

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021GY002
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Name of Service:	Kilcooley Preschool
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Address of Service:	Ballydavid, Kilcooley, Loughrea, Co. Galway.
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Eircode:	H62 YY62
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carmel Griffin
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	09/01/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla -Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulations Directorate, Clinical and Administration Building, Block A – First Floor -Green Corridor, Merlin Park Hospital, Galway City.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan.
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 sessional service operates out of a converted classroom on the grounds of Kilcooley primary school in the townland of Ballydavid, near the urban town of Loughrea. There is a main playroom, entrance hall, adjacent to the playroom lobby are the sanitary facilities. The pre-school offers an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme and sessional care programme from 9.15 am to 12.15 pm, Monday to Friday. A quiet rest area is available for the children to rest and relax. There is a secure outdoor play area to the side and rear of the building, which includes a sheltered play area.

Staffing

There was a total of 3 adults working in the service on the day of inspection which includes the registered provider and two other adults. The registered provider was the person in charge and there was deputy manager available to deputise when required.

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.

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

(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*

(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

- (1)(a) The registered provider ensured that there was a named designated person in charge. There was a named person who could deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (2)(a)(b) There were 6 written, validated references from past employers or a reputable source available in respect of the 3 adults working in the service.
- (c) Vetting disclosures from the Garda Síochána were available in respect of 3 adults working in the service.
- (d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another jurisdiction where a person had lived for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months was required and available for 1 adult.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that all adults working directly with children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education; the 3 adults had at least a minimum of a level 5.

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) During the period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.
- (3) On the day of inspection, there were 3 adults working directly with 10 preschools children.

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

(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)(a) and (b)

BASIC NEEDS

- Children were observed enjoying snack under the supervision of the adults. The children were given plenty of time to enjoy their meals and snack in a relaxed and unhurried environment. The snacks were healthy and nutritious which included wraps, sandwiches, fruit and water or milk.
- Snack time was observed to be a relaxed and sociable occasions for the children, who could sit, chat with their friends and the adults supervising them.
- A fridge was available for the storage of children's perishable items in their lunch box.
- Water was readily available in the playroom for the children to self-serve.
- The crockery, cutlery and drinking utensils used were suitable for the children's ages and stages of development.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.
- All children were toilet trained and self-toileting was both encouraged and supported by adults.
- Hand washing was observed before snack time, toileting and after children blowing their nose.
- The children had access to plenty of free space to move around and select which activities they chose to engage with both indoors and outdoors.
- There was a large sheltered outdoor play area that was well equipped and had clearly defined interest areas. There was also a large grass area with a planting area and a forest walk. The service had a variety of outdoor equipment to support children fine and gross motor skills.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN

- A key worker system provided opportunities for the children to form and sustain secure relationships with the adults who were caring for them in the setting.
- Each child had a learning journal which highlighted their beginning in a service, their development over time and interests. The learning journal gives staff the chance to reflect on the activities, curriculum and to plan for the future with a focus on child's emerging interests and individual needs.
- The adults demonstrated respect and warmth towards the children in their care using soft and gentle tones, positive language and engaging with the children at their level.
- Communication with parents was at drop off and collection, by email or phone.
- Each child had the opportunity to move freely to the numerous play experiences available to them.
- Visual displays were on the wall and children's artwork with the themes being linked to the theme which was 'Spring'.
- The service was linked into the local childcare committee for professional support.

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) The service provided evidence that 2 adults trained in first aid responder for children was available to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) There was a first aid box, items were within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had valid insurance for 22 children attending on a sessional basis valid until the 27 March 2024.