

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC096
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Name of Service:	Child's Play Educare Cloughduv LTD
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Address of Service:	Rycourt Manor, Aherla, Cloughduv, County Cork
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Eircode:	P14 RX27
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Name of Registered Provider:	Louise O'Sullivan
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	13/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	32	PM	29
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurranaברה, Cork, T23 X440
Inspection undertaken by:	J Russell and M Burke
Title:	Inspection and Registration Manager and 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).

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Description of service

Child's Play Educare is located in Cloughduv, County Cork. It is a purpose built, single storey building open from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. This private full day care service was established in 2013. It is registered to cater for children between the age of 0-6 years. On the day of inspection, it accommodated children between the age of 1 to 5 years 6 months. The service is registered for sessional care, full day care, and school age care. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated for 38 weeks of the year. The ECCE scheme was not in operation at the time of inspection.

The service has four care rooms. Three of the four rooms were in operation for early years children on the day of inspection. The rooms in operation were the Wobbler room, the Toddler room, and the Pre-school room. The fourth care room for school age care was not in operation. Each care room has sufficient sanitary areas adjacent to them. The service has its own kitchen where the children's meals and snacks are prepared daily. The service has a designated sleep room, adult sanitary facilities, an office and a laundry room. There are separate outdoor play areas at the rear of the building and parking is located at the front of the service.

Staffing

There are 15 staff members employed by the service. This includes the registered provider who is service based, the person in charge, one chef, and two cleaners. The remainder of the staff are early years practitioners, who work directly with the children.

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

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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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 22, 23, 25, and 32; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulations 10 and 16 (j). 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

A referral was made to the Child Safeguarding Statement Compliance Unit in agreement with the registered provider.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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, 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 registered provider had ensured that a designated person in charge and a deputy person in charge was assigned to the service.
 - (b) The person in charge was on duty at the service when the inspectors arrived. The register provider arrived shortly afterwards. Both were available to assist throughout the inspection process.
 - (c) A wall display in the main reception area clearly set out the names and roles of staff members and included individual photographs. There was a clear line management structure in place, and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2)

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Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that 10 new staff had been employed since the previous inspection. Of the total 10 staff employed, 8 worked directly with the children and the remaining 2 staff were not on site during operating hours and did not have access to children. A total of 10 files were reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for 5 staff members whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review. The following information was noted:

- (a) Sixteen of the written and validated references available were from past employers.
- (b) Four of the written and validated references available were from sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 15 staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting and verified translation records were available for review for 3 staff members, who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years.
- (4)

Records demonstrated that 8 of the 10 new staff members, who worked directly with children, had achieved at least a Major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications. The remaining 2 staff members did not require qualifications.

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

Procedures relating to the infection control policy was reviewed. It outlined the following procedures in relation to:

- Hand hygiene practice and procedures for staff and children.
- Prevention of cross-contamination; infection control and managing outbreaks of infectious diseases.
- Exclusion procedures from the service due to illness.
- Infection control measures for nappy changing and toileting procedures.

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Non-Compliance Information

The cleaning procedures in the infection control policy stated that all cleaning towels must be changed every day between sessions. Disposable or single use cloths are required in order to reduce the risk of the spread of infection amongst children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The register provider stated in their written response:

- The procedures for this use of cloths after each session has been removed and has been replaced with single use or disposable cloths.
- Staff have been informed of this change at a staff meeting to prevent cross contamination and reduce the risk of the spread of infection.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic evidence was submitted of the minutes of the staff meeting addressing the new procedures.
- Photographic evidence was submitted of the purchase of single use cloths.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 10 has been adequately addressed.

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,

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Compliance Information

(1) The person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were available to the children.

(2) On the day of inspection, the adult to child ratios were maintained as per the regulations.

There were three care rooms in operation for early years children on the day of the inspection, namely the Wobbler room, Toddler room and Pre-school room.

Wobbler room

In the morning, there were 2 staff members caring for 7 children, aged between 1 to 2 years attending on a full-time basis. In the afternoon, there were 2 staff members caring for 5 children attending on a full-time basis.

Toddler room

In the morning, there were 2 staff members caring for 9 children, aged between 2 to 3 years attending on a full-time basis. In the afternoon, there were 2 staff members caring for 8 children attending on a full-time basis.

Pre-school room

In the morning, there were 2 staff members caring for 16 children, aged between 3 to 5 years 6 months attending on a full-time basis. In the afternoon, there were 3 staff members caring for 16 children attending on a full-time basis.

(8)
(a) According to the staff rosters inspected, the service operated with at least two adults present during operation hours.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*

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- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) From the 33 child records available, a sample of 10 were reviewed and contained all particulars as detailed in (a) to (i).

