



**Health
Information
and Quality
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

Report of a Children's Residential Centre

Name of provider:	The Child and Family Agency
Tusla Region:	Dublin Mid Leinster
Type of inspection:	Unannounced
Date of inspection:	9 and 10 July 2024
Centre ID:	OSV- 0007766
Fieldwork ID	MON-0044123

About the centre

The following information has been submitted by the centre and describes the service they provide.

The centre offers care interventions for children and young people who require some respite from their current situation. Whether they are children living at home or in foster care and will benefit from some additional supports to maintain their placement in a family environment. Our aim is to support early intervention measures and where possible prevent a full admission to residential care.

The service is managed as part of children's residential services Dublin mid-Leinster region and accommodates a number of young people at any given time with the capacity for up to four young people on respite on a nightly basis.

This intervention aims to build on the strengths of young people and their families and support them to remain living in their local communities. Paramount to success is putting the young people and their needs at the centre of the service. Our hope is that young people engage with us collaboratively and voluntarily thus supporting them in enhancing their self-efficacy and developing further life skills. The centre operates within the parameters of the Well Tree Model. This approach focuses on the use of a therapeutic connection between young people, their families and staff members in order to promote positive outcomes. The centre will focus on integrating of supports by direct care givers social workers and staff to reinforce positive outcomes.

The centre provides a service for up to four children/young people aged between five and 17 years on admission, on a nightly basis. This can increase if a young person can share a room with another young person. Capacity on any one night will be informed by a risk assessment completed by the social care manager to ensure that a safe service can be provided. There may be times when it is appropriate to provide for smaller numbers on particular nights depending on needs. At times a larger sibling or family group can be accommodated if required.

The centre strives to provide quality care and a range of interventions to enable children and their families to address some of their life experiences so that they are better equipped for family life.

The following information outlines some additional data of this centre.

Number of children on the date of inspection	4
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How we inspect

To prepare for this inspection the inspector or inspectors reviewed all information about this centre. This included any previous inspection findings and information received since the last inspection.

As part of our inspection, where possible, we:

- Speak with children and the people who visit them to find out their experience of the service
- Talk to staff and management to find out how they plan, deliver and monitor the care and support services that are provided to children who live in the centre
- Observe practice and daily life to see if it reflects what people tell us.
- Review documents to see if appropriate records are kept and that they reflect practice and what people tell us.

In order to summarize our inspection findings and to describe how well a service is doing, we group and report on the standards and related regulations under two dimensions:

1. Capacity and capability of the service

This section describes the leadership and management of the centre and how effective it is in ensuring that a good quality and safe service is being provided. It outlines how people who work in the centre are recruited and trained and whether there are appropriate systems and processes in place to underpin the safe delivery and oversight of the service.

2. Quality and safety of the service

This section describes the care and support children receive and if it was of a good quality and ensured people were safe. It includes information about the care and supports available for people and the environment in which they live.

A full list of all standards and the dimension they are reported under can be seen in Appendix 1.

This inspection was carried out during the following times:

Date	Times of inspection	Inspector	Role
9 July 2024	10:15 hrs to 18:15 hrs	Grace Lynam	Inspector
10 July 2024	09:00 hrs to 16:45 hrs	Grace Lynam	Inspector

What children told us and what inspectors observed

This centre was subject to a routine unannounced inspection. Over the course of the inspection, four children came to and went from the centre. Three other children were due to arrive for the weekend. The inspection process includes providing children with an opportunity to have their views and opinions heard about their experiences of respite care. During the inspection the inspector met with two children in the centre, and spoke with one child by telephone following the inspection. A further four children submitted questionnaires following the inspection.

Inspectors observed that children were very relaxed and at ease in the centre. Children were observed lounging on a beanbag watching television and interacting easily with the staff. Staff were respectful and appropriate in their interactions with the children. There was a calm, relaxed atmosphere created in the centre which supported the children to engage with staff and fully benefit from their respite break. Staff served as role models for the children involving them in conversations about life experiences, helping them to make good decisions and negotiate their preferences for activities. The inspector observed the staff team skilfully guiding the children through the day with ease and patience.

Children who spoke with the inspector and who completed questionnaires were very positive about their experiences in the centre. Children told the inspector that they liked doing all the activities and explained that staff collected them from home or school and brought them to the centre. One child said they liked to play computer games in the centre and another said "it's fun, it's great". They liked going to the centre as it meant they "get out of the house". Some said they bake in the centre, another said the "staff are lovely", "everyone is nice" and you have "great craic".

When asked if there are enough staff children said "yes", and that the food is good because - as one child said - the staff are "very good cooks." When asked what they liked best about the centre a child replied "going on days out" and that the food "is nice, I like the food."

A child told the inspector that staff "support us" and described how staff can come and collect you to give you an extra break when it was needed that their keyworker "does all the paperwork". This child told the inspector they had not looked at their paperwork.

