

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023LD001
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Name of Service:	Kidz Demesne
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Address of Service:	Longford RFC, Lisbrack, Co. Longford
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Eircode:	N39 EK28
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sinead Cawley
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	29/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	N/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy
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

Description of service

This sessional service is located within a short distance of the town of Longford. The service provides an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care programme from 09:00 to 12:00hrs. A school aged programme is also offered from 13:30hrs to 18:30hrs Monday to Friday. The service is operated from a large room adjoining the local rugby club. It caters for children from two years eight months to five years six months. The service has a playroom, an office, a storeroom, a kitchen, and sanitary accommodation. There is access to a large enclosed outdoor play area located to the side of the premises where children have access to outdoor play.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge and there is a named person to deputise. A relief person is available to cover in event of staff absence. The registered provider and an additional adult work daily in the service. The two staff and the relief person hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at level 5 to level 7, in Early Childhood Care and Education. The staff have documentary evidence of ongoing training and education.

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 announced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child. 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 was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputize in the service.

(b) The registered provider was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.

Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.

(2)(a) &(b)

The three staff files were reviewed.

Six of the six written validated references on file in respect of the three staff were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the three staff.

(d) Documentary evidence indicated that none of the staff, had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years, and therefore did not require police vetting.

(4) The three staff working directly with the children had evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 to Level 7 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) Documentary evidence indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. At all times during the period of the inspection, the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained. On the day of the inspection, there were 5 children aged between 3-5 years with two adults directly caring for these 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.

Compliance Information

- The staff encouraged and supported the children to be as independent, as possible.
- The snacks were supplied by the parents/guardians. The children were given sufficient time to eat in an unhurried manner. The foods provided complied with the service's healthy eating policy.
- The tables and chairs were suitable for the children's ages and stages of development.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilet and did not have to wait to use the toilet. The staff used the correct language surrounding toileting.
- On the day of inspection, the registered provider advised two children wore nappies and were changed in the designated nappy changing area, in a sensitive and timely manner, and on a regular basis.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax in a designated cosy area in the playroom.
- The children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance. Play activities and experiences were developmentally appropriate and suitably challenging. The children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment. The children were observed at free play, playing with pegs and peg boards, making puzzles, doing art and craft activities, playing with playdough, playing house / kitchen, and at dress up / pretend play. The children were observed stacking, constructing, shape sorting, connecting, and playing with animals. The staff used visual aids and probed with questions such as 'who is this?', 'how many are there?'. The staff acknowledged a child's achievements, 'well done', 'that's great' and the children were observed laughing and having fun.
- The staff supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships by -
having a key person system for each child,
showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust,
listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures, and body language,
using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact,

providing opportunities for individual and small group activities and play, leading to increased social awareness, co-operation, collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of belonging,

providing opportunities for children to learn from each other and with each other, to work together, join in and contribute to projects and tasks,

working with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life, and any other concerns.

- On speaking with the staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the pre-school including the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times and via text messages, by phone calls, and by email.
- The staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them, and talking to the children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, and commentating, extending a child's activities and initiating games and activities.
- The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences. The inspector noted the staff acknowledged a child's achievements 'that is great' 'well done' and used questions such as 'what should we do next?', 'is there any other way to do this?', to allow children to critically think and explore.
- On the day of the inspection the staff showed kindness. They were thoughtful, supportive, and reassuring whilst caring for the children. They cared for children by being supportive while the children engaged in free play, role play, and creative play. A climate was fostered where the children knew their boundaries.
- The staff supported children to enter social groups, and to learn to help and positively engage with other children. They encouraged and praised children for specific, positive, and appropriate behaviours.
- Children were given positive alternatives, rather than just being told 'no'. Children were supported in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict.

Physical And Material Environment

- The pre-school room was spacious, bright, and colourful. The room was laid out with clearly defined areas of play to include an arts and crafts area with a selection of paint, glue, brushes foam shapes, scissors, glitter, sponges, stampers, paper, and card.
- Large and small-scale construction (plastic and wooden blocks) and manipulative materials; picture books, problem solving toys (e.g., jigsaws and puzzles), role and pretend play (e.g. a play kitchen with play

accessories ,a toaster, a cleaning trolley, dolls, highchairs, cots, buggies and accessories), shopping trolleys, cash registers and food items, a farm with play accessories, a dolls house with play accessories and small world toys (e.g. play animals, transport toys, musical instruments, and play figures).

- A dress up area with a selection of dress up items, accessories, and a mirror.
- A soft matted area with a child sized couch, mats, cushions and blankets was provided as a reading area should a child wish to relax or opt out of activities.
- Low level tables and chairs were in place and low-level shelving with equipment and materials were accessible to the children.
- A large outdoor play area was located to the side of the pre-school premises.