

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015CC372 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Small Ones |
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|                            |                                              |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of Service:</b> | 10 Woodview Lawn, Saleen, Midleton, Co. Cork |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | P25 F754 |
|-----------------|----------|

|                                     |              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Carol Murray |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Part Time |
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| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 22/05/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|---|----|--|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 3 | PM |  |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|----|--|

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|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Administration Office,<br>St. Mary's Health Campus,<br>Gurranabraher,<br>Cork.<br>T23X440. |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | D Cotter                                                                                   |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | 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).

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### Description of service

Small Ones is a registered privately-owned, part-time early years service, catering for children from 2 to 6 years. While the service is registered as a part time service, the service is currently offering a morning sessional service only. The service provides a school aged care service each evening from 1:30pm to 6pm each day Monday to Friday. Small Ones operates from one room located in the registered providers private residence. The service is located in a residential estate in the village of Saleen, Co Cork. There is one playroom and there are adequate toilet facilities for the children and the adults. The outdoor play area is located beside the playroom. The current opening hours of the early years service is from 9am to 12 each day Monday to Friday.

### Staffing

There were four adults associated with this service. The registered provider is the named relief person. The two staff working directly with the children hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The registered provider and the administrator are not serviced based.

### 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 deputy 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,*

*(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,*
- (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*

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*(d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.*

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

### Compliance Information

(1).

(a) The registered provider has ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The deputy person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection. The staff sign in book for the service demonstrated that either the named person in charge or the deputy were always on site.

(2)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that 1 new staff member had been employed since the previous inspection. This new staff member does not work directly with children. A total of 1 file was reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for 2 staff members whose disclosures was identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

(a) Both of the two required references were available from a past employer and had been validated.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was not required for any members of staff as they had not resided outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

(4)

Evidence of completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent was not required for the new staff member as they did not work directly with children.

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### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

*(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

*(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*

*(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

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

(3)

On the morning of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations. There was one adult available in the care room to work directly with the 3 children in attendance aged between 3 and 5 years.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(8) (c)

The registered provider had not ensured that an emergency contact was available and within close proximity while the service was being run single handedly. The deputy person in charge contacted the emergency contact at approximately 09:50am and the person did not attend the service until 11am. This poses a potential risk to the safety of the children should an emergency have arisen.

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### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

In her written response, the registered provider stated that the service would no longer be operated single handedly and there would be two people rostered to work at all times.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

The registered providers statement was accepted as evidence.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified under Regulation 11 (8)(c) has been adequately addressed. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child, and

#### Compliance Information

(1)

#### (a) Basic needs:

- On the day of inspection, the staff working with the children were sensitive and responsive in their approach to and care of the children.
- Children had access to water at all times throughout the inspection.
- Children's toileting needs were attended to promptly and staff assisted children when necessary.
- Staff were observed to encourage independence. For example, staff were observed to encourage children to choose their own activities and retrieve their own lunch boxes.
- It was evident through observation on the day of inspection that children's voices were listened to, and children were able to communicate their needs to attentive adults. For example, it was observed one child was chatting about turtles and the staff member helped the child to find pictures of sea creatures that they could colour.
- Children were observed to eat healthy and nutritious food for their mid-morning snack; examples of these included fruits, salads and yogurts.

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- The room was well laid out to encourage the children to move freely between the interest areas.
- Children were observed to play in the outdoor area on the morning of inspection.
- The care room had an established rest area located away from the general play area should any child require a rest during the session.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- Within the care rooms, low level units were in place to display interest items at the children's eye level.
- The room had several well-defined interest areas including; an art and craft area, home corner, library, construction and a sensory area.
- The materials on offer were age and stage appropriate.
- The care room was equipped with ample resources and equipment.
- Equipment appeared to be maintained in a state of good repair.
- Outdoors, the children were observed to engage with a range of equipment such as ride on toys, a water tray and slides. Additional resources included a sand tray, balls, climbing area and playhouses.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

*A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.*

#### Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

- The main entrance had been secured, and this ensured no unauthorised entry to, or exit from, the service.
- Heavy equipment and furniture had been anchored to prevent injury to a child.
- All electrical cables or flexes were in good repair and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning materials were observed to be stored out of reach of children.
- The outdoor area had been securely fenced to prevent unauthorised entry to or from the area.

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- The children's bags and coats were stored safely off of the floor in cubbies.
- Low level doors and windows had been fitted with visibility strips.
- Blind cords had been secured.
- Handrails were provided in the outdoor area to ensure children did not fall while using the steps up to the garden.

### Infection Control:

- Regular handwashing by the children was carried out before eating and after using the toilet.
- All wash hand basins were provided with warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels.
- There were detailed cleaning records available for the inspector to review.
- Foot operated pedal bins were in operation throughout the service.
- Windows had been opened to aid natural ventilation.
- Tables were sanitized before the children had their lunch.

### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were kept free and unobstructed.
- Wall tethered fire extinguishers were available in the care room.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for four staff members. However, one of these vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

#### Infection Control:

2. Perishable food for the children's lunch had not been refrigerated. The inspector noted that children retrieved their lunch boxes from their bags. Some of the lunches included cooked meats and yogurts which needed to be refrigerated. This posed a risk of food borne illness to the children

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. In her written response the registered provider stated that garda vetting had been applied for.

#### Infection Control:

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2. In her written response, the registered provider stated that a refrigerator would be available for the children's lunches to ensure that perishable food would be stored safely.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **General Safety:**

A photograph of the application for Garda vetting was submitted as evidence.

#### **Infection Control:**

The registered providers statement was accepted as evidence.

### **Summary Comment**

The inspector has reviewed the actions, evidence and statements submitted. The noncompliance identified under Regulation 23 in relation to infection control has been adequately addressed. Evidence of an application for Garda vetting was reviewed; however, a copy of the completed Garda vetting has not been submitted for the one staff member to the inspector to date. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt. This noncompliance in relation general safety remains out outstanding.

## **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.*

### **Compliance Information**

(1)  
An attendance book was available for the children in attendance in the service and indicated each preschool child was checked in and out on a daily basis by a staff member.