

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016LH007
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Children's World
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Faughart N.S., Faughart, Dundalk, Co. Louth
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A91 X272
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Catriona McAteer
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	03/03/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM	No.
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Flood
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable.
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### Description of service

Children's World is a privately owned service that commenced operation in June 2016. The service provides sessional care and education to pre-school children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. The service caters for a maximum of 22 children and operates each weekday.

This service operates from a purposively developed classroom within Faughart National School. The premises consists of a spacious playroom with adjoining toilet facilities and the children have access to an outdoor play area which is located to the side of the Primary school building. Off road parking for drop offs and collections is directly outside the school building.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs 3 staff to work directly with the preschool children in the 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 would like 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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named deputy person to deputise as required. The person in charge and the deputy person were on the premises when the inspector arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

(c) When questioned staff were familiar with the management structure within the service and the roles and responsibilities of the various staff members.

(2) Three staff files were reviewed. The following vetting documents were available:

(a) & (b) There were 2 written references available for the 3 staff members. Evidence of validation was available for 1 written reference.

(c) A processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for all 3 members of staff. The registered provider 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) Following a review of the files presented for inspection, international police vetting was not required at this time.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 3 members of staff who work directly with the preschool children held at least the minimum required level 5 childcare qualification on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) Documentary evidence was not available to confirm that 5 out of 6 written references available had been validated.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

All references have now been validated

Staff manager will ensure these are validated going forward.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

Written confirmation that all references have been validated

**Summary Comment**

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances together with documentary evidence. Based on the information submitted the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 have been adequately addressed. Implementation and sustainment of the corrective and preventative actions detailed will require assessment at the 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 was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced at 10.30am and remained so throughout the inspection. There were 10 preschool children aged 3 to 4 years being cared for by 3 staff members.

### 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:*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(i) Documentary evidence of a weekly staff roster was not available for inspection. It is acknowledged that the staff present had signed in for the day of the inspection, however the departure times of 12.00pm for the 3 staff present were also prepopulated when the inspector reviewed the record at 11.00am.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

Daily staff rota is now displayed for the week. Staff only sign out when day has ended. Manager will ensure staff rota is on display each week and will only sign staff out when the day is ended.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances together with documentary evidence. Based on the information submitted the non-compliances identified under Regulation 16 have been adequately addressed. This will require assessment at the next inspection.

### 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,*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children’s learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service.

#### Basic Needs

- The children’s care needs were attended to on a regular basis for example, hands were washed before snack time and after toileting, noses were wiped frequently.
- Independence with toileting was promoted for the children who were toilet trained and discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required. Gentle reminders were given about handwashing by the staff.
- Snack time was observed to be a social, interactive occasion with all staff and children observed seated at the tables. During this time the children and staff were observed to chat about their nice lunches. Children who required additional time to relax and eat their lunch were facilitated and were supported by one of the staff members.
- The staff were obviously familiar with the children and their families and encouraged the children to talk about their siblings. Enthusiastic conversation was supported for one child who had got ‘a new baby’ at home that morning. This conversation then extended to the other children who proceeded to speak about their younger and older siblings.
- The staff reported that the children had a change of environment to the outdoor area earlier in the morning prior to the inspector’s arrival.

#### Supporting Relationships

- Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children and the staff members present.
- A key worker system was in place in the service, and this was on display in the care room. It was observed that each staff member had a small group of children assigned to them and the key person took the lead in supporting that child’s transitions, recording their daily activities, maintaining relationships with their families, and documenting their learning and development.
- Verbal feedback was given to parents and guardians at drop off and collection, additionally phone calls, and a small messaging service on social media are also used for communicating with parents.
- Links between the service and home were promoted and evidenced by the presence of ‘our family tree’- pictures of the children’s family which were on display in the playroom. Additionally, scrap books are in

development for each child, and these contain samples of the children’s artwork and photographs of activities that are sent home as a ‘keep sake’ at the end of the school year.

- The staff communicate with each other on a regular basis and report that a messaging service and verbal communications on a daily basis support them to plan meeting the children’s needs in the service. For example, some evidence was available of strategies that have been identified by staff to assist children who require additional supports in the service.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The physical and material environment, both indoors and outdoors supported children’s learning and development. The playroom contained a suitable range of play materials and equipment which were appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the children and laid out to accommodate the needs and interests of the children in the room. These were stored on open low-level shelves and were freely and readily accessible to the children.
- Specific areas of interest that were well resourced, supported the pre-school children in initiating and sustaining play activities. For example; a kitchen area, a dress up area, soft area which contained a small sensory box, soft cork mats and cushions, an art area and open low level shelving units with a variety of small world toys and toys to develop manipulation skills including bricks, blocks, jigsaws, shape sorters, were amongst the interest areas and play equipment provided.
- The Outdoor area had a variety of play materials and equipment that supported many areas of development including gross motor, manipulation skills, balance and sensorial play.

## 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

Snacks and lunches were provided by the parents. A variety of foods such as sandwiches, cheese, crackers, yoghurts and fresh fruit were provided. All perishable items were stored appropriately in the fridge. Drinks were accessible in the children’s own individual cups/drinks bottles and were available for the children to access as required.

### 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

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection:

#### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for all 3 staff members. However, the 3 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'.
2. The records available for the firefighting equipment on the premises detailed 06/2023 as the last maintenance carried out. This is outside the best practice guidelines which recommends that all firefighting equipment must be maintained at intervals not exceeding 12 months.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Actions

1. All staff have secured new and up to date garda vetting. Garda vetting will be kept up to date in future
2. All fire equipment maintenance is up to date. I have asked the school to provide me with any fire safety checks going forward.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of updated garda vetting disclosures for 3 staff.

Maintenance records for firefighting equipment dated 24/04/2025

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances together with documentary evidence. Based on the information submitted the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed. This will also be reviewed at the next inspection.

### 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) A record was maintained of the monthly fire drills which had been completed in the service. The last recorded was 02/25.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment on the premises dated the 06/2023.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) Documentary evidence was not available of an up-to-date maintenance certificate for the smoke alarms on the premises.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that she has asked the school to provide any fire safety checks going forward

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary and photographic evidence of updated fire maintenance documents dated 12/02/2025.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances together with documentary evidence. Based on the information submitted the non-compliances identified under Regulation 26 have been adequately addressed. This will require assessment at the next inspection.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-  
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

### Non-Compliance Information

(e)The staff when questioned confirmed that there was no nappy changing mat available on the premises for children who required nappies or nappy pants changed.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The preschool has been provided with a changing mat.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence of nappy changing mat

### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance together with documentary evidence. Based on the information submitted the non-compliance identified under Regulation 29 has been adequately addressed.