

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025KE001				
Name of Service:	Caireen Early Years Ltd				
Address of Service:	70 Lumann, Straffan, Co. Kildare				
Eircode:	W23 RY9D				
Name of Registered Provider:	Osmond James Kilkenny				
Service type:	Full Day				
Date of Inspection:	13/01/2026				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>41</td> <td>PM</td> <td>40</td> </tr> </table>	AM	41	PM	40
AM	41	PM	40		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co Kildare				
Inspection undertaken by:	F Carty and R Flynn				
Title:	Early Years Inspectors				

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

Caireen Early Years Ltd is a full day care service and is located in a residential area of Straffan, Co Kildare. A service is provided to children aged between 0 – 6 years and is open Monday to Friday between 7.30am and 6.00pm. The service operates from a detached purpose build creche facility. The service consists of four care rooms, the Deer room, Fox room, Bear room and Penguin room. An outdoor play area is available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs fifteen staff members, including a cook and a supervisor who is available to assist in the care rooms. On the day of inspection, fourteen adults were present including the cook. The area manager arrived subsequent to the inspector's arrival to facilitate the 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 unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and notification and complaints. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9(2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3), (4), (7)(a) - management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1)(2), (8)(a) - Ratios

Regulation 19 (1)(a), (3) – Health, welfare and development of the child

Regulation 27 - Supervision

Regulation 32 – Complaints

Further non-compliance was identified under Regulation 23, Safety.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

Additional Information

The inspection was triggered by information received by the Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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

(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.

(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

(2)
The files of all adults who were employed in the service were reviewed. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b)

There were 30 written and validated references available for 16 staff members.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults in the service.

(d)

International Police vetting was available for 11 adults who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months.

(4)

Records were available evidencing that all staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held evidence of the required qualification or equivalent.

(7)(a)

Staff stated team meetings take place every six weeks, there was evidence that a team meeting was held in the service on 20 November 2025.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

There was only one reference available for two adults. Two written and validated references are required for each adult.

(3)

The registered provider did not ensure that the following procedures were carried out prior to nine adults commenced working in the service:

- Twelve references were not validated prior to six adults commencing work in the service.
- Seven Garda vetting disclosures in respect of seven adults were not received prior to the adult's commencing employment in the service.
- One international Police vetting disclosure was not received prior to one adult commencing work in the service.

(7)(a)

An induction folder was available for all new staff members which included the policies and procedures of the service however, there was no written evidence that staff had completed full induction training. Staff stated they had received training on some of the policies and procedures however there was no evidence that staff had received an appropriate level of supervision or training in order to achieve compliance with the regulation.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(9)(2)(a)(b)

The Registered Provider acknowledges the findings outlined in the inspection report and takes full responsibility for the identified gaps in recruitment and induction processes. The Registered Provider is committed to full

compliance with regulatory requirements. The registered provider acknowledges that recruitment and induction processes did not meet regulatory requirements at the time of inspection. Once there was an awareness of non-compliance, immediate corrective actions were implemented. Systems are now in place to ensure that all outstanding second references have now been obtained for the two adults identified. All references previously unvalidated have now been formally verified, with documented evidence of validation retained on file. A full audit of all staff personnel files has been completed to ensure that each adult has two written and validated references in place. A revised Recruitment Checklist has been implemented and must be fully completed before any staff member commences employment. Responsibility for validating references has been formally assigned to the Manager.

(3)

A strict “No Vetting, No Start” policy has been formally implemented. Contracts of employment now clearly state that employment is conditional upon receipt of satisfactory Garda Vetting and, where applicable, international police clearance. The Person in Charge will verify receipt of all vetting documentation prior to confirming start dates. A recruitment compliance log will be maintained and reviewed monthly. Training has been provided to management on regulatory requirements relating to Schedule 2 documentation.

(9)(7)(a)

A formal Induction Record Form has now been developed. All existing staff have completed a documented induction review to ensure understanding of policies and procedures. Staff training records have been updated and centralised. Supervision meetings have been scheduled and documented for all staff. A structured Induction Programme has been implemented, including: 14/01/2026. Policy review and sign-off. Mandatory training completion, supervised shadowing signed off by the Person in Charge. Induction must now be completed and signed off within a defined probationary period. A Supervision Policy has been updated to ensure formal supervision sessions every 3 months (minimum), documented supervision records retained on file and an annual appraisal and performance review processes have been formalised.

Governance and Oversight.

To strengthen overall governance and prevent recurrence of non-compliance:

A full audit of recruitment and HR systems has been completed.

The CEO has initiated oversight to review recruitment practices effective February 2026.

Monthly compliance reviews will be conducted by the CEO effective February 2026.

The registered provider will oversee compliance reporting to ensure accountability effective February 2026.

Supporting documentation submitted

(9)(2)(a)(b)

New staff recruitment checklist.

