

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018LK504
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Name of Service:	Killougheen Kids
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Address of Service:	Killougheen National School, Newcastle West, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V42 XE17
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Name of Registered Provider:	Aisling McCarthy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	25/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

This preschool sessional service opened in 2018. It provides care and education to children aged from 2 – 6 years of age from 08.40am to 11.40 midday and 11.50 to 14.50 pm daily.

The service operates from a modular unit located on the ground of Killoughteen National school, Killoughteen, Newcastle West Co Limerick. The children have access to one playroom, sanitary facilities for the children and adults and an enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the service

Staffing

The registered provider and 4 staff are working at the service. All the staff have the required childcare qualification.

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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (3)(4)

Regulation 10

Regulation 11 (1)

Regulation 19 (1)(a)

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Regulation 24

Regulation 28

Regulation 29

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 registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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 registered provider was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present, and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.

(c) There was 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 member of the team.

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(2) There was one new staff employed since the last inspection dated the 2nd of October 2024 and this file was reviewed.

(a) There were two written and validated references available for past employer.

(b) References from sources other than past employers were not required.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff working at the service. The Garda vetting for the 5 staff was dated within the last three years as per the regulatory notice, EYI-RN12.3 renewal of garda vetting, published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 1st of January 2024.

(d) Police vetting was available for the one staff member who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) All the staff members working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies were reviewed and contained the required information for staff to ensure the safe care of children.

- Healthy Eating Policy
- Policy on Infection Control

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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.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider of the service ensured that at all times the correct number of adults were rostered to work at the service. On the day of the inspection there was the registered provider and 3 adults present with 17 preschool children for the morning session. There were 4 adults present with 6 preschool children for the afternoon session. The adult/child ratio was correct for both sessions.

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

BASIC NEEDS:

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service and parents were advised to provide children with nutritious snacks each day for break time. Sandwiches, fruits, crackers, cheese strings, pasta snacks were observed in children's lunches on the day of inspection. All perishable foods were appropriately stored in a refrigerator each morning until required at break time. The staff sat with the children during breaks to give examples of positive social skills. The atmosphere was observed to be relaxed, and each child was given plenty of time to eat and enjoy their drink and meal without being rushed.

The children were observed going to the bathroom on their own which was located adjacent to the preschool room and were encouraged by staff to wash and dry their hand. The children could be easily supervised while independently accessing the bathroom facilities. A wash hand basin was also accessible in the preschool room for handwashing.

Tissues and wipes were always reachable to the children, and all waste was disposed of properly in lidded bins.

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A large couch was available, and this provided a quiet sensorial space for children to rest and relax in if tired during the session.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the playroom and in the outdoor play area. The outdoor area supported children's physical activity and social interaction.

Relationships around children were supported as the core staff in the service had not changed since the last inspection and children were familiar with staff through the use of the keyperson system. Staff had a good understanding of the benefits of the use of the keyperson system.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) no person other than-*
 - (i) pre-school child attending the service,*
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*
 - (iii) an employee, or*
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

Compliance Information

- (1) Each child was checked in by an adult on arrival to the service. At home time each child was checked out by an adult. The time of arrival and departure was documented for each child.
- (3)(a) No person other than a child attending the service, a person dropping or collecting a child, an employee or an unpaid worker could enter the premises without prior approval.
- (b) All visitors were signed in and out, documenting their time of arrival and departure and the reason for their visit. The name of the person who admitted them to the building was also recorded

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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 preschool service was adequately insured. The insurance certificate available on the day of inspection stated that 22 preschool children were covered by insurance to attend the facility. The commencement date of the insurance policy was the 28th of March 2025, and the expiry date of insurance was the 27th of March 2026.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (a) The premises was a modular unit of sound and stable structure and there were no visible defects.
- (b) The entrance and exit doors were secure to prevent children from exiting and to prevent unauthorised access.
- (c) Heating, ventilation and lighting were adequate in each area of the facility.
- (d) The playroom, entrance area and each sanitary area was clean and well maintained.
- (e) Suitable sanitary facilities were available for both staff and children.

All waste was managed appropriately.

Hygienic hand washing and drying facilities were available.

Hygienic nappy changing facilities were available.