

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015CE071

**Name of Service:** Leapfrog Creche & Montessori

**Address of Service:** Dun Carraig, Tuamgraney, Co. Clare

**Eircode:** V94 XV83

**Name of Registered Provider:** Sarah Ryan

**Service type:** Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 08/05/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	30	PM	24
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**Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:** Early Years Inspectorate  
Tusla Child and Family Agency  
Primary Care Centre  
Station Road  
Ennis  
County Clare.

**Inspection undertaken by:** A. McCarthy & J. Hayes

**Title:** Early Years Inspectors

### Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

**Conditions if applicable** Not applicable

### Description of service

Leapfrog Creche & Montessori is a privately operated, full day care service, located in the rural village, of Tuamgraney, in County Clare. This childcare facility provides full day, part-time and sessional care to children aged six months to six years Monday to Friday 07:30 to 18:00. An additional school aged childcare service is provided each afternoon and during school holidays. The programme of care and education is provided in a purpose-built bungalow structure in three care rooms. An enclosed play area is located to the rear and side of the building.

### Staffing

On the 08 May 2025 the registered provider, the assistant manager and five adults worked directly with the children. The registered provider and the manager provided a dual administration and relief cover in the care rooms when required.

### 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 and safety. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 - First aid (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures (1)(a)(b)(4)

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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. 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, the assistant manager, 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)

The registered provider was the person in charge and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The registered provider and a named person to deputise were available at all times during the inspection.

(2)

Seven files were available in respect of the registered provider and the adults employed by the service. The findings included the following:

(a)

Nine written and validated references from past employers in respect of adults working in the service were available.

(b)

Five written and validated references were available in respect of adults working in the service from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the seven adults employed by the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was not required for the adults working in the service, as the adults had not lived in another State for a period longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

The seven adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications at Level 5 and 6 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)

During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.

(2)

On the 08 May 2025 the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Seven adults cared for the thirty children in the morning and the twenty-four children in the afternoon.

(8)(a)

The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available in the service at all times.

## 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)

The children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the children. Three care rooms were in operation during the inspection.

#### Basic Needs of Children:

The adults treated the children in a kind and caring manner and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults conversed with the children in a respectful manner, using soft tones of voice, engaged with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance and comfort. The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings and using the toilet. The adults supervised and treated the children in a sensitive manner during nappy changes and whilst the children used the toilet. Nappies were changed frequently and on an individual need's basis. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal appropriate to their age and level of development. The children's sleep was attended to on an individual basis and an alternative area and activities were offered for children who did not wish to sleep. The children were encouraged to feed themselves and promoted to be independent. Appropriate crockery and feeding utensils were provided in each room, and these periods were observed to be relaxed and unhurried. The children in each room were offered a range of developmentally challenging play and learning activities, and the children were observed to be fully engaged and included in all activities. The children transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor area, engaging in play based activities.

A key person approach was observed in each care room, the staff demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge of the children's preferences, interests, and individual capabilities. The adults followed the children's lead in the care rooms, and the children were supported in individual and group play. Colourful visual learning aids and photographic daily routines and attendance charts were displayed in the childcare facility. The children were

notified and consulted in advance of changes in the activities. The transitions in the programme of care were completed cohesively and in a calm manner in the care rooms. The adults offered praise and encouragement, and children were respected and supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities.

### 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:

- A secure bell operated system was in place at the entrance door to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility.
- The outdoor areas were secured with fencing and gates to protect the children within. The children were supervised at all times during the inspection.
- The children’s arrival and departure from the service were recorded on the service application system.
- Medication and cleaning agents were stored in a secure area out of reach of the children.

##### Infection Control:

- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and bins.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, using the toilet and before mealtime.
- The nappy changing procedures were completed in accordance with the service’s infection control procedure. A procedure was displayed in the nappy changing facilities.
- The children’s perishable food items and infant formula were stored correctly in a refrigerator.
- The soothers were stored in individually labelled containers.
- The children’s bedlinen and personal care items were stored individually.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not administered during the inspection. An administration of medication policy was available to inform the adults of the service’s procedures.

##### Safe Sleep:

- The sleep room accommodated standard sized cots and low-level beds for the children to sleep.
- The sleep room was maintained within the recommended temperature range. An electronic thermometer was available for the adults to measure and monitor the room temperatures.

- The children's sleep observations were recorded by the adults every 10 minutes. These observations included the children's colour, position and breathing.
- The adults demonstrated an awareness of the service's safe sleep policy.

### Fire Safety:

- The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The fire exits routes and fire assembly points were readily identified with signage.
- The adults demonstrated an awareness of conducting fire drills to prepare the service to respond in the event of fire.

### Outing:

- The registered provider confirmed that outings are not conducted by the service.

## Part VI – Safety

### Regulation 25 - First aid

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

*(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-*  
*(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and*  
*(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

Adults working in the service had a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)(a)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored in the office.

(b)

The first aid boxes were available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

## 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 fire fighting 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)

Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out by the service. The last fire drill took place on the 18 April 2025.

(b)

Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system took place respectively on 01 April 2025 and 04 July 2024.

(4)

A fire action notice was available demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

## Part VI – Safety

### Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for 41 children attending on a full day care basis. The policy is valid until the 27 March 2026.