

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022CC005
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Name of Service:	Cherryblossoms 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:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	14/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	3	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher
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

Cherryblossoms Kiskeam is a private early years care and education service offering full day, part-time and sessional services, accommodating children aged 2 years to 6 years. The service is registered to open from 7:00 until 18:30 and currently the opening hours are from 8:00 until 18:00, Monday to Friday, 50 weeks of the year. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is facilitated from 9:10 until 12:10 term time only. The service is managed by a multiple provider and offers a school age service.

Cherryblossoms Kiskeam is situated in the rural village of Kiskeam, County Cork. It operates from a detached modular building located at the rear of Kiskeam National School and consists of a lobby area, a large care room and adult/child sanitary facilities. The children currently have access to outdoor play areas at the back of the service.

Staffing

There are six adults currently employed in the service, two of whom are after school workers, one relief worker from a sister service and one being the registered provider.

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 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.

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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 children, registered provider and staff 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 registered provider was the person in charge and there was a named deputy in the service that could deputise as required.
- (b) The deputy was on duty at the service when the inspector arrived and the registered provider arrived soon after for a brief period and returned later in the morning. The staff roster indicated that either the registered provider or the deputy was on duty at all times during the hours of operation.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to six adults, four of whom were employed in the early years service, including the registered provider and two of whom were employed in school age care were the subject of inspection.
- (a) Of the 12 required references, 7 were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the 12 required references, 5 were from a source other than a previous employer with required records of validation on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were obtained and were on file for the six staff. The person in charge was aware of the re-vetting timeframes outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was required and available for one of the six adults as they lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) All four adults who worked directly with the early years children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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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

The following policies were reviewed on inspection:

- Policy on infection control.
- Policy on outings
- Policy on healthy eating.

The policies contained the information required to guide staff in their care practices for children.

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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care of the children in attendance at all times.

(2) The adult to child ratio were observed to meet the minimum requirement over the duration of the inspection. The ratio was as follows:

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There were two adults directly caring for three children, one of whom was in school age care in the morning and three adults directly caring for five children, three of whom were in school age care in the afternoon.

- (8)
- (a) The service operated with at least two adults present at all times. This was observed on the day of inspection and was evident through examination of the staff roster.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The service has three early years children registered and all records were inspected. They were found to contain the required information as listed (a) through to (i).
- (3)
- (c) The records, as identified above, were made available to the inspector for review.

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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:

- (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 following records were reviewed:

- (i) The staff roster for the week of inspection was available for assessment on a digital application. The roster was in keeping with the staff working in the service on the day of inspection.
- (j) A sample of 10 accident and incident records were reviewed and contained all relevant information.
- (k) A sample of 13 medication records were assessed and contained all relevant information.

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:

- Drinking water was accessible to the children throughout the day.
- Food was prepared by parents and guardians and consisted of bananas, strawberries, crackers, cheese and pasta. The food was stored in the refrigerator and was observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- During snack time and lunch time, children independently obtained their own lunch boxes from the refrigerator.

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- The children were observed to access the sanitary area independently with the staff available to assist if required.
- The layout of the care room supported the children to move freely within their environment and to engage in their chosen tasks.
- Children were observed washing their hands before snack time and after using the toilet.
- A quiet space was incorporated into the care room which allowed children to rest if needed. Children who wished to rest while they attended the service could avail of a soft floor cushion.
- There was an outdoor play area which the registered provider informed the inspector that children had access to on a daily basis.

Supporting relationships:

- During mealtimes, the adult remained with the children and assisted as required. The children were afforded sufficient time to enjoy the food in a relaxed atmosphere and adults conversed with children at the tables.
- The adults were observed to be kind and caring towards the needs of the children in their care. An example of this was when a child was crying and an adult immediately comforted the child.
- The inspector observed positive and playful interactions between the staff and children. For example, the staff sat on the floor or at the table at the children's level and were building blocks, completing artwork and engaging in imaginative play with the children.
- The registered provider stated that they communicated with the parents through the use of a parent handbook, a learning journal, email and text messages or verbally at drop off or collection.
- The staff promoted positive behaviour among children encouraging them to take turns and share as seen in the care room.