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

Non-Compliance Information

A medical consent form for the administration of prescription medicines was not available for a parent of a child requiring medication. This practice was at variance with the service's medication policy, which stated a medical consent form for all emergency and prescribed medicines must be completed and signed by staff and parents prior to medicines being given. Failure to correctly share information on the administration of medications with parents or caregivers posed a risk to the safety of children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The register provider stated in their written response:

- new medical consent forms have been devised.
- Parents and staff have been notified that the new medical consent forms need to be completed before medication is administered.
- Staff have been informed of these new procedures at the staff meeting.

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Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic evidence was submitted of the minutes of the staff meeting addressing the new procedures.
- Photographic evidence was submitted of the new administration of medication consent form.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 16 (1) (j) has been adequately addressed.

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

Compliance Information

(1)

Supporting relationship

- The staff showed positive regard and care to the children in all the care rooms on the day of inspection. For example, staff were seen to positively interact with the children between activities.
- During mealtimes, staff assisted children with eating at mealtimes in the Wobbler and the Toddler room.
- In the Pre-school room, staff participated in children's creative play activities. For example, children were building airports and making ice-cream by using the magnetic tiles and blocks. In the afternoon, children were sitting outside in a circle with staff singing songs.
- Staff interacted calmly and warming to children during nappy changes and staff spoke to children at their level using soft, calm tones at mealtimes.
- In the sanitary room attached to the Toddler room, each child's dignity and privacy was seen to be respected, with one child being changed at a time.
- Supervision and assistance were provided for the children who accessed the sanitary facilities independently in the Pre-school room.
- Each of the care rooms had low-level open shelving units, which displayed materials and resources which children could freely access. In the Toddler room, children rested on the soft couch while playing with their chosen toys, which promoted independence and decision making.

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- Within the care rooms, the children had adequate space to move about freely. Children also had the opportunity to engage in outdoor play activities.
- Transitions between children's activities were seamless. Children in the Pre-school room assisted staff with tidying up after activities.
- An inclusion area was designated on the walls in each room. Family photos were displayed in the Wobbler room and themed birthday calendars for the children in the Toddler and Pre-school room. This practice encouraged a sense of belonging and identity.
- Effective teamwork among staff were evident when they assisted each other with routine tasks.
- The inspectors were advised that the service used a digital application to communicate with parents, which recorded details in relation to the children's activities of daily living. Sharing of information was also facilitated through informal conversation at drop off and collection times, email, phone calls and the use of a messaging application, with examples demonstrated to the inspector.
- During conversation, the person in charge stated that relevant information was shared among staff through daily discussion, digital applications and staff meetings, as needed.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The service had a record of a weekly menu plan for the month. The menu offered a varied selection of healthy foods. Examples of the meals offered included cottage pie, spaghetti bolognese, vegetable soup, bacon, and mash.
- The inspectors were informed that some of the children had dietary requirements which the chef accommodated. Staff informed the inspectors that a nut free policy was implemented.
- Breakfast, morning snack, hot lunch and afternoon snack were prepared on site by the chef in the service. The meals were observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- On the day of inspection, examples of the children's mid-morning snacks included crackers, cheese and a variety of fruit. In the morning, children in the Wobbler room were eating age-appropriate sized portions. Vegetable casserole with rice was serviced for lunch. Staff offered children extra servings if they wished.
- Children were observed using appropriate cutlery and crockery in all the care rooms.

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- Water was stored in the fridge and accessible to the children throughout the day when needed. In the Wobbler room, children were offered milk at breakfast and at lunchtime.

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.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The main entrance door to the service was secured upon arrival, preventing unauthorised entrance to the building.
- Internal and external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised.
- The outdoor perimeter of the play areas was secured with high metal fencing, and a locked gates with sliding bolts.
- Blind cords in the sleep rooms were secured and not in reach of children.
- The windows in the care rooms were adequately secured.
- Indoor and outdoor toys were observed to be in good condition.
- Highchairs in the baby room were in a good condition and had been fitted with safety harnesses.
- Flexes and cables were out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary rooms had warm water, dispensing soap and paper towels from a dispenser.
- Handwashing was observed after toileting in the Pre-school room.
- The Toddler nappy changing area appeared to be clean and had cleaning equipment. The nappy changing mats were intact. There was a sealed, lidded foot pedal bin used for the disposal of used nappies. Barrier creams and nappies were individually labelled.
- Staff in the Toddler nappy changing area were observed wearing disposable gloves and aprons between each nappy change.

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- The designated sleep room accommodated the children in the Wobbler room and cots were separated 50cm apart. Each cot was fitted with clean bedlinen and had a waterproof mattress. Bedlinen was laundered on site by the service's own laundry facilities.
- Windows in the sleep room were open to aid natural ventilation.

