

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022LK002
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Name of Service:	Castle Kids Creche
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Address of Service:	Bulgandan National School, Bulgaden, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V35 F589
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Name of Registered Provider:	PJ Carey
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	4	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early years Inspectorate, 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 sessional and part time service opened in September 2022 in Bulgaden National school. The service caters for children aged 3 to 6 years, operating a sessional service from Monday – Friday, 09.00 – 12.10 hours.

The service has one large playroom, sanitary facilities for the children and adults and access to outdoor space and a playing pitch to the rear of national school building.

Staffing

There are 2 staff members employed to work in the service and they have achieved an award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

The registered provider is not working in the service.

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.

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

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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 person in charge 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.

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(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 had appointed a designated person in charge who was available on the day of the inspection and there was a named person who could deputise if required.

(b) The person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(c) The person in charge and the staff members working in the service had a clear understanding of their own role and range of responsibilities to ensure the quality and safety of care provided to the children.

(2) The files of the two members employed to work in the service were viewed on the day of the inspection.

(a) There were 3 validated references from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer available on file for the 2 staff members.

(b) There were 1 validated reference from sources other than the previous employers available on file for 1 of the staff members.

(c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for the 2 staff members. Garda vetting for the staff members 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. Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available in respect of each staff working at the service.

(d) Police vetting was not required as none of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(3) All the required documentation was in place for each staff before they commenced employment at the service.

(4) All staff employed at the service held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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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 policies, and procedures for the service were last updated in January 2024 and were available in the service, accessible to the staff and parents to view and refer to as required.

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 ensured an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at the service.

(3) On the day of the inspection there were 4 preschool children present with 1 adult. The adult child ratio was correct. A second person, familiar with the service was close by and could be called to attend the preschool in the event of an emergency.

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

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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.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets located adjacent to the preschool room. Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were available for handwashing. The children could be easily supervised while independently accessing the bathroom facilities. A wash hand basin was also accessible in the preschool room. A change of clothes was available for all children if needed. Protective clothing was accessible for the children to wear when participating in messy play activities, or when playing outdoors in wet weather.

Tissues and wipes were always reachable to the children and all waste was disposed of properly in lidded bins. A large and smaller couch with pillows and blankets were available, and this provided a quiet sensorial space for children to rest and relax in if tired during the session. Children got to spend time outdoors each day at the preschool. The school yard and playing pitch was available to the children directly adjacent to the preschool room.

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.

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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.

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

- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced in June 2025 and mains powered smoke alarms was serviced in September 2025. A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(a) There were no fire drills practised in the preschool service since it re- opened in September 2025. The records demonstrated that the fire drills were practised in June and March of 2025 and were not carried out every month the service was in operation.
- (4) The fire procedure notice setting out the procedures to follow in the event of a fire was not displayed in the service.
- The non-compliances posed a risk to the safety of children and staff attending the service in the event of an emergency.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action: The registered provider has stated that:

- (1)(a)
- Fire drills were practised on the 6th of November the day after the inspection and the 4th of December 2025.
- (4)

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The fire notice setting out the procedure to follow in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous area of the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted with the CAPA document.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 26 Fire Safety point s(1)(a) and (4).

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

- (a) The school building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally and no obvious defects were noted on inspection.
- (b) The outdoor area was surrounded by fencing, walls and gates. Staff were outdoors at all times supervising the children when playing outside.
- (c) The playroom and sanitary areas were well lit by natural light and artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation.
- (d) Routine cleaning schedules were in place for the internal and external areas.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets and wash hand basins available to the preschool children in attendance and the staff members working in the service