

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022CC005
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Name of Service:	Cherry Blossoms Kiskeam
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Address of Service:	Kiskeam National School, Kiskeam, Mallow, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P51 X478
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Name of Registered Provider:	Christina Dunstan
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13 January 2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	3
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	134 Bank Place, Mallow, Cork. P51 EC59.
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel
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	Not Applicable
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Description of service

Cherry Blossoms Kiskeam is a privately operated part-time early years service in operation since October 2022. The service accommodates children aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years old and opening times are from 9:00 am to 2 pm, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is facilitated between the hours of 9.10 am until 12:10 pm and a school age service is in operation.

Cherry Blossoms Kiskeam is situated in the rural village of Kiskeam, County Cork. It operates from a detached prefabricated building located at the rear of Kiskeam National School and consists of an entrance hallway, one adult toilet, one children's toilet and a large care room. The children currently have access to an outdoor play area which is secured with barriers. Car parking is available at the front of the school.

Staffing

There are 2 full-time and 2 part-time staff employed in the service. The registered provider does not work in the early years setting.

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 the child. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

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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.

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.*
- (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,*

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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 has ensured that there is a designated person in charge and a person who is available to deputise in the service.
 - (b) On the day of inspection, both the designated person in charge and the deputy were working in the service.
The registered provider was briefly onsite later in the morning. The staff roster confirmed that both the designated person in charge and the deputy are in the service during the hours of operation.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure documented on the parent's notice board and this was visible on inspection.
- (2) There are two full-time and two part-time staff working in the service, therefore these staff files were the focus of the assessment.
 - (a) (b) There were five references and validations available from past employers and three references and validations available from sources other than previous employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available for all four staff members.
 - (d) International Police Vetting was not required as none of the four staff members had lived outside of the State for six consecutive months or longer.
- (4) The staff files indicated that each of the four staff members, working directly with the children, held an award in Early childhood Care and Education between levels 5 and 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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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.

(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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at all times.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was met. There were 3 part-time and 5 sessional children in attendance with 3 staff members on the day of the inspection.
- (8) (a) There were at least two adults in the service at all times as evidenced on the day of inspection and as indicated on the weekly staff roster.

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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) The nine children who were registered in the service were the focus of the assessment of the records for a pre-school child.

(a-i) All nine children's records were found to contain the relevant information required for each particular.

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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;*
- (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)
- (a) The inspector reviewed each of the four staff files and found all files contained the particulars required for part (1) (a).
 - (b) (d) (e) (f) These particulars were documented and available in the service's parent handbook.
 - (c) Details of the staff ratios were documented on the daily sign in sheet, available on the day of inspection.
 - (g) The policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in relation to Regulation 10 were available as soft copies in the service.
 - (h) (i) Details of the children's attendance were recorded in the sign in/ sign out sheet. The staff attendance was recorded in both the sign in-sign / out sheet and on the staff roster.
 - (j) Administration of Medication forms were available; however, none had been completed to date.
 - (k) Two accident/incident reports had been fully completed and these were both dated 17/11/2022.

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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

BASIC NEEDS:

- The service operated a rolling mid-morning snack and lunch. The children were observed eating healthy and nutritious food which had been prepared by the parents/guardians in line with the service's healthy eating policy.
- Water was observed to be available all morning from individual water bottles which were within easy reach. A filled water jug and cups were also available. Each child had their own personally designed table mat and cutlery and crockery were freely available.
- Children were observed independently accessing the sanitary area and staff were available to remind the children to dry their hands after washing.
- A rest/quiet area was available in the care room and children were observed in this area lying and playing on the mats and cushions.
- The children had ample room to move, play and access materials and resources.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:

- Staff were observed sitting with the children throughout the morning while supervising tabletop activities and mealtimes. At these times, the staff interactions with the children were noted to be kind, warm and caring. The children were given time to complete their activities and the atmosphere was relaxed and happy. The inspector heard staff commenting positively, encouraging the children in their efforts while they were engaged in building rocket ships and completing tasks involving sorting objects into coloured bowls with tweezers.
- A key worker system was in place with staff responsible for creating a close relationship with a group of children and their families. Each key worker was responsible for the observations on each child in their group, which the inspector was able to view on the day. These included photographs of activities the children had been involved with and written details of the child's interests and activities. The observations

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were linked to Aistear, the curriculum framework, and were sent home to the parents to sign to keep the parents informed of their child's learning and development.

