

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2017FL505

Name of Service: Kidology

Address of Service: Unit 8, Junction 6, Castleknock, Dublin 15

Eircode: D15 EA43

Name of Registered Provider: Deirdre Finnegan

Service type: Full Day

Date of Inspection: 08/07/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	31
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Area 1 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Nelson and C. Harte
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

Kidology is a full day care service located in a retail park in Dublin 15 and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 50 children aged 1 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday and is one of three services operated by the registered provider.

Kidology operates from the ground floor of a retail building and has three care rooms to include the Toddler Room (1 to 2 years old), Playschool room (2 to 3 years old), and Montessori Room (3 to 5 years old). There are sanitary facilities located off each of the care rooms, and a cot room located off the Toddler room. Further sanitary facilities are available for staff. A fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are currently eight staff employed by the registered provider, including the person in charge and seven childcare staff who work directly with the children. The registered provider works in a supernumerary capacity and manages the oversight of the service. There were ten adults present on the day of the inspection; the registered provider, a co-director, the person in charge, six childcare staff and a student.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under the following:

- Regulation 16(1)(h)(i)(j)(k) – Record in relation to Preschool Service

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 registered provider, person in charge, a director of the company, 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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and this was displayed in the entrance hall of the service.
- (2) A review of the roster and discussion with the registered provider established nine staff worked in the service, and these files along with that of a visiting student, and the garda vetting declaration of a director who was present on the day was reviewed.
- (a) Fourteen validated written references were available from recent past employers.
 - (b) Six validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the director, the student and all nine staff employed. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Documentary evidence showed that five adults had lived in a state other than Ireland for six months or more as adults and international police vetting from that state was available for inspection.
- (3) Documentary evidence available showed that all of the checks outlined in (2) had been carried out prior to any of the adults having contact with the children in the service.

- (4) The nine staff who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

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.*
- (9) In assessing compliance with the adult: child ratios specified in Schedule 6, unpaid workers and, where applicable, the person referred to in Regulation 24(2), shall not be taken into account.*

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs.
- There were seven staff available to 33 children present on the morning of the inspection.
 - There were eight staff available to 31 children present on the afternoon of the inspection.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection. For example:
- Staff breaks were staggered to ensure ratios were maintained.
 - Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children in the rooms.
- (9) A student who was present on the day of the inspection was not included in the adult: child ratios of the room.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (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;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured the following records were maintained:

- (a) Details of the name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff were maintained within the staff files and displayed in the entrance hall.
- (b) The service Tusla certificate detailed the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services. This was displayed in the entrance hall.
- (c) The adult: child ratios were displayed in the entrance hall.
- (d) The type of care or programme provided was displayed in the entrance hall.
- (e) The policy document outlined the facilities available within the service, and this was also displayed in the entrance hall.
- (f) The opening hours and fees of the service were displayed in the entrance hall.
- (g) The registered provider maintained all the policies required in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) Attendance records detailing the daily arrival and departure of the children were maintained.

- (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.
- (j) Following a review of a sample of 15 records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for the administration of medication.
- (k) Following a review of a sample of 15 records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for accident and incidents.

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-

(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) (b) The registered provider ensured the following care practices were in place to meet the needs of the children attending:

- Mealtimes were observed to be regular, with a set menu available for dinner, which was provided by an external company and reheated in the service kitchen. Alternative food was available for children with alternative diets. Drinks of water were available in the care rooms. Menu plans were displayed in the hallway for parents to review, and the meal of Caribbean chicken with rice served on the day was reflective of the menu.
- Daily routines were displayed in the rooms and were reflective of the practice on the day.
- Staff were observed to prepare in advance when moving from one activity to another and verbally indicated when the activity was coming to an end, making transitions calm and timely.
- Staff engaged with children in a warm, responsive manner, using strategies such as questioning and choice to engage children in activities.
- Staff were available to support children during toileting, whilst facilitating privacy and independence.
- All of the children were observed to access outdoor play on the day of the 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

The following measures were observed to safeguard children:

General Safety:

- There was an electronic door release system on all external and internal doors in the service, which was managed by staff and a code entry pad. This restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Blind cords were observed to be secure throughout the building.
- Radiators were fixed high on the walls out of reach of children.
- There were no trailing flexes observed in the care rooms.
- Medication was observed to be stored in date, out of reach of children, and clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Cleaning products were stored up high out of reach of children.
- Tall shelving units were observed to be fixed to the wall.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap and single use hand towels were available at all wash hand basins used by the children and the staff members.
- Staff were observed to support children to handwash before dinner and after using the toilet.
- Although no nappy changes were reviewed during the inspection, disposal single use aprons and gloves were available, and items needed during the nappy change were stored adjacent to the nappy mat.
- Children's soothers were stored in individual labelled lidded containers.
- Cots and beds were observed to be positioned with sufficient space between them while children were sleeping.