Safe Sleep:

- Adequate sleep and rest areas were provided for each care room.
- The sleep check records from the Wobbler room were stored on the digital app. The sleep check records included information on the child's sleep position, colour and breathing. Physical sleep check records demonstrated that staff conducted sleep checks every 10 minutes.
- In the afternoon, children over 15 months from the Toddler room were observed sleeping on floor beds. The room was appropriately darkened to create an ambient environment to aid sleep. A staff member remained in the room while children were sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- All emergency fire exit doors were unobstructed.
- The fire safety equipment was evident in each of the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Staff were observed using the same cloths to clean the tables, floors and the high chairs after mealtimes in the Wobbler room. This cloth was stored on the windowsill of the room, in reach of the children. In addition, staff in the Toddler and Pre-school room were observed cleaning the tables with the same cloths throughout the morning session. Not using disposable or single use cloths increased the risk of cross contamination among children.
2. The inspector observed staff not washing their hands and the children's hands after each nappy change in the sanitary room attached to the Toddler room. Not handwashing posed the risk to the spread of infection among children. This observation was at variance with the service's hand hygiene policy and nappy changing policy, which stated that staff and children's hands are washed after each nappy change to maintain hygiene.
3. The inspector observed that the nappy changing mat was not sanitised after each nappy change in the Toddler nappy changing area. Lack of sanitisation of nappy changing mats posed the risk to the spread of infectious diseases among children. The observed nappy changing procedure was at variance with the

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service's nappy changing policy, which stated that the nappy changing mat was to be disinfected after each use.

4. A toilet brush located near the toilet in the Toddler sanitary room was accessible to children. Having accessible used toileting equipment in children's reach increased the risk to the spread of infection.
5. A lidded foot pedal bin was located on a ledge near the toilet in the Toddler sanitary room. In addition, there were two, lidded foot pedal bins located on the windowsill in the Pre-school sanitary room. Children were required to use their hands to open the foot operated bins, which increased the risk to the spread of infection.

Administration of Medication:

6. Prescribed medication for a child attending the service was not stored securely. It was located in a drawer in the Toddler room accessible to children. Not safely storing prescribed medication posed a safety risk to children. This practice was found to be non-compliant on previous inspections on 12 March 2024. The corrective actions submitted following those inspections failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance
7. A care plan was unavailable for a child in attendance who required emergency prescribed medication. Not having an updated care plan, to give guidance to staff on the administration of prescribed medication, posed a safety risk to children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The register provider stated in their written response:

1. Staff have been informed at a meeting of the use of single use or disposable cloths to reduce cross contamination and spread of infection.
2. Staff have been informed at a staff meeting of the revised nappy changing protocol, particularly about handwashing procedures during nappy changes for both children and staff.
3. Staff have been informed at a staff meeting of the importance of sanitising the nappy mat after each use to prevent the risk of the spread of infection.
4. Toilet brushes have been removed from the sanitary rooms to the cleaning storage area. Staff have been instructed to only take the toilet brushes out during cleaning times and other cleaning products are to be stored in the cleaning storage area, inaccessible to children.

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- Foot operated lidded bins have been removed from the windowsills to the floor, to ensure children use the bins with their foot and not their hands, to prevent the spread of infection.

Administration of Medication:

- Children's medication has been stored safely and securely in a separate container.
- Staff have been informed of the updated individual care plan that is displayed on the wall in the care room to give guidance on the administration of medication.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence was submitted of:

- Minutes of the staff meeting and signatures of staff acknowledging collective responsibility with sanitisation of areas.
- Revised nappy changing protocols about handwashing.
- Revised protocols about sanitisation of nappy changing mats.
- The register provider's statement has been accepted as proof.
- Photographic evidence of the bin placed on the floor and the register provider's statement has been accepted as proof.

Administration of Medication:

- Photographic evidence has been submitted of the medication box.
- Minutes of the staff meeting addressing the procedures of a care plan and storage of medication. The register provider's statement has been accepted as proof.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

(1) There were four staff members with First Aid Responder (FAR) certifications. All four staff were present on day of inspection had current First Aid Responder (FAR) certifications. It was evident through examination of the staff roster that at least one of these staff members was available at all times.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider had ensured that the complaints policy for the service specified:
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the way such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the way was being dealt with.
- (2) (a) (b)
- Staff stated there had been no formal or informal complaints made to them since the service opened in 2013.

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Non-Compliance Information

(1) The service's complaints policy was not clear in how the nature of a complaint and the manner in which the complaint will be kept on file and open to inspection by an authorised person. Not outlining clearly how complaints are recorded and filed posed a potential risk to leaving the complaints relating to the safety of children unaddressed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The register provider's stated in their written response:

- The complaints policy has been updated and reviewed and includes details about how people's information are recorded, kept on file and accessed by authorised personnel.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic evidence was submitted of the updated policy. The register provider's statement is accepted as proof.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 32 (1) have been adequately addressed.