(9)(3)

Updated recruitment policy and procedures.

(9)(7)(a)

Updated recruitment policy and procedures.

Staff Induction checklist.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting evidence was submitted to the inspector and reviewed. The requirements of Regulation 9 have been met.

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)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for full day care services were adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 41 children attending the service being supervised by 14 adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults 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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The service had a healthy eating policy in place and staff reported that all meals are provided by the service. Children are offered breakfast on arrival, and a snack of fruit was provided during the morning. A hot meal of spaghetti bolognese was served at 11.00am. An additional hot meal was served in the afternoon. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their meals. Younger children were provided with bibs for dinnertime. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported younger children who needed assistance with their dinner. Additional servings were available for each meal. Staff were observed offering more food to children.

Children's hands and faces were cleaned after dinner as required. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent including cleaning up after their play and meals. Younger children's nappies were changed regularly, and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Older children were encouraged to use the toilet independently.

Staff interacted warmly with the children throughout the inspection and were observed supporting children in their play. Staff were observed to comfort children promptly when they became upset. Staff were observed to use encouragement, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour management policy.

The service used an interactive software application to communicate with parents and were also observed communicating with parents during collection.

The care rooms were arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included small world toys, construction toys, jigsaws, rest areas with books and home corners.

Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care rooms.

A fully enclosed outdoor play area was available to the rear of the premises with artificial grass surfacing. The outdoor area was equipped with a range of developmentally appropriate play equipment.

(3)

On the day of inspection there were no practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful observed in the service. Staff members ensured children in their care were supported and demonstrated warmth and affection in observed interactions with the children. Staff were observed being very respectful towards the children in their care and gentle voice tones were used. First names were used between staff, and the children and children were listened to and their care needs were met. Staff were observed comforting children when they became upset.

A number of staff were asked what are and are not acceptable ways of responding to behaviours that they may find difficult or challenging if a child becomes distressed, they demonstrated a knowledge of the service behaviour management policy and the structures in place for reporting inappropriate care practices.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

The children were not adequately supervised in the Fox room during the transition to sleep. The transition to sleep began when children finished eating their dinner at 11.23am. A staff member brought the floor beds into the room and stacked them on top of each other. The children were observed climbing and bouncing on the floor beds, running around the room and getting upset. One staff member was changing nappies and the other was getting cots ready whilst a third member of staff was left to supervise the children on her own.

There was no plan in place to ensure the children who were tired and ready for bed were put to sleep. The transition took one hour to complete before all children were in bed at 12.23pm.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A staff meeting was held immediately following the inspection to review the supervision requirements under Regulation 11 and reinforce staff responsibilities. A revised sleep transition procedure was implemented with immediate effect. Floor beds are no longer brought into the room while children are active. Beds are now prepared in advance of the transition period.

Staffing working time has been reviewed to ensure that:

One staff member is assigned solely to supervise children.

Nappy changing and room preparation are staggered and do not reduce active supervision levels.

Children who display signs of tiredness are now prioritised and supported to rest promptly.

The transition to sleep time has been reduced and structured to avoid unnecessary waiting.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supervision Policy.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 27.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)

There was a complaints policy available in the service which set out the procedure to be followed should a complaint be made to the service. The policy contained the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with and the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.

(2)(a)(b)

A record was kept in writing in respect of a complaint made to the service and complaints were dealt with in line with the service complaints policy.

(3)(a)(b)

A record in writing was kept in relation to complaints made, the nature on how they are and how it was dealt with. This was available for inspection.

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

Infection Control:

There was no handwashing observed in the Deer room throughout the inspection. Staff were observed wiping children's hands with wet wipes and cotton wool. This practice is ineffective for infection control.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

Staff were immediately trained of the requirement that handwashing with warm running water and liquid soap must be carried out at key times throughout the day. Wet wipes and cotton wool are no longer used as a substitute for handwashing, except where appropriate (e.g., visible soiling prior to proper handwashing).

A review of handwashing facilities was conducted to ensure that:

Sinks are accessible to children.

Liquid soap and disposable paper towels are available at all times.

Warm running water is available.

Staff in the Deer Room completed refresher guidance on effective hand hygiene practices on the day of inspection. The Infection Control and Hand Hygiene Policy has been reviewed with all staff. Clear guidance has been reissued outlining when handwashing must occur. Handwashing procedures will be included in induction training for all new staff. Visual handwashing guides have been placed at sinks to reinforce correct technique. The Person in Charge will conduct regular spot checks to ensure compliance with the policy.

The registered provider is committed to maintaining a safe, hygienic environment that promotes the health and wellbeing of all children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Hand Hygiene Policy.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions together with the supporting documents were reviewed by the inspector and are deemed to meet the requirements of Regulation 23.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School