

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024CC004
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Name of Service:	Caroline Butler (Childminder)
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Address of Service:	33 Pairc na Habhann, Cloyne, Co Cork
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Eircode:	P25 TW52
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Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Butler
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Service type:	Childminder
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Date of Inspection:	11/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	1	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Department, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, West Cork P81 PD78
Inspection undertaken by:	Ms. O'Reilly
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	N/A
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Description of service

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This is a registered childminding service. Daily hours of operation are from 07:30 to 18:30 hours, Monday to Friday. The childminders home is located in an estate and is provided from a two-storey house in the village of Cloyne, Co Cork. The setting has a play area in the sitting room at the rear of the childminders home, and access to the kitchen/dining area, sanitary area and an upstairs sleep room. Children also have access to a secure enclosed garden located to the rear side of the house.

Staffing

The service is operated by the named childminder with the backup of an emergency contact person. The childminder holds a major award in Early Childhood Care 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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

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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 childminder and child 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.*

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(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 childminder was the person in charge of operating the childminding service.
- (b) Throughout the duration of the inspection, the childminder was present.
- (2)
- The files of the childminder and the named emergency person for the service were reviewed.
- (a) Two written references obtained were from a previous employer.
- (b) Two references had been obtained from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting was on file for both the childminder and the emergency contact person. 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 the two adults had not lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of six months or more, while over the age of eighteen years.
- (4) There was a record on file stating the childminder had achieved a level 5 award 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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and*

Compliance Information

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(1) The childminder stated that at all times she works directly with the children attending during the hours of operation.

(8)

(b) The childminder has stated and ensured the inspectorate that there is a second person available to provide assistance and is within close proximity to the service in the event of an emergency.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

- (a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,
- (b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and
- (c) there is a working telephone on the premises.

(2) A childminder may have more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time where all such children are siblings of each other.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) There was one early years child in the care of the childminder at the time of the inspection. The child was two years plus. The adult child ratio for a childminder was maintained at time of inspection. The childminder was aware that she can have no more than five early years children in her care at any one time.
 - (b) At time of inspection, there was one child present aged between 2 and 3 years. On review of child attendance records. The childminder had 4 children that attend the childminding service. One child is aged under twelve months, two children are aged between two and three years and one child were aged four years plus. The childminder was aware that she can only cater for two children under fifteen months at any one time in her childminding service.
 - (c) A working mobile phone was available for use.

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(2)

Not applicable at time of inspection.

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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis.

Compliance Information

(1) (h) Daily attendance records, which included each child's arrival and departure times, were maintained, and presented for review.

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

- The childminder was observed attentive to the personal care needs of the child for example the children's hands and face were cleaned once they had finished the mid-morning snack and after toileting.
- The childminder was observed to interact in a caring manner with the child building their confidence and communication skills within the setting.
- The childminder communicated with the child in advance of initiating play activities and care practices, such as toileting and snack time, which supported the child to prepare for transitions. As a result, the child appeared calm, confident, and actively engaged in their environment.

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- A sofa was provided to meet the children's need for rest and relaxation.
- Within the indoor play environment, there was sufficient space for the children to freely explore their chosen activities and interest items.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available. Play materials and equipment, such as plastic bricks, building blocks, jigsaws, arts and crafts and a kitchen with associated utensils.
- There was open shelving with age-appropriate accessible toys and materials for children to access these independently, located in the sitting room.
- The outdoor space had a planting area and a climbing frame and slide to encourage gross motor activity.

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

- Either the childminder or parents/guardians provide the meals/snacks and drinks for the children. It was observed on talking to the childminder that the meals and snacks were being mainly supplied by the childminder.
- A balanced and varied three-week menu plan of the food provided by the childminder was available for inspection.
- For the mid-morning snack, it was observed, the child in the company of the childminder, after viewing the food in the fridge. The young child decided what she wanted to eat from the choice of nutritional foods available. The child had a yogurt and a drink of milk in a sippy/straw cup for the mid-morning snack.
- The childminder ensured there was suitable crockery and cutlery available to the children.
- Ample time was afforded to the child to eat and drink at a relaxed pace at the kitchen table.
- A fridge was available for the storage of perishable foodstuffs.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

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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:

- Entrance to the service was by a secured front door
- Storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- Access to the fireplace was prevented through use of a suitable fire guard.
- No cables were visibly within reach of children on the day of inspection.
- The blind cords in the kitchen window area were at adult height.
- The outdoor area was enclosed and secured.
- On review, at time of inspection, the childminder had suitable age-appropriate car seats in the named car vehicle for the transport of the current children attending the childminding service.

Infection Control:

- A lidded, pedal operated bin was in place in the sanitary facility.
- Bins were inaccessible.
- There was a supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, and paper towels available in the children's toilet.
- The premises appeared clean and well maintained.

Safe Sleep:

- There were two standard cots with safety mattresses located in one of the bedrooms upstairs. There was a water proof cover over each mattress.
- On sleeping children, the 10-minute interval sleep checks, which were conducted by the childminder, were maintained in writing.
- The air temperature of the sleep room was recorded at 19°C. This fell within the required range of 16°C to 20°C, for safe sleep practice.
- The child in attendance did not require a sleep during the inspection process

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.

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- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-
- (a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and
 - (b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) The childminder had an in date first aid responder (FAR) training certificate and she is available to the children at all times while in the service.

(2)

(a) The childminder ensured that a suitably equipped first aid box for children was safely stored in the premise.

(b) It was available to the children attending the childminding service at all times.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The childminder has adequate insurance to cover 6-12 children for childminding purposes, valid until 5 March 2025. The childminder had motor insurance cover valid until 24 May 2025