Safe Sleep:

- A log was maintained where the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children was checked every 10 minutes.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were observed to be clearly indicated and unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. There was a nail protruding from a wooden structure in the outdoor play area. This posed a potential injury risk to children.
2. There was a bottle of unlabelled clear liquid beside the nappy change mat in the Toddler room. The contents or expiry date of the liquid could not be established, or the identity of who owned the container. This posed a potential risk of skin irritation if used incorrectly.
3. The water temperature of the first sink in the Playschool room sanitary area exceeded the recommended temperature of 43°C. A temperature of 45°C was recorded by the inspectors at 12.17pm. This had dropped to 43.6°C at 12.21pm. This posed a potential scald risk to children.

Infection Control:

The following increased the potential risk of infection:

4. Three nappy creams stored in a box in the nappy change room off the Toddler room were not individually labelled. This increased the potential risk of cross contamination. It is acknowledged that evidence was submitted to the inspectorate on the 9 July 2025 that these creams had been disposed of.
5. There was a buildup of dirt and debris on the following:
 - Under the nappy change mat in the Toddler room.
 - The nappy change unit in the Playschool room.
6. The following was damaged and worn, leaving an ineffective surface for cleaning:
 - The wooden frame for the nappy unit in the Toddler room.
 - The bottom of the door to the cubicle in the Montessori room sanitary area.
7. The following fabric surfaces were observed to be stained and visibly dirty:
 - Cushions in the Montessori room cosy area.
 - The large floor cushion in the Toddler room.
8. There was no foot pedal operated lidded bin in the sanitary area of the Montessori room. This increased the potential risk of contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The nail was removed from the wooden structure and a permanent PVC edging has been installed to prevent further ageing or damage. The service continues to complete daily and weekly risk assessments and report damage to maintenance.
2. The baby oil bottle was removed. This will be checked on an ongoing basis via the service risk assessment.
3. The water temperature has been adjusted. This will be checked on an ongoing basis via the service risk assessment.

Infection Control:

4. The creams have been removed. This will be checked on an ongoing basis via the service risk assessment.
5. The nappy area was cleaned, and a new PVC sheeting / cover has been installed to enhance durability and facilitate easier cleaning in the toddler room. This will be checked on an ongoing basis via the service cleaning checklist.
6. New PVC sheeting / cover has been installed to the nappy change frame to enhance durability and facilitate easier cleaning. The doors were sealed and raised to prevent further damage.
7. New cosy corner has been placed in the toddler room and worn cushions will be discarded. The cushions in the Montessori have been thoroughly cleaned. This will be checked on an ongoing basis via the service cleaning checklist.
8. All bins in the sanitary areas have been replaced with foot pedal operated bins.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1-3 Photographic evidence, copy of risk assessments.

Infection Control:

4-8 Photographic evidence, copy of cleaning checklists.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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

The registered provider ensured:

- (1) A review of the service roster established that a person trained in First Aid Responder training was available during the operational hours while the children attended.
- (2) The first aid boxes were:
- (a) Suitably equipped and stored in each of the care rooms and in the kitchen. Staff were aware of where the box was stored, and this was visible to the staff in the care room.
 - (b) Stored in a manner where it was always accessible and available.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-*
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (1) There was a complaints policy maintained which outlined the following:
 - (a) The procedures to be followed when making a complaint.
 - (b) The way complaints would be dealt with.
 - (c) The procedures for keeping the complainant informed on how the complaint is being dealt with.
- (2) Was not reviewed as the registered provider reported there had been no complaints received to the service since the last inspection held on the 15 November 2023.
- (3) Was not reviewed as the registered provider reported there had been no complaints received to the service since the last inspection held on the 15 November 2023.