One child said they get the same bedroom every time they come to stay, and that they loved the company of the children that stay at the same time as them, that they were great company and very funny. Another child said they didn't like their

room, that the bed wasn't comfy: "someone else took my room". This child explained that when you are in for two nights you can't change rooms but that he would get his room next time as "that's my priority".

When asked if they felt safe in the centre a child replied "yes, definitely."

Comments from children included:

"Staff are nice"

"the staff are fun"

"My stuff is safe here...staff never get stuff mixed up"

"Food is good...we cooked roasted veg last week"

"It's good being able to come here."

When asked if there was anything the centre could do better one child said "no, nothing" and other children could not think of anything they would like improved.

Children who completed questionnaires indicated that various people had spoken to them about their rights including their social workers, foster carers, family members, foster carers, residential care staff and their keyworkers. Children said they knew how to make a complaint and who to speak to if they were unhappy about anything. They felt safe in the centre and had never made a complaint although they knew how to do this.

In addition to speaking with children, the inspector also spoke with nine foster carers or relatives of children availing of respite breaks in the centre, three social workers and one guardian ad litem*. Children availing of respite in this centre were being cared for by family members as well as foster carers. The nine foster carer or relatives who spoke with the inspector were caring for 18 children who were receiving a respite service from this centre. All were extremely positive about the centre and were very grateful for the support it provided to them and the children in their care. Professionals were also very positive about the service and how it benefitted both children and their carers. Both professionals and carers were complimentary about the staff team and the care they provided to children.

Carers told the inspector that the service was "fantastic" and "outstanding" and "gives a break to us and the child". One carer described it as an "essential service", well managed and well organised, providing care that is "consistent" and "tailored to individual needs."

*A Guardian ad Litem (GAL) is a court-appointed independent professional whose job it is to ascertain a child's views and represent them to the court.

Children were well matched with other children and enjoyed meeting up with each other at the centre. Carers agreed that the service provided by the centre supported the placement of the child with their family. They said children looked forward to going to the centre and participating in all the activities provided. All carers agreed that the staff team provided safe respite care to children. Carers and professionals alike said there should be more services like this one, providing more frequent breaks to children.

The staff team were described as "part of the team that's there for the family" and who demonstrated "a collaborative approach." Carers said the staff are "diligent" people who "have the child at the centre" and they "work hard to keep the place at the standard it's at." They described a staff team that knew the children well and who advocated on their behalf.

When asked if there was anything about the service that could be improved, most people who spoke with the inspector said they could not think of anything. Some suggested there should be more services like this one to support children's placements with their carers: it would be "good if you could replicate this service across the country" and "pity there's not more of these houses for kids" and more opportunities for children to have respite breaks. One carer mentioned that the child asks if he can go more often for respite. Another said there is nothing that could be improved, that the service goes "above and beyond." Another carer said they should "continue doing what they do." And another said "no, it's a great service."

Capacity and capability

The centre provided a vital support service to 22 children and their carers. Some children experience traumatic events which resulted in them having to be cared for by relatives or general foster carers. As a result of such trauma children may present with complex needs and behaviours that are challenging to manage on a consistent basis. Other children have diagnoses which are characterised by certain types of behaviour. Children require stability and consistency of care and it critical that placements are maintained. In order to achieve this stability and consistency some placements require additional supports to ensure they do not break down resulting in a child having to move. The regular respite breaks provided to these children by the centre supported them to remain in their placements which were often under pressure. This meant that placements with the potential to break down were supported to continue - thus providing stability for these children.

In this way the centre was meeting its objectives as outlined in its statement of purpose and function.

The provider had effective leadership, governance and management arrangements in place with clear lines of accountability to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support to children availing of respite there.

There was effective workforce planning in place. The staff team was well-organised and managed to deliver child-centred safe and effective care to children. There were sufficient staff on duty in the centre to ensure the individual needs of each child were appropriately met and due attention paid to facilitating their interests and preferences. Particular attention was paid to having staff on with children for whom they could be a positive role model, and the inspector observed an example of this during the inspection.

Staff understood their roles and responsibilities and were clearly supported by management to deliver a high quality of child-centred care in a culture of learning. The inspector found, from discussions with staff, professionals and carers, and from their observations of the staff team at work – that there was a culture of learning and development in the centre. Children, carers and professionals told the inspector the standard of care was high, and that staff worked collaboratively to meet the individualised needs of each child in the centre.

Staff were supported and supervised to ensure child-centred safe and effective care and support to children. However, there was room for improvement both in the regularity and recording of formal supervision records. These records also did not reflect the levels of reflective learning that staff reported to the inspector. In addition, staff performance was not formally appraised on an annual basis as required by the standard.

Overall, the inspector found that children's case records were well maintained. There were effective arrangements in place for information governance and records management to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support to children in respite. Records were up-to-date insofar as the centre was responsible for maintaining them. Where records were provided by other professionals the staff team were diligent in requesting updated information to ensure the child's information was up to date. The inspector found that some records would benefit from a more efficient method of recording, such as the minutes of the children's team meetings. The privacy of each child's information was protected and respected. Children knew records were kept by the staff team

and were aware they could access their records but told the inspector they had not requested to see their records.

