

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2018KE513
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	KARE Pre-School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Curragh Grange House, Green Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	R56 F886
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Deirdre Murphy
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	19/06/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	4	PM	Not applicable
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years inspectorate Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35K1W4
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A Spain
<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

KARE pre-school is a sessional service which provides individual care and educational plans for children with complex needs requiring specialist support to participate in a pre-school service. The service is operational between the hours of 9.30am and 1.00pm and cares for children in the age range 2 to 6 years. The service is located in a standalone two storey building on the outskirts of Newbridge town in Kildare. Rooms in use include two playrooms, a sensory room and a utility room at ground floor level. An additional playroom and a kitchen are provided at first floor level. Sanitary accommodation, nappy changing and showering facilities are available to the children. A staff toilet area, training room and two offices are also located at first floor level. An enclosed outdoor play area is provided for daily access by the children cared for.

### Staffing

The service is staffed by ten adults with a combination of childcare and nursing qualifications and backgrounds. The registered provider does not work directly 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment,

Regulation 11 – Staffing levels,

Regulation 15 – Records of pre-school child,

Regulation 19 – Health, welfare and development of child,

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials,

Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,

Regulation 25 – First aid,

Regulation 26 – Fire safety measures,

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15, Records of pre-school child. The scope of the inspection included all rooms in use in the service and the outdoor play area.

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 wishes 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.

(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 has both a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

The designated person in charge was present in the service on the arrival of the inspector and for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure evident on the day of inspection between the management and staff with responsibility for caring for the needs of the children present during both play time and during break time in the service.

The inspector reviewed 11 staff files.

(2)(a)(b).

Two references from past employers were held on file in respect of five staff members. Two references from sources other than past employers were held in file in respect of two staff members. A reference from a past employer and a reference from a reputable source were held on file in respect of four staff members.

(c)

A Garda vetting disclosure was held on file in respect of the registered provider and all ten staff working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff members.

(d)

International police vetting was held on file as necessary in respect of a staff member in the service who had lived outside of the state for over six consecutive months as an adult.

(3)

Records held on file confirmed that the necessary vetting procedures were conducted prior to the appointment of staff to work in the service.

(4)

Records held on staff files confirmed that six staff members held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education, varying from level 5 to level 6.

### 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 worked with and cared for the children for the duration of the inspection.
- (3)  
Three childcare staff members cared for four children on the arrival of the inspector and for the duration of the inspection.

### 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.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,
  - (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and
  - (c) an authorised person.

### Compliance Information

- (1)(a) to (i)  
The service held individual child record files. The inspector reviewed three children's files. The necessary details in respect of (a) to (i) were recorded in respect of the sample of files reviewed.

(3)(a)(b)(c)

The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to their child, an employee who is authorised by the registered provider and an authorised person such as the inspector on the day of 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, and*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The inspector observed the Children while cared for in the outdoors open shelter on the day of inspection. Toys and play equipment were situated on the soft all-weather surface and were both visible to the children and easily accessible to promote independent access by children who were mobile. Breaktime in the outdoor open shelter was relaxed. Children were afforded the time to feed themselves or were fed by staff members. Snacks provided from home included yoghurts, cheese, pasta, plain biscuits, crackers and diluted juices. A combination of soft seating, foam filled mats and soft cushions were provided across the outdoor play shelter, the three playrooms and the sensory room for children to play at floor level, rest and relax, and for therapeutic purposes as necessary. A bubble tube and wall images created with the use of a projector were noted as additional aids used to add to the restful environment in the sensory room.

Staff were observed to sit and listen to the children in a caring and gentle way and respond to their cues in a timely fashion when they were upset or needed attention. Staff used soft tones when speaking to the children, were familiar with each child's name and needs and were observed to both get down to each child's level during snack and play time and make eye contact with the children.

Children's folders were maintained in the playrooms with both their individual care and educational plans.

Information included each child's personal profile, support network, typical day, both therapeutic and multi-disciplinary services linked to, family communication plans and assessment reports.

Children were provided with opportunities to make links with their local community. Examples of this included; engaging in horse riding lessons and going on outings during July annually which included visits to local pet farms and the Zoo.

## 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

Low level furniture, including tables and chairs were provided in the “Willow Room” at first floor level for children to sit and play. Specially adapted chairs and seating were available to the children as required. Toys and play equipment observed in the playrooms included kitchens with kitchen equipment, utensils, dolls and prams in home corners. Blocks of different sizes and dimensions were provided for construction play. Blackboards, paper and large crayons were provided in art areas. Play items in children’s personal activity folders included nursery rhymes, songs and picture boards. A range of sensory toys and communication devices which included pictures of the children, family walls and activity walls with children's work were observed in the playrooms. In addition, special toys were provided to ensure that children in attendance were facilitated to engage with the equipment and resources available in the service.

The outdoor play area was provided with water and sand containers for messy play. A climbing frame was provided on a shock-absorbent ground surface. A smooth paved area was provided for toys on wheels to push along. A Storage shed was provided to shelter outdoor toys not in constant use and rotated for use outdoors.

### 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:

Entrance to the service was secured with a turn key lock and a doorbell provided to alert the service of arrivals. Cleaning equipment, agents and chemicals were stored in locked presses and in the utility room in the service. The outdoor play area was safely and securely fenced in by high level timber walls and the building walls. A high level timber gate bolted from inside was provided to prevent unauthorised access from the front of the building and the driveway to the outdoor play area.

##### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap and disposable paper towels were provided in the children's nappy changing and sanitary accommodation for handwashing and personal care. Foot pedal operated bins were provided adjacent to the wash hand basins. Completed and up to date cleaning schedules were available for the furniture, shelving, toys and play equipment in use both indoors and outdoors in the service. Toys and play equipment were observed to be clean and in good condition. Openable windows were available in all rooms to ensure a good supply of fresh air when children played indoors. Refuse bins were stored in an enclosed shed off the outdoor play area.

##### Administration of Medication:

Each child had a documented medication management plan and parental consent was available for the administration of medication. Registered nursing staff on site were responsible for the administration of medication

##### Fire Safety:

Fire exits were signposted and unobstructed. A fire assembly point was posted on a building wall outside of the service.

##### Outing:

The service conducted community-based outings and had an outings policy. The person in charge of the service furnished the inspector with risk assessments conducted prior to taking children on outings which included horse riding, use of a hydrotherapy pool and outings in the local community. Risk ratings were reviewed and updated

based on any changing needs of individual children in attendance at the service. Parental consent for outings was recorded on the children's enrolment forms.

### 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)  
Six staff members trained in FAR (first aid response) with an expiry date of the 1 September 2025 were available in the service.

(2)(a)(b)  
A first aid box was provided in the utility room at ground floor level and the kitchen at first floor level and both were easily accessible and available to staff caring for children attending 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)

Records were maintained of monthly fire drills as conducted in the service. The last monthly fire drill was recorded on the 30 May 2025.

(b)

The maintenance record for the firefighting equipment confirmed that an annual service was conducted on the 30 May 2025. The maintenance record for the smoke alarm system confirmed that a service was last conducted on the 5 June 2025.

(4)

A personalised fire evacuation procedure was documented for each child in attendance in the service.