

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC110
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Conna Community Childcare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Conna, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P51 P959
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Noeleen Tanner
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	01/07/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	30	PM	30
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Admin Building, St Marys Health Campus, Cork, T23X440
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M.O' Reilly
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Conna Community Childcare is an established community based early years service that first opened in 2008. It is registered to accommodate children aged from 0 to 6 years. Daily opening hours are from 7:45am to 6pm each day Monday to Friday.

The service is situated in a purpose built, single storey detached property, in the outskirts of Conna village, Co Cork. The premise is registered to operate five playrooms. There are adequate toilet and nappy changing facilities, two separate sleep rooms, a catering kitchen, utility room, staff room and administration office. The children have access to multiple outdoor play spaces to the rear and side of building. There is ample staff parking and set down parking for the children to arrive and depart safely from the service with their families.

## Staffing

Twenty-seven adult files were reviewed. This included the registered provider, two chefs, a cleaner, a community employment worker and twenty-two early years educators employed in the service. The registered provider is not service based. The adults who work directly with the early years children all hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or hold a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)

### 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.

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 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, and

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) There is a named person in charge and named deputies to deputise as required.
  - (b) The person in charge was present when the inspector arrived at the premise on the day of the unannounced inspection and was available throughout the inspection process.

(2) Twenty-seven adult files were reviewed. This included the registered provider, two chefs, a cleaner, a community employment worker and twenty-one early years educators employed in the service.

(a) There were thirty-nine validated references on file from past employers in respect of the adults.

(b) There were fifteen validated references from sources other than past employers in respect of the adults.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of each of the twenty-seven adults. The service did adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) One police vetting record was available on file for the one adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of six months or more, while over the age of eighteen years.

(4)

The adults who worked directly with the children hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent qualification, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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 person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2) On the day of the inspection, there was the person in charge and 10 adults working across the 4 care rooms in operation, with 30 children present in the morning and afternoon session. During the period of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations and an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children in each care room. It was observed that one staff member was assigned to relieve staff for lunch break. The person in charge was also the chef on day of inspection as the chef was on leave on that day.

#### **Baby room**

There was a total of 5 children in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon with two children aged under 12 months and three children aged between 12 and 24 months with 2 adults in attendance in the morning and afternoon.

#### **Woddle /Toddle room**

There were 6 children in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon. Two children were aged between 1 and 2 years and four children were aged between 2 and 3 years with 2 adults in attendance in the morning and afternoon.

#### **Ladybird Room**

There were 5 children in attendance in the morning and in the afternoon. All the children were aged between 2 and 3 years with 3 adults in attendance in the morning and 2 in the afternoon. This room is converted into a sleep room after lunch for the children in attendance. In the afternoon, all the children were observed sleeping after lunch on day of inspection.

#### **Butterfly Room**

There were 14 children in attendance in the morning and afternoon session. The children were aged between 3 and 5 years with 2 adults in attendance in the morning and 3 in the afternoon.

#### **Bunny Room**

This room was not in operation as the inspection took place during the first day of the summer holiday season.

(8) (a) On review of the staff roster there are always at least 2 adults on the premises.

### 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:*

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) (h) Details of attendance by each child was recorded individually under the child’s name in the services electronic application device. The record indicated the arrival and departure time of each child, on a daily basis in the service.
- (i) On review of the hard copy of the staff roster for the last three weeks including the week the inspection took place. The weekly staff roster indicated the time the staff commenced and finished in the service each day. The name of the staff rostered in each room and the named person who relieved the staff in each room while on their break.
- (k) Details of any accident, injury or incidents were recorded individually under the child’s name in the services electronic application device and signed by the parent, staff and person in charge at time of incident

### 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 children appeared to enjoy the nutritious food provided by the service and were afforded ample time to eat and drink at a relaxed pace. Support and assistance offered by the adults during mealtimes was appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children in their care. For example, toddlers had

the opportunity to feed themselves, while younger children were provided with one-to-one support. The available cutlery was suitably sized and easily handled by the children.

- Nappy changing was incorporated into the daily routine at frequent intervals and as the need arose. This care practice was observed to be managed by adults in a caring and sensitive manner, as they chatted warmly to the children throughout.
- Shortly after eating lunch, the children in the Waddle/Toddle and Ladybird rooms were facilitated to sleep as needed, during a scheduled rest period.
- Staff were observed attentive to the personal care needs of the children for example staff were observed to assist children to clean their faces and hands after eating.
- Child height hooks and storage shelving was available in the Ladybird and Butterfly rooms to encourage independent dressing and organisation of their personal belongings.

### **Supporting relationships around children:**

- The staff members were observed to be kind, patient and caring to each child as observed during caring duties, facilitating play and one-to-one engagement.
- The staff advised the inspector that the service operated in partnership with parents, and staff recorded the details of their child's day while in the service for example meals/snacks, activities, observations and sleep were recorded individually under the child's name in the service's electronic application device. Phone calls, a messaging application and informal face to face discussion at arrival and collection times, were also incorporated.
- The adults were observed to demonstrate patience and kindness in their interactions with the children, as was noted when the children's efforts were readily acknowledged and when children were calmly assisted to resolve minor conflicts.
- There was adequate space in the indoor and outdoor area. The children from all playrooms were observed playing outdoors on day of inspection.