Standard 5.2

The registered provider ensures that the residential centre has effective leadership, governance and management arrangements in place with clear lines of accountability to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support.

There were effective leadership, governance and management systems in place that ensured a focus on providing safe effective respite care and support to children. This led to positive outcomes for the children who all reported to enjoying their time in the centre. The centre was well-run and managed. There were appropriate systems and processes in place to underpin the safe delivery and oversight of the service. The centre was managed by a centre manager, supported by a deputy centre manager and a team of social care leaders and social care workers. A deputy regional manager had oversight of the service and visited the centre regularly to ensure the quality and safety of the service was being maintained.

Managers demonstrated good leadership at all levels of the service and staff were clear about their roles and responsibilities. The centre manager was responsible for the day-to-day operation of the centre and the deputy manager was the designated person in charge for any period of absence of the centre manager. Both the centre manager and the deputy centre manager worked shifts with staff during the week and were also on call on a rota basis outside of normal working hours. Various duties were delegated to named staff members and recorded on a shift handover document. Staff were rostered to work during the night. This ensured a high quality of care and support to children.

There is a suite of policies and procedures that are used nationally to guide practice in residential care and staff were aware of these. There were contracts in place for the provision of respite care to children.

The centre manager had completed biannual audits on a number of areas of practice including child protection, risk management, positive behaviour management and fire precautions. Action plans were developed from these audits to ensure the quality of care and recording was of a high standard. The centre manager had also completed a service review for 2023 and developed a service improvement plan for 2024 which outlined the goals for the service. These included reducing the waiting list by 20%, maintaining the 84-85% bed usage, a young person's consultation day and hosting a well-being day for staff.

The inspector spoke with the deputy regional manager who told the inspector that she visited the centre regularly to review documents, meet staff and observe practice. She expressed pride in the staff team, who, she said, worked incredibly hard under the good leadership provided by the management team in the centre. She commented that the environment of the centre lent itself to a lovely warm atmosphere. The inspector experienced this warm and welcoming atmosphere during the inspection.

The centre had an effective risk management framework in place to identify, manage and mitigate any identified risks in the centre. Inspectors reviewed the risk register and individual risk assessments and found that appropriate control measures were in place and were regularly reviewed and amended. These included individual risk assessments for some of the children. Inspectors reviewed a sample of these risks and found that they had been appropriately identified, assessed and adequate measures put in place to manage identified risks.

The management arrangements in place ensured that children were confident in the care they would receive. The inspector observed that children seemed comfortable approaching staff and interacted easily with them.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 6.1

The registered provider plans, organises and manages the workforce to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support.

Regulation 6: Staffing

The staff team was well-managed and organised so that there were sufficient staff with a mix of skills and experience on shift to provide high quality and appropriate care for the wide range of diverse needs of children who came to the centre for respite. Staffing levels were in line with the centre's statement of purpose. Children told the inspector there were enough staff in the centre and foster carers and professionals who spoke with the inspector also held this view. The inspector reviewed a sample of the staff rosters and found there were sufficient numbers of staff with a good skill mix on shifts to provide a safe service to children. There was a mix of Tusla and agency staff on duty together, who worked a 24-hour seven day week live night roster. This means staff worked throughout the night. There was an on-call system in place whereby the centre manager and the deputy centre manager were available to support the staff team outside of normal working hours. When agency staff were required, the same agency staff were used to cover shifts thus ensuring consistency of care for the children.

Consistency in staffing and good planning meant that children experienced the best care and support for their individual needs. Children spoke confidently to the inspector about what the staff did for them and the support they provided.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 6.3

The registered provider ensures that the residential centre support and supervise their workforce in delivering child-centred, safe and effective care and support.

Staff were supported and supervised to ensure child-centred safe and effective care and support to children. Staff understood their roles and responsibilities and were clear on lines of reporting. Staff who spoke with the inspector demonstrated knowledge of relevant policies and procedures and the inspector observed members of the staff team exhibiting good practice in their care and attention to the children.

The centre manager supported a learning culture among the staff and maintained a record of all staff training. This reflected that all staff employed by Tusla were up to date in a number of mandatory training courses required, including refreshers, which are required at varying intervals. Staff employed by the agency were not listed on the training record, therefore the provider could not track their training to ensure it was completed and up to date. However, the centre manager told the inspector that the agency provided him with a training compliance report on the training of agency staff. All staff were up to date on safeguarding training and were familiar with reporting procedures for child protection and welfare concerns. However, five staff were not up to date in one of three required fire training constituent elements. The deputy centre manager told the inspector that the trainer was not currently available but that the training would be scheduled for the earliest possible date. Staff told the inspector they were reminded by the centre manager when training was due for renewal and also of training courses they might be interested in.

