

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2019DL002		
Name of Service:	Kool Kids Killymard		
Address of Service:	Gortlosky, Donegal Town, Co. Donegal		
Eircode:	F94YTE5		
Name of Registered Provider:	Alida Mc Ginty		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	25/10/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	30	PM 8
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F95 XK94		
Inspection undertaken by:	L Mc Glynn		
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

Kool Kids Killymard is a privately-owned, part time service located in a rural setting a short drive from Donegal Town. The service is registered to provide sessional and part time day care to children aged 2-6 years. The service operates from 9.00am to 2.00pm with the sessional care operating from 9.30am-12.30pm. The service operates from a two-storey facility which has been purposely adapted for the provision of a preschool service. There is one pre-school room on the ground floor and a second on the first floor. The premises also includes a kitchen and relevant sanitary and storage facilities. There is a large outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There is a total of six staff members working in the service inclusive of the registered provider who is the person in charge and works in the service on a daily basis. All six staff members were present and working directly with the children in the pre-school service on the day of inspection.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 19 and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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, staff 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

Vetting files in respect of the five staff members working in the service were reviewed on this inspection. The vetting file for the registered provider was reviewed on previous inspection and therefore is not included in this inspection report. The following information was available:

- (2)
- (a) There were two past employer references on file for four of the staff members and one past employer reference for one staff member.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from The National Vetting Bureau were available for review for the five staff members.
- (4) Evidence of the completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework was available for three staff members.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (a) The second reference on file for one staff member was from a source other than one of the past employments listed by them in their curriculum vitae.
- (d) International police vetting from the relevant state was not available for one staff member working in the service for whom documentation presented at inspection indicated that they had resided in another state for a period longer than six consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) Evidence of completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework was not available for two adults.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2) (a) The member of staff's CV has now been updated to include the employer whose reference was on file.
- (d) The member of staff who resided in another state applied for international police vetting and received it a few days later.
- (4) Certificates for each staff member submitted.

Supporting documentation submitted

Certificates, references and employment records were submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances identified on inspection have been adequately addressed.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times throughout the period of the inspection.

In the morning, there was three adults in the Jr preschool room caring for 17 children aged 2-3 years.

In the Sr preschool room, three adults cared for 13 children aged 3-4 years.

In the afternoon, the rooms joined together, and three adults cared for 8 children aged 2-4 years.

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

A written record was maintained in the service and open to inspection of the required information listed at points (a) to (k) of the regulation.

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

A healthy eating policy was in place which was evident from the varied foods which the children had brought to pre-school from home for their morning snack. Each child had brought a drinking bottle with them from home which was available in the room. The mealtime was a relaxed, social occasion for children, and they were observed to be engaged in energetic conversation with one another. Staff members sat alongside children, helping to unpack lunches when required and providing support to those that required it. Children were encouraged to be independent where possible and were observed to be competent in using the toilet facilities, washing hands, putting on coats and dressing for outdoor play. The children's efforts were encouraged and assistance, when required, was provided in a gentle manner.

There was a designated area in both rooms with softer seating for children to rest and relax from the activities if they wished. Both rooms also contained a range of carefully considered wall displays including children's artwork and a birthday wall represented individual children within the service and provided for a sense of belonging. There was also a display in the Sr preschool room with prompts for children to name feelings where children could place their name beside the feeling they were having. The vocal expression of feelings appeared to be common among children with one child heard telling the staff member, 'I feel sad'. The staff member responded in a caring and considerate manner, acknowledging the child's feeling and reassuring them. The child appeared content following the interaction.

Staff members were observed to encourage positive relationships between children, for example, during circle time, children collectively welcomed each child as their name was called. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of their friends and staff modelled caring behaviours, were warm and responsive in their interactions with children. Staff members were observed providing praise and encouragement at appropriate times and comforting children when they became upset.

The children were observed to move around the environment with ample opportunities provided for child-led, self-directed play. Throughout the morning, children in both rooms were observed to be engaged in various different types of play activities. Both rooms were laid out to provide interest areas and children were free to engage in the play experiences on offer within each one. Children in the Jr preschool room had moved the furniture around to create a row of seats which they explained was a 'dinosaur train'. In the Sr preschool room, a group of children were pretend playing with the dress up materials while another group focused on an art activity and a third group was constructing small buildings with magnetic blocks.

All children had access to the outdoor area on the day which provided a range of developmentally appropriate equipment and play materials. There were opportunities within the play area for children to develop their physical skills and provide challenge with sloping ground and steps, ride on toys and a slide. Children were also playing with a mud kitchen and happily jumping in the puddles that had naturally formed from the rainfall. When outdoors, staff appeared to be mindful of engaging children who were playing alone and were seen to encourage these children to join in group activities.

There was evidence in the service of curriculum planning with short- and medium-term plans centred around topical themes, seasons and holiday events. The staff also spoke with the inspector about pictorial observations that were compiled on individual children and a sample of these were available for review.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. When reviewed by the inspector, it was noted that not all children attending the Sr preschool room were signed in on the register attending the room. In conversation with staff, it was established that this was an oversight on the day and the register is checked during circle time when a roll is called. When the sessional service finished, it was noted that children were not signed out of the Jr preschool room on their individual departure. The record was completed by staff when all children had left. The absence of an accurate real time record of arrival and

departure times for each child poses a risk that a child may be unaccounted for in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Infection Control:

2. There was no suitable changing station at waist level to provide for safe and hygienic practices in relation to nappy changing. On the day of inspection, children's nappies were changed on a changing mat placed on the floor of the adult sanitary accommodation.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. This has now been corrected and all children are signed in as soon as they arrive and signed out immediately when they leave. We have now moved the sign in/sign out sheets to the wall beside the door in both rooms to leave it easier for staff to complete them in real time.

Infection Control:

2. A waist level nappy changing unit has now been ordered and will replace the changing mat. Children's nappies will now be changed on the new unit at waist level when it arrives.

Supporting documentation submitted

Images and a purchase order receipt was submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The registered providers response has been accepted. The practice will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

Certification of adequate insurance for a maximum of 31 children availing of part-time day-care service or 40 children availing of a sessional service was available and displayed in the service with an expiry date of 27 March 2024.