

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2024LH001

**Name of Service:** Kilsaran Preschool

**Address of Service:** Kilsaran, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth

**Eircode:** A91 RY82

**Name of Registered Provider:** Donna Kirk

**Service type:** Sessional

**Date(s) of Inspection:** 27/11/2024

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	12	PM	No.

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Flood
<b>Title:</b>	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

Kilsaran Preschool is a privately owned sessional early years' service that operates from 9.00am to 12.00midday Monday to Friday. The service operates for 38 weeks each year and is registered to cater for a maximum of 22 preschool children.

The service is located on school grounds of the primary school in Kilsaran village in Co Louth. The premises consists of a single storey modular building with two interconnecting rooms and adjoining sanitary facilities. The children have access to an outdoor area on the school grounds and also the activities hall with the main school building.

### Staffing

There are 4 staff members employed in the service to work directly with the pre-school children including the registered provider.

### 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/ 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 would like 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,

(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,
- © 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 service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider and deputy person in charge were present during the inspection.

(2) The staff files for four members of staff, including the registered provider, were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

(a)&(b) Eight written references from past employers or a source other than a past employer were available on the day of inspection. All required reference validations were also available.

(c) Completed Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the four staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as none of the staff had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All four staff who worked directly with the preschool children attending the service 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

### 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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(3) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived announced to the service at 10.20am and remained so throughout the duration of the inspection. Three staff members including the registered provider were present and working directly with the twelve preschool children present.

### 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

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

#### Basic Needs

- All children attending the service brought their own lunches from home and the perishable items were appropriately stored in the fridge in the care room. The adults encouraged the children to tidy up when lunch time was finished. Children who required additional time to eat their lunch were afforded the opportunity and were also provided with assistance as required.
- The personal care provided met the needs of the children attending the service e.g., noses were wiped when required and the children were observed to wash their hands after toileting with gentle reminders given by staff.
- Independence with toileting was promoted for all children while discreet supervision was also provided by the staff.
- The children had a change of environment and were observed to access to the activities hall within the primary school building. When questioned staff reported that the children access the hall on a rotational basis with the primary school. They are also reported to access the outdoor play area also on a rotational basis.

#### Supporting Relationships Around Children:

- The adults demonstrated sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for the children as evidenced in the positive use of language and soft tones in the playroom.
- Parent/staff communication occurred at drop off and collection, and the staff reported that the service also use a phone messaging app to communicate with parents. A written communication notebook was also used for some children in the service for the sharing of information about care needs between home and the staff.
- When questioned the staff were familiar with strategies used, to include and encourage the children who required additional supports while attending the service.

- Staff meetings are reported to occur on a quarterly basis. The staff also confirmed that they discuss daily any queries or concerns that they may have about the children on a daily basis if required.

### Physical and Material Environment

- The service consisted of 2 interconnecting playrooms which were spacious and were equipped with a variety of developmentally appropriate play materials and equipment.
- Specific areas of interest were developed and play materials were positioned on low level open shelving which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children.
- Seasonal and thematic artwork was on display such as; Christmas trees, “Room on a Broom”, finger painting, and Humpty Dumpty pictures.

### Programme of activities and its implementation

- The children attending were observed to engage in a variety of activities throughout the session e.g., tabletop activities, art activities, reading, singing and circle time. The staff were observed to actively support and encourage each child to take part in the activities. They were observed to sit on the floor or at the tables with the children and to actively engage with the children e.g. one adult was observed to support a child with a gluing and sticking activity who did not wish to participate in circle time. Additionally, one child who required a break from activities was facilitated to access the quieter room for a break and to engage in their chosen activity.
- The children were given choice in what they wanted to sing next or what story they wanted to read.
- Individual scrap books were in development for each child. These are sent home at the end of the school year and include a collection of the children’s artwork, photographs and observations throughout the year.

## 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

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection:

### Infection Control:

1. Hand washing was not carried out after the children returned to the care room from play in the activities hall of the primary school. The children were observed to commence playing with toys and tabletop activities without hand washing taking place. This practice is an infection control risk.

### General Safety

2. There were a number of unprotected sharp corners on some of the low-level shelving units in the care room. This is a potential injury hazard.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Actions

1. After the inspection the registered provider spoke to staff regarding the importance of handwashing and adhering to the services handwashing policy. The staff gave assurances that it was a one-off mistake not washing hands after coming from the hall so to prevent it happening again a staff member has been given the task every day to ensure all hands are washed after every activity.
2. The registered provider has attached corner safety cushions to each shelf end. The staff have been requested to check the cushions are still attached as part of the class daily risk assessment.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence

### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Based on this information the non-compliances under Regulation 23 have been addressed. However, implementation of the corrective and preventative strategies will be assessed at the next inspection.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

*(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

## Non-Compliance Information

(e) The nappy changing facilities were not adequate in the service. For example: there was no nappy changing mat available. Additionally, there was no suitable area set up to accommodate the supplies and equipment necessary to carry out nappy changes as required.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(e) The registered provider purchased a nappy changing mat. The changing mat and bag of spare clothes and nappies are in the toilet area and easily accessible.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence

## Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance. Based on this information the non-compliance under Regulation 29 has been addressed. However, implementation of the corrective and preventative strategies will be assessed at the next inspection.