry, Athy Co Kildare, and operates from a large room in a modular unit to the rear of Kilberry Primary school. It is one of two private services in the locality operated by the registered provider.

Sessional care and education is provided to children from 2-6 years of age. Opening hours are from 9:00am-12:00pm for 38 weeks of the pre-school year. An enclosed play area is located to the front of the pre-school and the children also have access to the large, enclosed playing field and the school playground on site. The service consists of one large pre-school room and sanitary accommodation. The service is also registered to provide school aged care.

Staffing

There were three adults present in the service on the day of the inspection, working directly with the children. One relief staff member is available, however, was not present on the day of inspection. One employee was working directly with children under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) on the day of inspection. A manager who provides support to the two services operated by the registered provider arrived to the service at 12pm and remained for the closing meeting. The registered provider does not work in the pre-school service.

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,

- Regulation 9 (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (4) - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1), (3) Staffing Levels.
- Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child.
- Regulation 16 (h) (j) (k) – Record in relation to pre-school service.
- Regulation 19 (1)(a) – Health, welfare and development of child.
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.
- Regulation 25 (1), (2)(a)(b) – First aid.
- Regulation 26 – Fire Safety.
- Regulation 28 – Insurance.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, 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.

(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) The service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise.

(b) Both the person in charge and a named person who could deputise were on the premises during the inspection.

(c) The service had a clear, documented management structure which was displayed on the notice board of the service.

The files of six staff members, including the registered provider, employed and or present in the service were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of four adults whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the manager and 4 staff members employed to work directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or 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.

(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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the preschool children.

(3) The ratio of adults to children was maintained on the day of the inspection. There were 21 children attending the service being supervised directly by three adults.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1)
A sample of 12 records were reviewed by the inspectors. The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a) to (i) of the above regulation for the records reviewed.

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child 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)
- (h) A written record was available in the pre-school detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection.
- (j) A sample of one medicine administration record, recorded since the beginning of the pre-school year was inspected and contained the relevant information and details.
- (k) The accident and incident record book was reviewed.
- A sample of nine recorded incidents, between 14/10/2024 – 25/03/2025, were inspected and contained the relevant information, details of the accident/incident and signatures of staff and parents.

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

- (1)(a)
- Basic Needs**
- Children were observed to have freedom of movement throughout the pre-school room as they independently chose one of the various activities which included painting, sensory play with rice or partaking in making playdough with one of the staff members.

A packed lunch was provided by the children's parents/guardians and consisted of a variety of sandwiches with healthy fillings, yoghurts and fruit with water to drink; this was in line with the healthy eating policy of the service which was reviewed. A drinks station was in place in the pre-school room with a lidded jug of water and beakers which enabled the children to self-serve throughout the morning. During snack time, staff sat and chatted with the children making it an enjoyable and social occasion. Children were not rushed when eating their snack and were given time to eat at their own pace.

Prior to the children going outside to play staff ensured individually labelled sun cream was applied as it was a warm sunny day.

Supporting relationships

The service had a key worker system in place and staff interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. Staff provided clear instruction on what was going to happen next such as verbal signalling of transitions. The service-maintained workbooks for each child which contained documentation and photographs of their play and work activities. These are shared with parents at the end of the pre-school year. The registered provider advised the inspectors that information, and updates regarding the service are given to parents via an electronic messaging application and a monthly newsletter. For lunch time, children were observed assisting with setting the tables for lunch, enjoying their turn taking and roles of responsibility.

Pictures of the various emotions that are experienced by children were displayed at child height on one wall which assisted the children to understand and express their feelings to the staff members caring for them.

A birthday celebration wall with pictures of each child celebrating their birthday ensured each child was supported and included among the group.

Physical and material environment

The preschool room was equipped with age-appropriate low-level tables and chairs allowing the children to sit comfortably for snack and tabletop activities. Areas of interest included a kitchen/home corner, construction area, mark making and a library adjacent to a large rest area with child sized couches and sand/water play areas.

Materials and resources included plenty of art and craft materials for painting, cutting, sticking and colouring and the kitchen area was resourced with associated props. Further play and learning materials included cars, trucks, dolls, dress up, puzzles, jigsaws, building blocks and animals. The children had also planted seeds which were placed on a table in the room to allow the children follow the growing process of their plants.

The outside play area to the front of the service was equipped with a climbing frame on a bark surface and a selection of toys to promote imaginary play. The large, enclosed school playing field was also available for the children to use.

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

Access to the service was at the side of the primary school building through a high-level metal gate; this was secured with a padlock and slide bolt mechanism during the pre-school hours. Access outside of this time was through the primary school entrance which was controlled by primary school staff. The main entrance door to the pre-school was securely locked and controlled by staff to prevent children exiting the pre-school unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised access, a window panel in the entrance door also allows staff visibility of any visitors. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. Cleaning products were stored in a high-level shelf in the kitchenette area, out of reach of the children. There was documentary evidence available that daily indoor and outdoor risk assessments were completed to promptly identify and manage any potential risks in the premises. Staff advised the inspectors they immediately cut/chop any food that may pose a choking risk to a child at snack time.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled warm water and liquid hand soap was readily available for hygienic hand washing. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal and containment of used tissues. Staff were observed to encourage and prompt the children to wash their hands after outdoor play, toileting and before snack time.

Administration of Medication:

Medicine was not observed being administered on the day of inspection. Staff advised that medications were not generally administered in the service, however there was an adequate administration of medication policy in place, in the instance of emergency medication being required to be administered. Written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child.

Outing:

The inspectors were informed by staff that the children are brought to a local farm on a school outing in the summer term, operational procedures were in place guided by the outings policy which was reviewed on inspection.

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 ensured that a person trained in first aid response was available to the children attending the service. One staff member present had First Aid Responder (FAR) certification.

(2)(a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available in the building (pre-school room) and was always available to the adults caring for the children in attendance in the 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) A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 21/03/2025.
- (b) Records reviewed demonstrated that the annual servicing of the fire extinguishers was conducted in August 2024. The last maintenance check for the service's fire alarm system was recorded as having taken place 17 April 2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the wall in the pre school room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

On review of the service's current insurance certificate, the inspector observed that the insurance certificate detailed cover for a sessional childcare service for 22 children which was active until the 27/03/2026.