

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018LK504		
Name of Service:	Killougheen Kids		
Address of Service:	Killougheen National School, Newcastle West, Limerick, Co. Limerick		
Eircode:	V42 XE17		
Name of Registered Provider:	Aisling McCarthy		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	02/10/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM 6
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick		
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne R Phillips		
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

This preschool sessional service opened in 2018. It provides care and education to children aged from 2 – 6 years of age from 09.00am to 12.00 midday and 12.00 to 15.00 pm daily.

The service operates from a modular unit located on the ground of the National school in 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 5 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 and safety . The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 25 and 26.

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, 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 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.

(2)(a) All staff files were reviewed. There were two written and validated references available for all staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff working at the service. All the vetting disclosures were dated within the last three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff members 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 adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) 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 19 preschool children for the morning session. There were 5 adults present with 6 preschool children for the afternoon session. The adult/child ratio was correct for both sessions.
- (3) At all times the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)- (i) A sample of 10 records for preschool children were examined and all the information required from (1) a- i was maintained on each record.

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)

BASIC NEEDS:

The services objective was to ensure that each child's learning, development and well-being was supported, taking all children's individual interests, needs and stage of development into consideration. There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service to encourage and educate the children about the importance of good nutrition. The parents supplied healthy snacks and drinks for the pre-school children. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator until required each day. The children have option of having their snack at any time throughout the session. A designated snack area was assigned for the children's snack time in the playroom and the children make the decision when to have their snack .

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets which were located next to the preschool room. Foot pedal operated, lidded bins were used for the safe disposal of used tissues and handtowels. A nappy changing facility was accessible if required. Staff were available to assist children at all times if needed.

The staff interacted with the children in a caring and respectful manner. Staff were observed conversing with the children at their level, using a soft tone of voice and staff responded promptly to their cues for assistance.

The staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the children’s personal interests and capabilities. Staff supported the children to be independent in their chosen play-based activities both individually and as part of a group.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The preschool room was a large, inviting, well-designed space which contained many interest areas for the children. Low level tables and chairs were accessible for snack time and for tabletop activities. Imaginative play areas with dress up clothes, play kitchen and a home corner were available. A reading area with soft seating and a wide range of books, a construction area with building materials and an art and craft area with paints, brushes and paper were also provided in the room.

All equipment was stored at children’s eye level and was well labelled and easily accessible. Children’s artwork was visible around the room and family photos were displayed in the library corner.

The facility had a well-resourced outdoor play area where children had an opportunity to play in most weather conditions. The outdoor area provided opportunities for fresh air, discovery, movement, exploration and activities exclusive to the outdoors. Children were observed in the outdoor area directing their own play, working in small groups and staff were observed joining with them when invited.

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) There were 5 members of staff that held current certification in first aid response for children and their certificates were maintained on file.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in the playroom.

(b) The first aid box was available if required by a child.

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) The fire drills were practiced on a monthly basis and a record maintained of the fire drills for the previous preschool year of 2023/2024.
- For the new preschool year of 2024 the first fire drill took place on the 27th of September 2024.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual basis, most recently in July 2024 and the smoke alarm system serviced on the 1st of August 2024. There was record maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the wall in the main entrance of the preschool.