

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016MH011
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Name of Service:	Tigers Childcare
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Address of Service:	Rath Lodge, Ashbourne, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	A84 W983
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Name of Registered Provider:	Karen Cince
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	54	PM	50
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Family Resource Centre, Commons Road Navan, Co Meath
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Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray & AM Cunningham
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Title:	Early Years Inspectors
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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

Tigers Childcare is a private childcare service which is part of a chain located in a residential area of Ashbourne. The building is a purpose built single storey facility and consists of 5 care rooms, office, kitchen and sanitary facilities. The service provides full day care, sessional and part-time care to children from 0 to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). Hours of operation are from 07:30am to 6:30 pm.

The rooms in the service were as follows:

Discoverers room 1 provided care for children from 6 to 16 months.

Discoverers room 2 catered for children from 17 months to 2.6 years.

Explorers room facilitated the care of children from 2 to 3 years.

Active Cubs 1 accommodated children from 2 to 3 years.

Active Cubs 2 provided care and education to children from 2.8years to 6 years.

An outdoor space is located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

Staff employed in the service were 1 manager,12 childcare staff,1 relief staff and a cook. Present on the day of inspection were the manager,11 childcare staff,2 agency staff and a cook.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager , 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.*

(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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Thirty-Four written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for 17 adults.

(d) Police vetting was available for 2 staff who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Sixteen childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(6A) One staff member were employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection the manager, 11 childcare staff and 2 agency staff were working directly with the 54 children attending the service. The manager was available to provide support to the care rooms as needed.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection.

The rooms were as follows:

Discoverers room 1 had 6 babies ranging in age from 6 months to 16 months attending the service on a full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults.

Discoverers room 2 had 9 children ranging in age from 17 months to 2 years 3 months attending the service on a full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults.

Explorers room had 11 children ranging in age from 2 years to 2 years 7 months attending the service on a full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults.

Active Cubs 1 had 12 children ranging in age from 2 years 9 months to 3 years 9 months, 11 of which were attending on a full day care basis with 1 child attending on a sessional basis being cared for by 2 adults.

Active Cubs 2 had 16 children ranging in age from 3 years 7 months to 4 years 7 months, 13 of which were attending the service on a full day care basis with 3 children attending on a sessional basis being cared for by 3 adults, one of which was providing AIM support.

Two additional staff members were available to providing assistance as needed across the care rooms.

(8) (a) According to the staff roster, the manager ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Children individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required. Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Older children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.
- The children in the Discoverers rooms 1 & 2 who became upset or who awoke from sleep were nurtured and cuddled until they were ready to re-join their group. Children in the Explorers room who were transitioning were given additional comforted and support with some children observed carrying their framed family photograph around with staff overheard chatting to the children about their family.
- Children were observed enjoying meaningful, sustained play with tabletop activities, art and crafts and free playing with lots of conversation and laughter observed. Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. In the Discoverers rooms 1&2 the theme of the week was "Halloween" with the children's artwork of "Spiders" and "Ghosts" displayed to reflect this theme. Themes for the week were well supported in the remainder of the care rooms which also included Halloween activities and "Dealing with Emotions" in Active cubs 2, where art work and story time incorporated these themes. In the Explorers room gross motor development was the theme and activities for indoors and outdoors supported the theme e.g, skittles and movement activities.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning with children observed enjoying outdoor play with their peers on the day of inspection.

Supporting relationships around children:

- A record was kept in the Discoverers 1 & 2 and Explorers rooms of nappy changes, sleep times, meals and issues pertaining to each child as occurred during the day and this information was passed on to parents or guardians by an electronic tablet device.
- The staff spoke to all children in a positive way and listened attentively to each child. They used welcoming facial expressions and gentle vocal tones. At snack time children were observing sitting around tables which created a positive atmosphere where children had the opportunity to interact and developing relationships. The children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.
- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed on “The Family Wall” in the care rooms which gave a sense of identity and belonging.

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-
- (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,

Compliance Information

(1)(b) Cosy areas consisting of mats, cushions and soft furnishings were available in all care rooms should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. A cot room was available off the Discoverers room 1 with 5 standard cots for the younger age group who required sleep. An additional 6 fold up cots were available if required. The older children requiring sleep were accommodated on sleep mats in the Discoverers 2, Explorers and Active Cubs 1 room.

(3)(a) There was a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to the rear of the premises. The area was divided into 3 spaces by wooden fencing with 2 secure side gates. The surface areas consisted of paving stones, woodchip, grass and artificial grass covering.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) Three children under 2 years were sleeping on sleep mat which were less than the required thickness of 6 to 15 cms.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b) Three floor beds measuring 10cm in dept have been purchased for children under the age of 2 years.

Supporting documentation submitted

Acknowledgement Order Form for the purchasing of 3 floor beds and photographic evidence of floor beds.

Summary Comment

The registered providers in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan have addressed the non-compliance for regulation 20. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on open shelving at their height which supported children to select and become involved in meaningful, sustained play experiences.
- The outdoor spaces were equipped with age-appropriate play materials and equipment in each of the 3 areas to facilitate the children to engage in energetic play and physical activity. Equipment included a large stationary activity unit with a climbing board and slides, push along toys, plastic playhouse and rockers, climbing tunnel, tricycles, a swing, mud kitchen, tyres, balancing planks and sand and water trays.

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 service had a 4-week menu plan with a variety of dishes ranging from vegetarian, meat, fish and poultry supplied by a catering company. All food was provided by the service except for the morning snack.

On the day of inspection, the children had a variety of snacks ranging from fruit, yougurts, ham, cheese, bread sticks and crackers which were served between 11:30 to 12 am and between 5 and 5:30pm before leaving for home.

Dinner was served 2:30 and 3pm which consisted of a minced beef chilli dish. Water was available in the care rooms throughout the day.

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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The two side entrance to the outdoor spaces had secure gates and the main door to the service was secured by a buzzer system. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- An indoor and outdoor risk assessment was conducted on a daily basis.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times. Warm running water was available in the children’s sanitary area, along with a supply of liquid soap and hand paper towel for effective hand washing.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.

Safe Sleep:

Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- Temperature of the cot room was maintained between 16 to 20⁰ C and between 18 to 22⁰ C in the Discoverers 2 room, Explorers room and Active Cubs 1 while children were sleeping. Thermometers were available in the rooms to monitor the temperature.
- A sleep log recording the position, colour and breathing pattern was recorded at 10 minutes intervals on all sleeping children. Children over 2 years who were sleeping on mats had adults supervising in the room at all times.
- Block out blinds were available which created an atmosphere conducive to sleep.

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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 the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 20th September 2023
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment was last serviced on the 18th July 2023. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 26th July 2023.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 68 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2023 to the 28/03/2024.