

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2025CN001
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Krafty Kidz Cavan
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	O Raghallaigh Park, Cavan Town, Co. Cavan
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<b>Eircode:</b>	H12 XT68
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Ciaran McManus
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full-Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	05/12/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	12	PM	11
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S Mc Kenna
<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).	

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

Krafty Kidz Cavan opened in August 2025 and is one of a chain of three non-profit preschool services located within the county of Cavan. The service operates within a single-storey community building in a housing estate in Cavan town. The building is owned by Cavan County Council.

The service operates 50 weeks per year, from 8am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday catering for a maximum of 39 children aged 0 to 6 years. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme from 9am to 12 noon. There are two care rooms named Preschool and Creche. An office, a kitchen, a laundry store, sanitary areas and a sleep room are also provided.

### Staffing

There are a total of 14 staff working in the service, to include a CEO, a manager, a caretaker, a cook, a cleaner, 3 adults on a community employment scheme, and 6 childcare staff, two of whom are employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

Two students attend the service for work experience but were not present on the day of inspection.

### 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 and 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 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.

#### Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge, who is the service manager, and two named persons to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation, the designated person in charge or the named person in charge was on the premises.

(c) A management structure was in place, which was clearly identifiable through review of the staff roster, a staff display in the entrance hallway and from discussion with the staff team.

(2) The files for 14 staff and 2 students were reviewed.

(a) (b) Two written and validated references were on file for 14 staff and 2 students.

A total of 26 written and validated references from a previous employer were on file.

A total of 6 written and validated references from a reputable source were on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 14 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all employed staff. The college where the two students attend carried out the vetting procedures for their students, and two vetting records were available on file.

(d) A review of the employment history for 14 staff and 2 students demonstrated that 2 adults had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. The required police vetting for the 2 adults was available on file.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 9 staff employed to work with children held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. A qualification for 3 staff on the community employment scheme, and the 2 students on work experience is not 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.*

*(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) On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service throughout the inspection. The following adult-to-child ratios were observed when the service was operating at maximum attendance;

Two adults cared for 3 children aged 1 year 9 months to 2 years 2 months in the Creche room, of whom all were registered to attend on a full-day care basis.

Four adults cared for 9 children aged 3 years to 4 years 11 months in the Preschool room, of whom all were registered to attend on part time or full day care basis.

In addition to the above, the manager worked in the kitchen preparing dinner and was available to assist in the care rooms if required.

(8) A review of the staff roster demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

### 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*

*(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

The following examples demonstrate how children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service:

#### Basic Needs

The children were observed to enjoy snack and meal times in a relaxed manner. Younger children wore bibs at snack and meal times and were encouraged to self-feed where able, and staff were observed to support and

feed children where needed. All food is provided by the service. The children had toast, oranges, bananas and apples for their morning snack, and had potatoes, fish fingers, gravy, carrots and peas for dinner. Drinking water was available at all times in the care rooms. Snack and meal time foods are adjusted where required for children with specific dietary requirements.

The older children were encouraged to be independent in using the toilet, and the children who wore nappies had them changed in line with their own routine. Children's appearances were cared for, with staff observing to clean children's noses when needed, and also encouraging them to wash their hands before and after eating. Aprons were used for messy creative activities, and a spare set of clothing was individually stored and labelled for each child. Outdoor suits and wellies were provided for playing outside. Children's soothers were stored in the service and kept in individual labelled containers.

The children in the Creche room had a sleep after dinner in the cot room, which is adjacent to the Creche room, where six cots and one stackable floor bed were provided. The two Creche room staff were observed to comfort and soothe the children by rubbing their backs while they were transitioning to sleep.

Rest areas to include soft child-sized sofas, play mats and cushions provided areas within both care rooms for children to take time out to rest from their busy day.

The children in the Creche room took part in outdoor play on the morning of the inspection. The Preschool staff advised that they also go outdoors, which was demonstrated by recent photos of children planting and playing outdoors.

Individual care plans were available when children's needs required. The staff were aware of each child's preferences and dislikes and planned and facilitated the children's day and routine with these in mind.

### **Supporting Relationships**

The care rooms were warm and welcoming. The staff were observed to sit with the children either on seats or on the floor in both care rooms, engaging in the children's play and learning experiences. The children appeared familiar with those who cared for them and actively sought out staff for support when needed.

There was minimal staff changeover observed. The staff team were observed to work well together, and transitions between play time, snack and meal times and sleep times were observed to be smooth.

The staff used gentle encouragement for children to be mindful of other children's feelings and encouraged children to share and take turns with toys. The staff were observed to use age-appropriate strategies to help children find positive solutions to problems where a minor disagreement occurred over a toy.

The staff were observed to demonstrate sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for children and their families, through respecting parental wishes and by following care plans for the children. The staff were observed to treat each child with respect and demonstrated familiarity with the children's families through discussion about their baby sisters and brothers at home.

The staff were observed to communicate using soft, gentle tones while interacting with the children. Comforting hugs and reassurances when needed were provided to the children by the staff in both of the care rooms.

Communication with parents and carers is in person at arrival and collection, and also through a digital application, email and term-time newsletters. The service is located within a housing estate and has immersed itself in its new community. A recently funded Halloween children's play pack initiative, which was organised and overseen by the service, was provided to service users and also to the residents of the housing estate, and the manager explained that the initiative proved popular with everyone.

### **Physical And Material Environment**

The indoor care rooms were comfortable, pleasant and laid out to suit the needs of the children in attendance. The rooms were arranged into designated interest areas, and clear floor space was also provided. The play equipment available provides a range of enriching learning experiences for the children. Interest areas included play kitchen with real-life materials, small world toys, dolls and play equipment, a chalkboard, construction area, table top toys, rest areas with books, creative areas and push-a-long toys.

Materials were freely available and accessible to children on low-level shelves and floor-based units and boxes, which were at children's level, nurturing independence to retrieve and self-care to return their play materials. There were displays of children's artwork on the walls to include finger painting, hot air balloons, car paint tracks and a winter tree painting activity. Photos of road safety week on display in the hallway showed the recent Garda visit to the service. Our community, family photo books, birthday charts and daily photo schedules were also on display. The table and chairs provided in both care rooms were suitable for the numbers and ages of children in attendance. A seat for adults to comfort younger children was provided in the Creche room. The outdoor play area was secured by fencing and locked gates. A ground surface of concrete paths and grass was provided. Sensory play materials such as a sand tray, water tray, a gloopy activity, as well as balls, stepping stones and push-along toys were also provided.

## Programme of Activities

Evidence of an emerging curriculum was noted in each room, and a key worker system was in place. Planning records available for review demonstrated the children's current interests, and these interests were incorporated into the care rooms, for example, the transport theme.

The children in the Preschool room were observed to enjoy a music activity at the table with the staff, and also enjoyed their own self-directed play, which included colouring and drawing "volcanoes and dinosaurs" and making bottles to "feed the babies." The children in the Creche room engaged in play with the support of the staff in their room and also enjoyed a sensory painting activity using ice cubes which had been frozen with food colouring.

The staff in the preschool room were observed to be aware of the children's interests and spent time sitting with and supporting the children during their play, such as reading stories of their choice and talking to them about their new brothers or sisters at home. The staff in the Creche room used opportunities, such as the ice painting activity, to enhance children's learning by building on the children's interest in "building houses" with the ice cubes and talking about the "colours" of the ice cubes.

Participation in play was observed to be child-led, children's choices were respected, and the adults were observed to consistently engage in play activities with the children. Where children did not want to participate in planned activities, they could opt out and play in an interest area of their choice.