There were arrangements in place to facilitate communication within the staff team. These included team meetings and staff handover sheets. Inspectors reviewed a sample of records and found that team meetings followed a set agenda. The records of team meetings sampled by the inspector reflected a child-centred approach to practice. Each child was discussed individually including any issues and challenges that were presenting for them. Actions were agreed for the care of each child during their next respite break so that their needs would be met and any identified issues would be addressed. On occasion, the centre manager

presented findings of audits to the staff team at the team meeting to share learning and maintain the quality of care in the centre. The inspector found that attendance of staff at the team meetings could be improved upon.

The recording and regularity of staff supervision required improvement. Staff told the inspector that they received good, regular support and supervision from their managers. Staff said their supervision provided opportunity for reflective practice, challenged their practice and held them to account. Inspectors reviewed a sample of staff supervision files and found the records did not always reflect this. Whilst some staff had regular supervision – including agency staff who were regularly rostered to work - which was well recorded and reflected the discussions and decisions made, others did not. The supervision records sampled did not reflect that supervision sessions were held with the regularity required by Tusla’s supervision policy. The inspector noted that the action plan referenced above had identified several areas of practice relating to supervision that required improvement and actions to address this were included in the 2024 goals. The need for improved supervision did not impact directly on the care provided to the children which was of a very high standard. This was reported by all carers and professionals who spoke with the inspector and the inspector observed the care and attention given to children by staff at all times.

There was an employee assistance service available to staff as required by the standard. However, the service did not complete annual appraisals of staff performance. The centre manager was the only staff member registered with the professional body as required but there is a period of time remaining before all staff must be registered by law.

Judgment: Substantially compliant

Standard 8.2

Effective arrangements are in place for information governance and records management to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support.

Regulation 21: Maintenance of Register

There were effective arrangements in place for information governance and records management to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support to children in respite. The provider had national policies in place to guide the management and sharing of information including the retention and disposal of records. All staff in the centre were trained in the safe sharing of personal data, although children who spoke with inspectors said they had not asked to view their records.

There were systems in place for the maintenance of case records on children's care. Children's active case records were kept in a locked cabinet, care files were stored in a locked room. When children no longer came to the centre for respite their records were archived. Each child had a unique number on their file rather than their name to preserve their confidentiality. Inspectors reviewed a sample of children's active files and their care files and found they were up to date and well maintained. The inspector found that children's case records were well maintained and included the documents required by the regulations. Where records were missing or required updating such as care plans and medical information, records reflected the efforts made by staff to get the required information from children's allocated social workers or their carers as appropriate. Professionals and carers told the inspector that staff were good at communicating relevant information to them regarding the child's care. Children were aware that records were maintained on their stay in the centre and that they could see them if they wished. No child had requested to see their case files. The inspector noted that the children's information leaflet included their right to access information held on them. The staff team were also guided by a national policy on child-centred care and support services which outlined both the principles of sharing records with the children and the process for doing so. All staff were up to date in their training on sharing personal data safely.

A register of children was maintained in the centre which contained appropriate data on the children availing of the respite service.

The inspector found that the minutes of children's meetings were maintained in two places – a folder of children's meeting minutes and also held separately in each child's case record. The folder did not reflect all the meetings that had taken place so did not facilitate managerial oversight of all the expressed views of children. In addition, the views of all children were therefore held on each child's file which was not necessary.

The staff team employed a collaborative approach in ensuring children's needs were met – working diligently in their communication with social workers and carers to ensure good sharing of information in the best interests of the child. Children who spoke with the inspector were aware there were records maintained about their care. No child had requested access to their records.

Judgment: Compliant

Quality and safety

High quality, safe care was provided by the staff team to children coming to the centre for respite breaks. The centre staff promoted the safety and welfare of children and children's safety was paramount to the staff team. The staff team were child-centred in their approach to care and they protected and promoted both children's rights and their welfare. The centre staff promoted optimum health, development and education for children and staff worked skilfully with children and their carers to achieve their objectives.

This inspection found that the staff in the residential centre used the best available evidence and information to make sure they met each child's care and support needs. The respite care provided to children focused on each child's individual needs and ensured the best outcomes for them in supporting and maintaining their primary placements. Admission procedures and processes ensured that children's needs could be met in the centre and that the needs of each new child who came for respite was matched with the children already receiving services there.

Children's care plans and placement plans formed the basis for the care they received in the centre. Placement plans were routinely reviewed and amended as appropriate to reflect the child's changing needs.

The design and layout of the centre provided a supportive environment in which children could thrive and the atmosphere created by the staff underpinned the relaxed and contented presentation of the children as observed by the inspector.

Children attending the centre for respite received well-coordinated care, professionals, the staff team and children's carers worked together to ensure care was integrated. For example, staff described how they implemented the rules from the child's home in the centre to ensure continuity for them. Records reviewed by the inspector and discussions with carers and professionals confirmed the team-

working collaborative approach employed by the staff in caring for each child. One carer said about the staff “it feels like they’re part of the team.”

The centre manager valued feedback from children and one of the goals for 2024 was to host a children’s consultation day as outlined in the centre manager’s service review and improvement plan for 2024.

