

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022FL008
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Name of Service:	Kidology Childcare (Mulhuddart) Ltd
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Address of Service:	Unit 4, Parkside, Navan Road, Mulhuddart, D15AV84
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Name of Registered Provider:	Deirdre Finnegan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	19/05/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM	15
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Nelson
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

Kidology Childcare (Mulhuddart) is a full day care service operating from the ground floor of a retail building in Dublin 15. Kidology is one of three services operated by the registered provider and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 53 children aged 1 to 6 years Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.00pm. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme, which is delivered on a sessional basis in the morning from 9.00am to 12.00 and offers a part-time and full-time service. There are four care rooms to include the Yellow Room (1 to 2 years), Green Room (2 to 3 years), Red Room (2 to 3 years) and Blue Room (3 to 6 years). The Green Room was not in use on the day of the inspection as a care room, and the children from that room attended the Yellow Room. There are sanitary facilities located off each of the care rooms. Other facilities include a Cot Room which is located off the Yellow Room, an office, staff room and kitchen. A fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are currently ten staff employed by the service including the registered provider, the person in charge and eight childcare staff who work directly with the children. The registered provider is supernumerary and manages the oversight of the three services. Present on the day of the inspection was the registered provider, a co-director, the person in charge and eight childcare staff.

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 an announced initial inspection and focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4)(7)(a); 11 and 19.

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.

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.

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The person in charge was present during the inspection.

The files of the ten staff were reviewed and the registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (2)
- (a) Sixteen validated written references were available from recent past employers.
 - (b) Four validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Completed Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the ten staff members.
 - (d) Six adults who had lived outside of the state for six months or more as an adult had international police vetting from that state available for inspection.
- (4) The ten staff held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.
- (7) There was documentary evidence available that staff were provided with appropriate information in relation to the policies and procedures of the service.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children as there were 7 adults working with 17 children in the morning, and 4 adults working with 15 children in the afternoon. The registered provider, person in charge and a relief staff member were also available to provide cover across the rooms where needed.

(2) The correct adult/child ratio was maintained in the service throughout the inspection at all times. The adult child ratios during the morning session were maintained as follows:

- Yellow Room - 3 adults to 7 children aged between 1-2.5 years.
- Red Room - 3 adults to 5 children aged between 2 to 3 years.
- Blue Room – 1 adult to 5 children aged between 3 to 5 years.

(8)(a) There was a minimum of two adults on the premises throughout the inspection. The review of the staff roster provided for a minimum of two adults to be on the premises during the services operational hours.

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 service provided morning snacks and afternoon snacks which were prepared in the onsite kitchen, and a hot meal which was prepared by an external catering company. There was a four-week menu plan available, and staff discussed how alternative diets are catered for if required. On the day of the inspection children were served a morning snack of breadsticks with cheese at 10.30am, a hot meal of fishcakes with diced potato and corn at 12.00 noon, and an afternoon snack of ham and cheese pizza wrap. Staff were observed to sit with the children making mealtime a pleasant sociable experience. Drinks of water were available throughout the day.
- Childrens personal care needs were observed to be respectful practices, which facilitated independence. Children were observed to be encouraged to wash their hands independently after outdoor play in the Red and Blue Rooms, and nappy changing and toileting were led by the needs of the children.
- Staff were observed to support children's behaviour through positive strategies such as the setting of clear boundaries, the description of behaviours that were unacceptable and intervening in a timely manner.
- Children were observed to have the freedom to move around their care rooms and choose their play experiences, and all children were observed to have access to the outdoor play environment. Children from the Blue Room were observed to be supported to independently change from their outdoor clothes after outdoor play.

Supporting Relationships:

- Adults demonstrated warmth and positive regard for the children. Childrens individual needs were catered for, such as providing toys and equipment according to their needs and emergent interests. This promoted a sense of welcome and inclusion.

- Staff in the rooms were observed to be familiar with the children and their families. The exchange of information on the child's day such as their food and sleep routine was shared with parents via an online software application, and through conversations at drop-off and collection. There was a notice board in the hallway where relevant information is shared with parents such as 'Meet our Staff' and the weekly Menu plan.
- Children were given the opportunity to transition into new rooms on a phased basis, at a pace that suited the child. Staff were familiar with the children in the service, which makes transitions a comfortable familiar experience for the children. Staff used strategies such as learning key words in the child's first language which provided language bridges for children which can facilitate comfort for children learning English as a second language.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The furniture provided in the rooms was low level and appropriate for children attending.
- Toys, equipment and play materials were easily accessible and visible to the children on low-level units which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- Images of the children and their families were displayed throughout the rooms and hallways, reflecting the image of the children attending, facilitating a sense of identity and belonging.
- The rooms were laid out in interest areas such as construction areas, home corners, art and craft areas, books, sensory areas and small world play. These areas had appropriate and adequate props to extend the learning experiences of the children and facilitate play experiences such as fine and gross motor play, creative and imaginary play, and language and literacy play.

Programme of Activities:

- Staff used strategies such as observation, preparing activities in advance, and activities timed to suit the needs of the children. Children in the Yellow Room were observed to participate in circle time singing songs with actions, and staff read the cues of the children and ended the activity and moved on to the next one in a timely manner.
- The programme of learning activities was developed through a collaboration of adult planning and the emergent interests of the children, which were displayed throughout the rooms. Learning themes were extended through books, songs, associated words, sensory materials and products of children's art which reflected the themes were displayed throughout the rooms.

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- Children's learning experiences were recorded in learning books which were shared with parents. These journals contained images of the children engaging in planned themes and activities and staff discussed how the children are involved in creating the learning journals, making them equal partners and contributors to the experience.