

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LS023
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Name of Service:	Just 4 Kids Creche
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Address of Service:	Crann Nua, Edenderry Road, Portarlinton, Co. Laois
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Eircode:	R32 H282
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Name of Registered Provider:	Catriona Robinson
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	30	PM	31
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35 K1W4
Inspection undertaken by:	R Flynn
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Authority to Inspect

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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).

Description of service

Just 4 Kids creche is one of three services operated by the registered provider. The Early Years' Service operates from a two-storey purpose-built premises, in a residential area, in the town of Portarlinton, Co Laois. The service provides a full day care and sessional service to children aged between 0 to 6 years. The ground floor has an entrance hall, an office, a storeroom, the Caterpillar room, Butterfly room, Frog room and two sleep rooms. The first floor has a kitchen, sluice room, a staff room and the Sunroom. Outdoor play areas are located to the front, side and back of the premises. Parking is available in the designated carpark to the side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs eleven adults to work in the service. There were nine staff present on the day of inspection, this included the registered provider, the person in charge, six childcare practitioners and one cook. The registered provider works in the premises with the children and facilitated 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

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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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

- Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b), (2) (a)(b)(c)(d), (4) – Management and recruitment,
- Regulation 11 (1),(2),(8)(a) – Staffing levels,
- Regulation 15 – Record of preschool child,
- Regulation 16 – Record in relation to preschool service,
- Regulation 19 (1)(a) – Health, welfare and development of child,
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,
- Regulation 25(1),(2)(a)(b)– First aid,
- Regulation 26(1)(a)(b),(4) – Fire,
- Regulation 28 – Insurance.

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, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.*

(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)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

The registered provider and deputy person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined that two new staff members had commenced in the service since the last inspection on the 09 September 2025. The staff files of the newly employed staff members were reviewed and the following was noted;

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- (a)
Two written validated references were available from a previous employer and
- (b)
Two written validated references were available from a reputable source.
- (c)
Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the two new staff members. In regard to all staff members, the service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)
Police vetting was available for the two new staff members who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months as an adult.
- (4)
One newly employed childcare staff member working directly with the pre-school children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed to be the equivalent.

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)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children. In the morning on arrival at the service, there were thirty children being supervised directly by six adults. In the afternoon, there were thirty one children being supervised by six adults. The person in charge and registered provider were also available to assist in the preschool rooms.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained on the day of inspection demonstrated by the following observation;

Morning

- There was one adult providing direct care to four children aged between 1 year and 3 months to 1 year and 8 months old in the Caterpillar room.
- There were two adults providing direct care to eight children aged between 2 - 3 years in the Butterfly room.
- There were two adults providing direct care to eleven children aged between 3-5 years in the Frog room.
- There was one adult providing direct care to seven children aged between 5-11 years old in the Sun Room.

Afternoon

- There was one adult providing direct care to four children aged between 1 year and 3 months to 1 year and 8 months old in the Caterpillar room.
- There were two adults providing direct care to nine children aged between 2 - 3 years in the Butterfly room.
- There were two adults providing direct care to eleven children aged between 3-5 years in the Frog room.
- There was one adult providing direct care to seven children aged between 6-11 years old in the Sun Room.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises duration the operational hours of the service. This was confirmed following review of the staff roster for the service.

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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;*
- (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)

A sample of 12 records were reviewed. The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a) to (i) of the above regulation for all the records reviewed.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*

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- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1) (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g).
- (h)
The attendance records of children were digitally recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.
- (i)
The staff roster was available and reflected the adults working in the service.
- (j)
Medication administration templates were located in each child's file on a tablet in each room. The electronic application used for recording information is also accessed by parents on the shared electronic application.
- (k)
A sample of 18 accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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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)(a)

Basic Needs

Children were observed to have a hot meal of tomato pasta with cheese. Children in the Caterpillar room sat together at low tables eating their meal. Bibs were placed on the children to protect their clothes. The menu displayed included a variety of meat, potatoes, vegetables and pasta dishes. Dairy free options were available for any child who had an intolerance or preference, such as dairy free cheese, raisin bread and dairy free pizza bases. Staff were observed engaged in conversation with the children during meals. Milk and water was provided, and children's individual water bottles and cups were accessible in each room throughout the day.