A recent audit (report dated May 2024) by Tusla’s Practice Assurance and Service Monitoring team (PASM) had identified an action requiring the development of a more streamlined record management system for respite services that should be explored with senior management. The date for completion of this action had passed. The inspector found that some records maintained in the centre could be more efficiently maintained such as the records relating to children’s meetings.

Children were appropriately supported to transition to independent living and staff advocated on behalf of children in this regard.

The health, wellbeing and development of each child was protected, promoted and improved by the care they received in the centre. The staff team supported children to stay in their family placements in line with the stated objectives of the service. All carers and professionals who spoke with the inspector confirmed that the level of support provided by the centre staff was crucial to the maintenance of children’s placements. The centre staff provided care to children in line with their care plans. There were placement plans and placement support plans that were regularly reviewed to ensure the children’s changing needs were identified and met in the centre. Foster carers and relatives confirmed that staff communicated well with them citing the fact that staff telephoned prior to the child’s break in the centre to get an update on their current needs and also after the child’s break to update the carer on how the child had been.

Standard 1.1

Each child experiences care and support which respects their diversity and protects their rights in line with the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Regulation 10: Religion

Regulation 4: Welfare of child

All staff in the centre were aware of and promoted the rights of the children in their care. The inspector observed respectful and caring interactions between the staff team and children. The ethos in the centre was welcoming and inclusive and supported children’s right to participate in decision-making and freedom of

expression. One foster carer commented on how the experiences of a child in the centre had supported the child to be more inclusive and aware of the diversity of society.

Children were treated with dignity and respect and their individual preferences were considered in the daily activities of the centre. The inspector noted that the manner in which records were written reflected the respect in which they were held by staff. The records of conversations of note which staff had with children demonstrated how they guided children to reflect on their behaviour and in some cases make better choices for themselves. In addition, the inspector noted that in one of the centre manager's audits of children's files they identified that the religious beliefs and preferences of each child should be identified and facilitated. This was an ongoing action to reflect the fact that new children came to the centre.

Children were aware of their rights and confidently expressed their opinions and preferences to the inspector. The inspector observed staff demonstrating good role models for the children and interacting in a respectful manner with children. Staff worked with children and enabled them to understand and respect diversity of all kinds. One foster carer commented on how a child's exposure to the diversity of culture and identity of children in the centre had been beneficial to their learning and experience. Children were encouraged to engage in social activities and leisure interests and special occasions such as birthdays were marked, celebrated and documented. Children and carers told inspectors about the care they received in the centre, how good the staff were to them and the fun they had while they were there. The inspector found that staff maintained photographic records of children's activities and compiled these into scrapbooks for children to keep when leaving the centre.

Children who completed questionnaires for the inspection indicated that a number of people had spoken to them about their rights and they were aware of their rights. These included family members, residential staff and social workers. The inspector heard the staff speak to children about their preferences and interests and observed them facilitating children to take part in activities of their choice when this was appropriate.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 2.1

Each child's identified needs informs their placement in the residential centre.

Children coming to the centre for respite received care and support that suited their individual needs. There was a national admissions policy which took into account children's rights, the statement of purpose and function and the national standards. The admission process that included a referral to a national committee and the completion of a collective risk assessment on each child prior to them visiting the centre, and ultimately coming to stay for respite breaks there. Children coming to the centre all had an allocated worker such as a social worker, social care leader or principal social worker who was responsible for co-ordinating their care. The staff team worked with allocated workers prior to the admission of each child to ensure the centre would meet the child's needs. All relevant information about the child was shared in order to inform these decisions and children and sometimes carers too, visited the centre prior to the commencement of respite breaks for the child.

One professional and a foster carer told the inspector how well-matched the child was with other children staying in the centre at the same time as they did. One child told the inspector they loved going to the centre to meet up with the same set of children and how much fun they enjoyed in their company. Professionals and carers alike commented to the inspector on the collaborative team-working approach that staff employed with them in the care of the children.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 2.2

Each child receives care and support based on their individual needs in order to maximise their wellbeing and personal development.

Regulation 23: Care Plan

Regulation 24: Supervision and visiting of children

Regulation 25: Review of cases

Regulation 26: Special review

This inspection found that children received care and support based on their individual needs. This maximised their wellbeing and personal development. The centre maintained a copy of the care plan for each child. This was provided by the child's social worker. The staff team worked collaboratively with the child's social worker in implementing the care plan.

The centre staff developed placement plans and placement support plans which outlined the child's assessed needs in every area of their lives. Actions were then set out for staff on how they would interact with and support the child to grow and develop. The actions set out for staff were specific to the individual needs of the child. For example, for one child's routine management staff were specifically to promote healthy eating and to constantly reassure the child regarding their behaviour. Placement plans were routinely reviewed to reflect each child's changing needs. The inspector's review of children's records reflected the communication between the staff team and social workers was good. For example, a daily email update was sent to each child's social worker about their stay in the centre. Social workers confirmed to the inspector that there were good levels of communication with them.

