

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016WW009
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Name of Service:	Castle Kidz
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Address of Service:	Newcastle Parish Centre, Church Lane, Newcastle, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 X782
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rev. Ross Styles
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	12/12/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, County Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	Mona Condon
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	N/A
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Description of service

This sessional service operates in a purpose-built premises which is adjacent to a parish centre in a rural area in County Wicklow. The service is registered to care for children aged two to six years and operates from Monday to Friday between 09.00am and 12.30pm. The service has one care room and a sanitary area. The outdoor area is available to the children at the rear of the premises. This service is registered to care for a maximum of 16 pre-school children at one time.

Staffing

There are three adults employed who work directly with the children. One of these adults is employed as a relief member of staff. The registered provider does not have daily contact with the children but works in an administrative role.

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.

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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on 12/12/2025 in relation to a non-compliance identified in relation to Regulation 23, General Safety.

A response from the registered provider was received on 15/12/2025 and accepted.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff member and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and*

(d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(2)
Files for three adults employed in the service were reviewed.

(a)&(b) Six written and validated references were available for three adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of three adults

(d) Police vetting was available for two adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months as an adult.

(4)
The three adults employed had 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.

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) Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the pre-school children.

(3) The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection. There were two adults working directly with twelve pre-school children on the day of inspection.

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;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the information listed above (1)(h) - (j) in relation to the service.

(3) A record listed above (1)(h) - (j) were available for inspection.

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 designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelving and were inaccessible to the pre-school children.

Infection Control:

- Children were encouraged to wash their hands regularly including before snack and after using the toilet. Effective hand hygiene practices were observed and in accordance with the services infection control policies and procedures. Pedal operated bins were available in the sanitary areas and in the care rooms.
- The premises play equipment, and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Cleaning schedules were maintained in the care room and the environment was clean.

Administration of Medication

- Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. Written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. Medication was stored safely. Staff were aware of the procedure to be undertaken should medication be required.

Non-Compliance Information

Upon arrival of the inspector at the service twelve children, aged two years and six months to 4 years, were playing outdoors on scooters and bikes at the front of the premises. The two gates at the entrance were unlocked and the latches on the gates were easily accessible to the children. This posed a risk as a child could leave the premises and have access to the roadway. Additionally, an unauthorised adult could enter the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Locks will be used at all times and all staff members made aware of procedures.

A review of the risk assessment for the use of the carpark has been completed. A staff member will be positioned near the locked gate. As advised, we will also use cones to section part of the carpark to make supervision more manageable.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the lock in place on the gate.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 23.

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) One staff member, who was trained in first aid response (FAR), was available to the children on the day of inspection.
- (2)(a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible position.
- (b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school 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 record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 24 October 2025.
- (1)(b) Records were available detailing the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms dated January 2025 and October 2025 respectively.
- (4) Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The children present were supervised when indoors and outdoors at all times during the session.