### **Physical and Material Environment**

- The playrooms in operation were child friendly, bright, and spacious and laid out with special interest areas with materials largely accessible to the children.
- The Baby room had adequate space and soft areas for children to roll and crawl and walk. The Baby room had a cordoned area for the children so that they could explore their environment in a safe way and avail

of the age-appropriate equipment such as, pull along toys, handheld toys, sound making materials and construction.

- The Waddle /Toddle, Ladybird and Butterfly rooms had interest areas that included, a wide range of tabletop activities and games to encourage companionable interaction, there were cars and trucks, a fine motor skills area, a home corner suitably furnished with dolls, buggies, dress up and small utensils to prompt imagination and pretend play.
- Highchairs in the Baby room and adequate numbers of child sized tables and chairs were available in each room.
- Rest areas were available to the children in all rooms to allow the children to opt out of play activities and relax if they so wished.
- All playrooms had access to secured outdoor play areas which had lawned areas and a hard course for the use of ride on toys.
- There was a wide range of ride on and push toys, picnic benches, a mud kitchen, see saws and slides and a tunnel to encourage the children to master gross motor skill play.

## 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

- A pasta with garlic bread was served to the children at lunch time. It was observed that the children were served adequate portions of the pasta dish with water to drink at the lunch meal.
- The children were provided with appropriate cutlery and crockery at snack and mealtimes.
- Fridges were located in each of the playrooms for the storage of perishable items provided by the parents/guardians for the mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack. The service provided the breakfast and lunch meal.

### 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:

- Upon the inspector's arrival at the service, the main entrance door was found to have been adequately secured and was maintained secure when not in use.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the children's reach.
- First aid boxes were appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- No cables were visibly within reach of children on the day of inspection.
- The outdoor area was noted to be fully enclosed and secured.

##### Infection Control:

- There was thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper towels in the hand washing facilities across the service.
- The tables were sanitised prior to lunch and snack mealtimes.
- Handwashing by the children was observed before snacks, lunch and after toileting, nappy changing and outdoor play.
- Within the nappy changing areas, there was neat and tidy individually labelled storage for the children's toiletries.
- Pedal operated bins were in place for the disposal of paper towels.
- Non-contact bins were available for the storage of used nappies.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Staff recorded the details of any medication the child received while in the service. The medication was recorded individually under the child's name in the service's electronic application device.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Ten-minute sleep checks were recorded individually under the child's name in the service's electronic application device for each sleeping child by the adults monitoring the sleeping children.
- The children aged under 2 years rest needs were facilitated in the two designated sleep rooms beside the Baby and Waddle /Toddle rooms. There were adequate numbers of standard cots with safety mattresses for children under two that required a sleep with individual accompanying bed linen.

- Each of the safety mattresses was covered with a waterproof mattress cover.
- The children over two rest needs were met during a planned sleeping period when floor beds were set up in the Waddle/ Toddle and Ladybird room.
- There were a sufficient number of suitable floor beds available with designated suitable bed linen for each child over 2 years who wanted a sleep while attending the service. There was an adequate distance between each floor bed. There was no child that required a sleep in the Butterfly room on day of inspection.
- The air temperature reading of the designated sleep room beside the Baby room was reading between 19°C and 20°C. The air temperature reading of the designated sleep rooms beside the Waddle/ Toddle room was between 18°C and 19°C. The Waddle /Toddle and Ladybird rooms where the children were observed sleeping in the playrooms converted into sleep rooms after lunch were reading within the normal range of between 19°C and 19.6°C. Accepted air temperature range is between 16°C and 20°C for rooms where children are sleeping.

### Outing:

- Not applicable, as an outing was not observed.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 25 - First aid

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.*

*(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-*

*(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and*

*(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

There were two staff in total working in the service that had a current certified First Aid Responder certificate (FAR). The two staff were present on day of inspection with a current certified First Aid Responder certificate (FAR).

(2)

- (a) The first aid boxes were safely stored out of children's reach in the service.
- (b) The first aid boxes were available to adults at all times if in the event that a child may require treatment.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-*
- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*
  - (b) the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A record of monthly fire drills carried out in each room was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place on different dates in June 2024
  - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced on the 07/09/23 and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced in 25/01/2024.
- (4)
- The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was adequately insured, with insurance for 108 children until 27/03/2025. The records detailed the category of service covered which was full day care, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

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

- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

(b) From visual inspection the premises appeared safe and secure. The entrance door was adequately secured to prevent unauthorised entry and unsupervised exit of children from the service. The outdoor area was adequately secured.

(c) The four playrooms in operation were provided with a combination of natural light, through windows and artificial lighting. Adequate lighting was also in place in the sanitary facilities as supplied through natural and artificial lighting. Light fittings were noted to have protective covers installed. There were openable windows in all the playrooms, most of the toilet and nappy changing facilities allowed for a supply of fresh air. Mechanical ventilation was in place in toilet facilities that had no openable windows.

(d) The service was well maintained and clean on the day of inspection.

(e) There were an adequate number of adult and children's toilets and nappy changing facilities in the service.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School