Communication was good between the staff team and children's carers. Staff used pre-planner questionnaires, communications logs and other records to record discussions of note with carers and professionals. Foster carers and professionals confirmed to the inspector that staff communicated well with them on all aspects relating to the care of the child.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 2.3

The children's residential centre is homely, and promotes the safety and wellbeing of each child.

Regulation 7: Accommodation

Regulation 12: Fire precautions

Regulation 13: Safety precautions

Regulation 14: Insurance

The respite centre was child-centred and homely and promoted the safety and wellbeing of each child. The layout, design and décor was suitable and provided a relaxed yet stimulating environment for children to grow and develop.

The centre was a two-storey residential house accessed through a gate and set back from a public road located in a busy area just West of a city centre. The centre enjoyed a central location with easy accessibility to public transport and a range of amenities, such as shops, schools and leisure activities. The front elevation of the centre was welcoming with colourful, well-maintained planters with flowers placed around the front door to welcome callers to the centre. There was closed circuit television (CCTV) at the front door as a security measure. There

was a policy in place to guide the use of CCTV and there were signs in place to advise of its use.

The layout of the centre provided a stimulating and relaxing environment for children. They had a wide range of spaces to occupy depending on their needs on a given day. On the lower floor, off the colourfully decorated hallway the centre had a well-stocked art and hobby room, an open-plan kitchen diner and lounge area with a television, a separate lounge with a television, a games room complete with games console and gaming chair and a pool table, a room for receiving visitors and a downstairs bathroom. The stairs led to a spacious upstairs landing area with comfortable seats and shelves of books for the children to enjoy reading. There were framed photo montages of children enjoying many and varied activities with staff on the landing walls and in the staff office. There were two such offices in addition to the four bedrooms for children all of which were decorated to a theme. Three of these bedrooms had en-suite bathrooms and there were two additional bathrooms upstairs. There was one bathroom for the use of the staff team and a store room. There was a colourful sensory room for children to relax in and take time out for peace and quiet if they wished, and a little fairy corner at one end of a corridor for younger children to enjoy.

Although, due to the nature of the care provided, children did not have their own rooms, they could choose which bedroom they would like for their stay. Children understood that other children came to stay in the centre. One child explained to the inspector how he had not got his room preference for this stay but this was because another child was already in it. He was not at all put out and was quite confident that he would get his favourite room next time. Personal belongings for each child coming to the centre were safely stored, and staff put them out into the child's bedroom to welcome them and personalise the room, once their choice was made.

The centre was clean and well-maintained and benefitted from the services of a cleaner who attended in the centre on the second day of the inspection. The centre was in good repair, except for the carpet on the stairs which required replacing. The inspector reviewed the maintenance log and found that all repairs were appropriately reported and dealt with promptly.

The back garden area was enclosed and there were seating areas off the kitchen and the lounge area. The garden had a mural painted on one wall, a hammock, a set of goals and a trampoline with a safety net. The equipment was appropriate and well-maintained and provided choice to children regarding daily outdoor on-

site activities. There was also a wooden shed in the garden which was used as a beauty room.

The centre complied with fire safety regulations. Fire doors were in place and firefighting equipment was maintained in the centre. The inspector viewed fire safety records and found all were in order. Children told the inspector they had taken part in fire drills and the records reflected this. There was a safety statement in place as required and there were personal emergency evacuation plans on every child's file.

The centre had the use of two cars for transportation of children when required. The inspector reviewed the documentation for the vehicles and found the vehicles were appropriately taxed, insured and serviced. Members of staff checked the cars for safety on a weekly basis.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 3.1

Each child is safeguarded from abuse and neglect and their care and welfare is protected and promoted.

Children were safeguarded from abuse and neglect and their welfare was protected and promoted by the staff team in the centre. The centre operated in line with relevant policies and procedures as outlined in *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*. Staff were aware of their responsibility to report concerns about children and all staff were up-to-date in their mandatory training in Children First. There was a safeguarding statement in place as required and a log of all child protection and welfare reports was maintained by staff. Inspectors reviewed this log and found that staff appropriately recognised and reported concerns about children through Tusla's portal. They also maintained contact with the child's social worker regarding the outcome of investigations into the concerns. This was evident on children's case records. There was a child safeguarding policy in place which included guidance for staff on identifying, preventing and managing incidents of bullying behaviour. It also included guidance for staff on the importance of safeguarding children online. The inspector found from review of children's files and records of children's meetings that that staff spoke with children about how to keep safe. Topics included substance misuse, internet safety, sexual health, self-care and bullying.

When children required help with personal care a risk assessment was completed to ensure their needs were safely met.

Children who completed questionnaires for the inspection indicated that they had a trusted adult in their lives to whom they could go if they had a worry or a concern. Foster carers and professionals told the inspector that children were safe whilst being cared for in the centre.

The provider had a protected disclosure (whistleblowing) policy and procedure in place and staff who spoke with the inspector were aware of this policy and confident in its use if required.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 3.2

Each child experiences care and support that promotes positive behaviour.