Staff supported children in the Butterfly room to wash their hands before meals, after toileting and after outdoor play. Self-toileting was supported for children in the Butterfly and Frog rooms, and children were supervised as necessary. Children in the Caterpillar room had their nappies changed on a routine basis and more frequently if required.

Children from each room were provided with the opportunity for outdoor play in their separate assigned outdoor play areas throughout the day.

Cots were available in the designated sleep room off the Caterpillar room for children requiring a cot to sleep in. Low level beds with appropriate bed linen were available in the sleep room of the Butterfly room for children aged two years and above.

Supporting relationships

The preschool rooms had family walls with pictures of the children with their family members. This helped the children feel connected to home. Communication with parents is via an electronic application where parents get live updates regarding their child's activities, sleep, care and learning. Updates were also provided at drop off and collection times. Learning journals were maintained for each child, documenting their individual learning and development over the course of the year.

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Physical and material environment

Children in the Caterpillar room accessed the toys and play equipment freely from low-level shelving, enabling free choice. Vinyl mats on the floor were placed in front of a child level wall mounted mirror with a pull bar for babies to stand up with support. Children from the Caterpillar enjoyed playing in the outdoor play area located directly off the Caterpillar room.

Children in the Butterfly room were observed outdoors enjoying swinging on the swings, playing in the play house and sitting on the ground with building blocks brought out from the preschool room. A canopy was available in the garden with seating which provided shelter from the sun. A shock resistant surface was present under the swing set and climbing frame. A child was observed engaged in a gross motor activity using tweezers to sort and organise coloured toy animals into matching coloured bowls. The Butterfly room had a couch in the rest area, with cushions and a bookshelf for children to sit and rest from activities during the day.

Children in the Frog room were engaged in reading books together on floor mats during 'quiet time' after lunch. Artwork on the wall such as 'When I Grow up' displayed pictures completed by the children such as builders, doctors and chefs.

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 entrance to the service was secure and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. A doorbell alerted staff to any visitors and an internal latch, and lock were positioned up high out of reach of children.

Cleaning products were stored safely in the storage room and in high cabinets in the care rooms, out of reach of children.

The upstairs kitchen was inaccessible to the children on the day of the inspection.

Infection Control:

Liquid hand soap and warm water were available for hand washing. Paper hand towels were accessible to children

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from wall mounted dispensers. Children from the Butterfly room were supported to wash their hands after outdoor play, before meals and after using the bathroom. Pedal bins were available in the preschool rooms and sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste. Mechanical ventilation was in place in the sanitary accommodation.

Administration of Medication:

An individual and emergency care plan was in place for one child who required specific medication in the event of a medical emergency. No medication was administered on the day of inspection. Staff were familiar with the procedure of administration of medication if required by a child. Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature and was stored safely in the storeroom out of reach of the children.

Safe Sleep:

Appropriate sleep equipment was used for children who required sleep. Children aged under 2 years old were provided with a cot while older children slept on low level beds. Sleeping children were physically monitored at 10-minute intervals. Staff were observed to record the colour, position and breathing pattern of the sleeping children on a tablet. The temperature in the sleep room for children from the Caterpillar room was recorded as 21.9°C.

Fire Safety:

Each preschool room had a fire exit leading directly out to a secure outdoor area which were easily recognisable and unobstructed. The fire assembly point was to the side of the premises in the carpark.

Outing:

A policy was in place to support outings conducted by the service. During discussion with staff, they advised that the children participate in nature walks. Risk assessments were completed and documented on an electronic application.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

Handwashing practices were inadequate to control the spread of infection in the Caterpillar Room. Children were not assisted to have their hands washed under warm running water following nappy changes observed, after coming in from outdoor play and before meals.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

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The staff member was spoken to and the handwashing policy was provided again to read. Management will monitor the preschool room, and spot checks will be done on a regular basis. All staff got a copy of the hand-washing policy just to keep fresh in mind. Constant reminding and monitoring of this with all staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of hand-washing policy reviewed.

Summary Comment

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

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)

Three staff members were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and was available on the premises during the operational hours of the service.

(2)(a)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were located in the service.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to adults caring for children in the pre-school service.

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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.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was recorded on 31 May 2026.

(b)

Records were kept of the maintenance of the firefighting equipment which was last serviced on 20 September 2025. The smoke alarm system in the premises was last serviced on 23 April 2026.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for 45 children attending the service and the expiry date noted was 28 March 2027.