- Children settling in were observed being facilitated in the service. Staff stated the children had started off staying for short periods which gradually increased to longer periods and that this strategy had worked very well. A child who was settling in was observed staying close and sitting with a staff member throughout the morning. The staff member was sensitive and supportive when speaking to the child.
- Staff stated various forms of communication are used to exchange information with parents including a messaging application and face to face at collection and drop off time.
- Monthly staff meetings and informal meetings were stated as taking place in the service with discussions focusing on planning, training and general day to day issues. The inspector was furnished with minutes from the weekly meetings.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The room was laid out in clearly defined areas which provided opportunities for play and learning across all developmental areas. The resources and materials observed included arts and crafts, construction, home corner, book corner, small world people and animals, musical instruments and pegs and boards.
- The play equipment was stored on shelves in baskets which were easily accessible and encouraged independence and choice.
- The tables and chairs were age and stage appropriate, and areas were provided where the children could sit in a group or on their own.
- The care room was clean and tidy and the walls were decorated with photographs of the children engaged in activities with people from their local community including the post person. Family trees with pictures of each child's family were also visible along with pictures of the children participating in meditation.
- The entrance hallway had hooks and cubby houses where the children could store their personal belongings. These were labelled with each child's name.

PROGRAMME OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES:

- Children's language development was supported through a variety of mediums during the inspection including imaginary play in the quiet area where the children were using the mats and talking with a staff member about keeping out the big bad wolf and how afraid they were; singing songs at circle time including the days of the week, Old McDonald, The floor is Lava, and storytelling (Hungry Harry).

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- Activities were child led and the children were observed expressing their opinions, taking the lead and exercising choice in activities and with play equipment. This was evident when one child wanted to continue making patterns with their pegs and board, while another child built a rocket with cubes and a third child was sitting contentedly eating their snack. Staff were available to facilitate the children's choices and assist if required.

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 parents/guardians provided the food observed on the day of inspection. This was found to be healthy and nutritious and conformed to the service's healthy eating policy. The children were observed eating filled sandwiches, crackers, yogurt and an assortment of fruit. Children who were staying for lunch brought extra food in their lunch boxes. The service operated a rolling mid-morning snack and lunch and the children were observed helping themselves to their food at different times. Water was available at all times from individual bottles and the service provided a jug with water and cups, if required, which were available throughout the morning. Additional food was available, and the children could help themselves to the available cutlery and crockery.

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 internal and external doors were secured preventing unauthorised access by an adult or a child leaving the service unsupervised.
- The six window openings in the care room and the 2 in the child and adult bathrooms were inaccessible to the children.
- All blind cords were made secure and were placed out of reach of the children.
- A handrail was provided to facilitate the children climbing up the two steps to the service entrance. An access ramp with a handrail was also available.
- The toys and equipment appeared in good condition.
- Heavy equipment and furniture could not be easily moved.
- Flexes and cables were stored out of reach of the children and appeared in good condition.
- The medication was stored on a high shelf which was inaccessible to the children.

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- Cleaning agents were stored securely.
- The outdoor area was secured with metal fencing, bolted gates and barriers.

Infection Control:

- Staff were observed disinfecting the tables and sweeping the tables after meals and activities.
- The cleaning rota was available, completed and up to date.
- The children were observed washing their hands before and after food.
- There was thermostatically controlled hot water, dispensing soap, paper towels and pedal bins available in both the children and adult toilets.
- Perishable food was stored in the fridge.

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Administration of Medication:

- Anti-febrile medication was available in the service.

Safe Sleep:

- Two sleep mats, a low-level bed and individual linen were available for children who needed to rest or sleep.

Fire Safety:

- The fire doors were fitted with thumb twist cylinders.
- A fire evacuation plan was available.
- The notice of the fire assembly point was visible in the outdoor play area.
- The fire doors were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- (1) The four electric heaters located in the care room were accessible to the children and recorded temperatures of 45°C, posing a safety risk from a child being too close to the vents that were emitting heat.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- (1) The registered provider stated that the temperature on the thermostatic control for each heater has been turned down and the temperatures will be monitored by staff daily.

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Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- (1) Photographs of the reduced temperatures on the thermostatic controls on each heater was received.