The care and support provided by staff in the centre promoted positive behaviours. There was a policy in place to guide staff in promoting positive behaviour and best practice in responding to behaviours that were challenging. Children observed by the inspector during the inspection presented as relaxed and content. The inspector found from review of a sample of children's case records that they were encouraged to understand and appropriately express their needs and emotions. Where children had additional needs these were provided for to ensure safe and appropriate care which minimised the child's need to act out or express themselves in ways that might be challenging. Each child had a written behaviour management plan specific to their assessed needs. These plans guided staff in managing each child's behaviour.

Many of the staff were experienced in managing challenging behaviour, some had particular skills in supporting children to be creative, and all staff demonstrated a child-centred approach to care. This was clear to the inspector from their observations of the staff with the children, interviews with staff and review of the children's case records.

The inspector reviewed a number of keyworking sessions completed with children and noted that staff used naturally-occurring opportunities to have conversations with children about issues pertaining to them and also about their behaviour and interactions with their peers. The inspector also heard a number of such conversations taking place between staff and children in the centre.

Children presented as relaxed and content in the centre and they told the inspector they liked being there. They were aware that the staff were there for them and this was borne out by the inspector's observations. Professionals told the inspector that staff were always available to the children. It was clear from the

inspectors observations that the day centred around children and their needs and their days were planned to take account of their individual needs and preferences. Staff were experienced at managing challenging behaviours and the inspector observed how they skilfully guided each child through the day with ease and attention to detail. Children demonstrated how they were being supported to understand behaviour and make better choices for their own behaviour.

Restrictive practices were utilised appropriately in the centre. These practices included turning off the wi-fi at a certain time at night, some children handing up their mobile `phones at bedtime and some doors being locked in very specific circumstances for the safety of a child. These practices were risk assessed and reviewed regularly to ensure their appropriate use. Foster carers and relatives confirmed that the staff team worked together with them in relation to implementing the same rules and boundaries in the centre as they did at home.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 4.1

The health, wellbeing and development of each child is promoted, protected and improved.

Regulation 11: Provision of food and cooking facilities

The health, wellbeing and development of each child was promoted and protected in the centre. There was a national policy in place to guide staff in promoting personal development health and wellbeing of children. This policy included guidance for staff on promoting positive lifestyle choices. The staff approach to children's care and support was aligned with this policy and the objectives of the centre. Professionals and carers who spoke with the inspector were unanimous in their opinion of the positive benefits provided to children by their respite breaks in the centre.

The inspector observed that there were adequate quantities of healthy food options available for the children as well as treat items. The inspector observed children making good choices and helping themselves to the foods of their choice. Staff ate with the children and the inspector observed that meals were a social event with staff and children interacting easily together. Foster carers confirmed that children were well-fed in the centre and that they had appropriate access to the kitchen to make drinks and snacks. Staff told the inspector that children baked goods to eat or to bring home with them.

Older children were encouraged and supported to develop the skills necessary for independent living, and their carers confirmed this to the inspector.

Children who came to the centre during term time were supported with their homework and with transport to and from school and home as required. Children told the inspector that staff collected them from school and dropped them home. Carers described how the centre maintained the rules of home in the centre such as the child completing their homework prior to being allowed play a computer game. This supported consistency of care and boundaries for the child.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 4.2

Each child is supported to meet any identified health and development needs.

Regulation 9: Health care

Regulation 20: Medical examination

The health and developmental needs of each child were met when they stayed in the centre. The inspector reviewed a sample of children's record and found they included various specialist reports relating to specialist services for children. This ensured that staff were fully informed about the child's health and medical needs.

Children did not generally attend general practitioners at the centre as they were only there for short periods of time: one or two nights usually.

Some children were taking prescribed and or over-the-counter medications. There was a system in place to ensure that the staff team were informed about the child's medication: prescriptions were kept on file and cards with the medications clearly set out and their administration method were maintained in the centre. These were updated as and when necessary. Foster carers confirmed they ensured that information was provided to the centre about a child's medical needs and that staff administered medication appropriately. The inspector observed that medication was appropriately stored in a locked cupboard. The centre manager audited medication administration records and shared any identified learning with the staff team. The inspector reviewed a sample of medication administration records and found that they were appropriately recorded and signed. All staff were up-to-date in their medication administration training and in First aid.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 4.3

Each child is provided with educational and training opportunities to maximise their individual strengths and abilities.

Children were supported to achieve their potential in learning and development. The staff team valued the children's education and supported it insofar as they could when the child was only in the centre for short periods. All the children attending the centre had appropriate school placements.

Staff were well-versed in the preferences of the children and it was clear from the inspector's observations that the staff knew the children very well. It was also clear that children felt comfortable and secure in the centre by their relaxed and easy interactions with staff. The inspector observed staff and children chatting about various topics such as holiday destinations, discussing food preferences and options for the day's activities.