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:

- On the day of inspection, the door was appropriately secured on arrival to the premises and entry was gained by the use of a doorbell. This restricted unauthorised access into the building and helped to prevent the risk of children exiting unsupervised.

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- During the inspection, toys and play equipment assessed were observed to be in good condition.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children on inspection.
- The outdoor area was observed to be secured with metal fencing, a wall and a gate. One section of fencing was open to allow access to an astroturf area for the children attending the national school. The registered provider ensured that a staff member remained at the opening while children were playing in the yard.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- The blind cords had restrictor devices fitted.

Infection control:

- Lidded, foot pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste during the inspection.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground on wall hooks to be prevent cross infection.
- Perishable foods were stored in the refrigerator to prevent food spoilage.
- Children's individual bed sheets were available if needed and laundered after use.

Administration of medication:

- The registered provider informed the inspector that no regular medicine was being administered to a child currently in the service.
- Temperature reducing medicines were stored out of reach of the children and the observed medicines were in date.

Safe sleep:

- The designated sleep area was located in the corner of the room if needed and two stackable beds were available for use.
- The air temperature of the care room was recorded at 21°C.
- The registered provider informed the inspector that no child availed of sleep in the last year and that in the event of sleep, records were maintained in relation to the children's colour, breathing and position at 10-minute intervals.

Fire safety:

- The fire exit doors were free from obstruction on inspection.
- Fire extinguishers were wall mounted.

Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection. The registered provider informed the inspector that they may occasionally take walks to the playground with a risk assessment completed prior to this occurring. On

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discussing the risk assessment with the registered provider and adults present, the risk assessment had a number of strategies in place to mitigate identified risks to the children.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

1. The inspector observed that no liquid soap was available in the children's sanitary area of the care room. This inadequate handwashing posed a risk of cross infection to the children and staff in the care room. It is acknowledged that the registered provider obtained soap when informed of this.
2. The inspector noted exposed unvarnished or painted timber on the skirting board area of the children's sanitary facilities. Due to being unvarnished or painted the area cannot be adequately cleaned. This posed an infection control risk.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was made by the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection control:

1. Soap is now placed in the bathroom for the children's use. This was discussed at a staff meeting to ensure liquid soap is in place in the future.
2. The timber is now painted with washable gloss paint. This is now added to the monthly maintenance check.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection control:

1. Photographic evidence of liquid soap in place and the minutes of the staff meeting was received in the office of the inspectorate.
2. Photographic evidence and a copy of the maintenance check list were received.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service.
- (3)
- (b) A daily record of visitors to the premises was kept on the check in page in the care room. The inspector was requested to signed in and out from the service.

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

- (2)
- (a) There were one sufficiently stocked first aid box available in the service, which was safely stored out of reach of children.
- (b) The first aid supplies were always accessible, should they be required.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The inspector noted that for 75 minutes in the morning, no adults employed in the service held a current up to date first aid responder (FAR) certificate. In the event of an accident or injury occurring to a child, this posed a safety risk to the children. It is acknowledged that one adult held an up to date first aid certificate.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. FAR qualified staff are now labelled daily on the weekly roster and this practice will continue in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. A copy of the roster was received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 25.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

Compliance Information

- (a) From a visual assessment, the building appears to be of sound and stable structure.
- (c) Within the care room, natural lighting was provided through windows, and this was supplemented with artificial lighting.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d) There was black residue visible on one corner of the ceiling of the adult's toilets, posing a health hazard. This was noted on the last inspection on 14 June 2024. It is acknowledged that the registered provider informed the inspector that the area was painted since last inspection but reoccurred due to an issue with a leaking roof.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

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Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d) The internal roof was cleaned and painted, and the external roof was sealed. This area is now added to the monthly maintenance checklist.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (d) Photographic evidence of the roof and a copy of the monthly maintenance check list was received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The action taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 29.