

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK034
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Name of Service:	Caherelly Kids
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Address of Service:	Caherelly, Grange, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V35 Y296
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Name of Registered Provider:	Helen O'Riordan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	11/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	15
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate Offices, 2 nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan
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).

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Description of service

Caherelly Kids operates as a private, rural preschool service in Caherelly in County Limerick. The preschool offers a full day care service with a morning sessional service included each day at the facility. A dedicated after-school service is provided each evening for older children.

The facility runs from a purpose-built, single-story premises situated on the grounds of the owner's family home. A second well-resourced preschool room is located within the family home. Conveniently located sanitary accommodation and nappy-changing facilities are directly adjacent to both preschool rooms. Outside, children enjoy a spacious, fully resourced playground, garden area and a sheltered outdoor zone to ensure daily open-air play regardless of the weather conditions.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge of running the service. There are 4 additional staff employed to work at the school. All staff members have the appropriate qualifications 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

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This inspection was unannounced 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 wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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*

(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,*

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(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 was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and there was a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a) There were written references, from past employers, available in respect of each staff working at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not provided, references from reputable sources such as former schools and colleges were furnished.

(c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available in respect of each staff working at the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) No police vetting was required as none of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(4) Each staff working at the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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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.

Compliance Information

(1) The service operates a full day care service from 9.00am to 6.00pm each day. On the day of the inspection there were 31 pre-school children present with 5 staff members during the morning sessional class. In the afternoon for the extended hours there were 15 preschool children present with 3 staff members. The adult child ratio was compliant with the requirements of Regulation 11.

(2) At all times the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

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

BASIC NEEDS:

The service implemented a comprehensive healthy eating policy, which required parents to supply a nutritious daily snack and drink for their children's lunch. Staff stored all perishable food items inside a refrigerator immediately upon arrival each morning to maintain food safety standards. For children availing of the full day care hours, a hot meal is provided in the early afternoon.

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Children enjoyed unrestricted access to the toilet facilities positioned directly adjacent to the preschool classrooms. The bathroom featured low-level sinks, warm running water, liquid soap, and disposable paper towels to actively promote independent hand hygiene. An electronically controlled nappy-changing unit is also available if required.

For relaxation, a designated rest area was established within the library corner, where comfortable soft seating allowed tired children a quiet space to recuperate. Furthermore, children spent extensive periods outdoors daily, moving freely between a rear garden and an adjacent playground area. A large overhead canopy provided ample shelter, ensuring outdoor play continued smoothly during inclement weather.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service operated from a large main preschool room, a second smaller adjacent room, and three expansive, well-resourced outdoor play spaces. A preschool room was also available in the adjacent registered provider's home. Management designed all areas to accommodate the developing needs of the children. Low-level tables and chairs were used for both tabletop activities and dining at snack time. The library area offered a diverse range of reading materials next to a large, comfortable couch to create a peaceful relaxation space. Staff accommodated sensory play by providing easy access to both sand and water stations, while the home corner area inspired lots of imaginative play. Children easily accessed Montessori learning materials from low-level, open shelving units throughout the day. Staff displayed a vast amount of children's artwork and items of interest at the children's eye level. Visuals including posters focused on the transition to primary school, the local community, and a calendar celebrating each child's birthday decorated the walls. Additionally, a large journal featured photographs that allowed parents to view the many activities the children enjoyed throughout each term.

The children spent a significant portion of their day outdoors, utilising the vast space for active play and operating a variety of ride-on toys. A large natural garden featured play equipment constructed entirely from timber, which gave the children regular opportunities to master their climbing, running, and balancing skills. Furthermore, the children utilised a large grass area at the rear of the premises specifically for ball sports. Staff continuously reviewed, modified, and enhanced both the indoor and outdoor environments to align with the children's evolving interests, capabilities, and preferences, as well as the overarching seasonal themes and curriculum plans of the service.

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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.

(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) There were 3 staff members working at the service that had the required first aid responder training course completed. All certificates were in date.

(2)(a) A first aid box stocked with all the necessary materials was stored in an easily accessible location in the preschool.

(b) The first aid box was at all times available to the children at the service. The box located in the outdoor cabin was easily accessible to the children while playing in the outdoor areas.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-

(a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and

(b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) Records were available to show that fire drills were carried out monthly. The most recent fire drill took place on the 15th of May 2026.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises with the most recent service having been completed in November 2025.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a current insurance certificate which outlined that adequate insurance was available for a maximum of 36 preschool children to attend the service for a full day care preschool service.