Staff told the inspector about the arrangements in place for children who came for respite during school term. Children were collected from school and brought there the next day no matter what the distance. The centre provided respite for children in the Tusla Dublin Mid Leinster region so often long distances were involved in the transportation of children to and from school and home. Carers told the inspector that the transport provided was a huge support to them and ensured the child could attend school. Children described how the staff collected them and brought them home. They also said staff helped them with their homework if they needed help. During the inspection, the inspector noted that one young person was brought by staff to their school's summer activities.

Judgment: Compliant

Appendix 1 - Full list of standards considered under each dimension

Standard Title	Judgment
Capacity and capability	
Standard 5.2: The registered provider ensures that the residential centre has effective leadership, governance and management arrangements in place with clear lines of accountability to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support.	Compliant
Standard 6.1: The registered provider plans, organises and manages the workforce to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support.	Compliant
Standard 6.3: The registered provider ensures that the residential centre support and supervise their workforce in delivering child-centred, safe and effective care and support.	Substantially compliant
Standard 8.2: Effective arrangements are in place for information governance and records management to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support.	Compliant
Quality and safety	
Standard 1.1: Each child experiences care and support which respects their diversity and protects their rights in line with the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Compliant
Standard 2.1: Each child's identified needs informs their placement in the residential centre.	Compliant
Standard 2.3: The children's residential centre is homely, and promotes the safety and wellbeing of each child.	Compliant
Standard 3.1: Each child is safeguarded from abuse and neglect and their care and welfare is protected and promoted.	Compliant
Standard 3.2: Each child experiences care and support that promotes positive behaviour.	Compliant

Standard 4.1: The health, wellbeing and development of each child is promoted, protected and improved	Compliant
Standard 4.2: Each child is supported to meet any identified health and development needs.	Compliant
Standard 4.3 Each child is provided with educational and training opportunities to maximise their individual strengths and abilities.	Compliant

Compliance Plan

This Compliance Plan has been completed by the Provider and the Authority has not made any amendments to the returned Compliance Plan.

Compliance Plan ID:	MON-0044123
Provider's response to Inspection Report No:	MON-0044123
Centre Type:	Children's Residential Centre
Service Area:	DML
Date of inspection:	9 July 2024

Introduction and instruction

This document sets out the standards where it has been assessed that the provider is not compliant with the National Standards for Children's Residential Centres 2018.

This document is divided into two sections:

Section 1 is the compliance plan. It outlines which Standard(s) the provider must take action on to comply.

Section 2 is the list of all standards where it has been assessed the provider is not compliant. Each standard is risk assessed as to the impact of the non-compliance on the safety, health and welfare of children using the service.

A finding of:

- **Substantially compliant** - A judgment of substantially compliant means that the provider has generally met the requirements of the standard but some action is required to be fully compliant. This finding will have a risk rating of yellow which is low risk.
- **Not compliant** - A judgment of not compliant means the provider has not complied with a standard and considerable action is required to come into compliance. Continued non-compliance or where the non-compliance poses a significant risk to the safety, health and welfare of children using the service will be risk rated red (high risk) and the inspector have identified the date by which the provider must comply. Where the non-compliance does not pose a risk to the safety, health and

welfare of children using the service it is risk rated orange (moderate risk) and the provider must take action *within a reasonable timeframe* to come into compliance.

Section 1

The provider is required to set out what action they have taken or intend to take to comply with the standard in order to bring the centre back into compliance. The plan should be **SMART** in nature. **S**pecific to that standard, **M**easurable so that they can monitor progress, **A**chievable and **R**ealistic, and **T**ime bound. It is the provider's responsibility to ensure they implement the actions within the timeframe.

Compliance plan provider's response:

Standard : 6.3	Judgment: Substantially Compliant
<p>Outline how you are going to come into compliance with Standard 6.3:</p> <p>The registered provider ensures that the residential centre support and supervise their workforce in delivering child-centred, safe and effective care and support.</p> <p>All supervisors (9) trained in the new supervision policy by Q1 2025. A new supervision list will be drawn up to ensure that supervisors will sufficiently overlap to have time to complete supervision sessions in line with the TUSLA policy. By Q3 2024, the centre manager will deliver a workshop to supervisors on the new templates and how to best use them so that the minutes from supervisions appropriately capture and represent what is discussed or needs to be discussed. Supervisors to provide the centre manager with a supervision schedule for 2024 and Q1 2025 that will bring all supervisee's in line with policy by the 30th September, 2024.</p>	
Proposed timescale: 31st of January, 2025	Person responsible: Gareth Crean

Section 2:

Standards to be complied with

The provider must consider the details and risk rating of the following standards when completing the compliance plan in section 1. Where a standard has been risk rated red (high risk) the inspector has set out the date by which the provider must comply. Where a standard has been risk rated yellow (low risk) or orange (moderate risk) the provider must include a date (DD Month YY) of when they will be compliant.

The provider has failed to comply with the following standards(s).

Standard	Regulatory requirement	Judgment	Risk rating	Date to be complied with
6.3	The registered provider ensures that the residential centre support and supervise their workforce in delivering child-centred, safe and effective care and support.	Substantially compliant	Yellow	31.01.25

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