

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D.: TU2015CW024

Name of Service: Little Orchard

Address of Service: Leighlinbridge Community Childcare Centre, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow, R93 KN72

Email Address: littleorchardcommunitychildcare@yahoo.com

Name of Registered Provider: Thomas Lalor

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	✓	Part-Time		Sessional	
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change: Increase in number of children from 83 to 103

Proposed Number of Children: 103

Recommended Change Following Inspection: Change to be approved

Registered change: Change in number of children that can be accommodated from 83 to 103

Date of Inspection:	1	2	0	6	2	0	2	4
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Inspection undertaken by: L McGeeney

Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:
 Civic Offices, Limerick Road
 Nenagh
 Co. Tipperary

Rationale for Inspection:
Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day Care Service for 103 Children
Date of Registration	2 nd July 2024

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Authority to Inspect

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

Description of Service	<p>This community run service was established to provide care and education to children aged 0 – 6 years old on a full day, part-time and sessional basis. A registered school aged service is also provided.</p> <p>The service operates Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. This includes a three-hour sessional service operated under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) which runs Monday – Friday, 9am – 12pm for 38 weeks of the year.</p> <p>The service is currently registered to accommodate up to 83 children at any one time and proposes to increase to 103 children by the inclusion of a basement room and the enlargement of the baby room created by the removal of the milk kitchen.</p>
Premises	<p>The service is operated from a detached period premises with three floors over basement which was converted from residential use into an early years and school aged care service. There is a single storey, detached modular building in the outdoor area which is part of the early years service. The service is located in the town of Leighlinbridge in Co. Carlow beside public amenities such as the church, car park and playground.</p> <p>In the main building the children have access to activity rooms and sanitary accommodation areas on each floor with a total of seven activity rooms and two sleep rooms. There is also an office and kitchen in the premises. The modular building consists of an activity room and sanitary accommodation area. There are grounds to the back and side of the premises for outdoor play.</p>
Staffing	<p>The registered provider does not work in the service. The service manager is the person in charge on a daily basis. There were 10 staff working in the service at the time of inspection which included 7 staff working directly with the children, management, administration and catering staff.</p>
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The inspection focused on regulations under the following themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the Child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff, are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>
Acknowledgements	<p>The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.</p>

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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.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a) The service manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who could deputise in her absence.

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.

(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,

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1) At 1pm on the day of inspection there were 7 staff working directly with 28 children aged between 1 – 5 years old in 3 activity rooms and 3 sleep rooms. There were additional staff on the premises not directly involved in working with the children including the service manager, assistant manager and catering staff.

The person in charge stated that the adult to child ratios will be maintained within the requirements in each room throughout the day.

(8)(a) There were at least 2 staff present in the service at all times while it was in operation.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a) There were eight activity rooms: one in the basement, two on the ground floor, two on the first floor, two on the second floor and one in the modular building. The

early years service used all of the rooms in the morning and five of the rooms in the afternoon when the other three rooms were used by the school aged children. The rooms were designated to children according to their age and stage of development as follows:

Holly room (Basement) = 3 to 5 years old in the morning and school aged in the afternoon.

Acorn room (ground floor) = 0 to 2 years old.

Willow room (ground floor) = 1 to 2 years old.

Beech room (first floor) = 2 to 3 years old.

Maple room (first floor) = 2 to 3 years old in morning and sleep room after dinner.

Cherry Blossom room (second floor) = 3 to 5 years old.

Pear room (second floor) = 3 to 5 years old in the morning and school aged in the afternoon.

Hawthorn room (Modular building) = 3 to 5 years in the morning and school aged in the afternoon.

Acorn room previously had an area sectioned off as a milk kitchen, this space had been remodelled which increased the space available in the room. This room was bright and comfortable. It was set up for play and exploration by the younger children which included soft matting and seating areas.

Holly room had been developed for use by children attending the ECCE session in the morning and was used by school aged children in the afternoon. The room was set up in a number of well-defined interest areas including a cosy area, home corner, art area, small world areas and sensory play areas.

There were two large outdoor play areas at the back and side of the premises. The areas were well laid out and resourced for the children to play and explore freely in the outdoors on a daily basis.

(b) There were cosy rest areas in each room for children to relax in during the day as well as two sleep rooms with standard cots for use by the younger children who required a sleep during the day. Camp beds were available and laid out in one of the rooms after dinner for the older children who required a sleep.

(3)(a) The service had two large, enclosed play areas on the premises as well as access to the community sports fields located near the service which ensured that the children enjoyed a variety of outdoor experiences and opportunities for movement and exploration in the outdoors on a daily basis. The person in charge said that walks within the town were also undertaken by the staff and children on a regular basis.

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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.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.
The service had a healthy eating policy. Children brought packed lunches to eat during the morning and afternoon snack times. Children who attended on a part-time or full day care basis were provided with a hot meal at 12.30pm which was prepared on the premises by the catering staff. Children were encouraged to serve themselves at dinner time which enabled them to self-portion and to return for second helpings if desired. Drinking water was available to the children in each room throughout the day. None of the children were currently on formula milk. The policy of the service was that individual bottles of reconstituted formula were supplied by parents and kept refrigerated until required.

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.

Requirement met:

This requirement had been met.
General Safety
Hot water for hand washing was thermostatically controlled not to exceed 43°C. The service was sited away from the main road. Gates and doors were kept secured to ensure that children could not leave the service unsupervised or gain access to a roadway.
Infection Prevention and Control
The service had an infection prevention and control policy.
Administration of Medication
The service had an administration of medication policy.
Outings
The service had an outings policy.
Fire Safety
Fire escape routes were kept clear of obstruction.

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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.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1) Five staff hold current certification in first aid response (FAR).

(2)(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available in each room.

(b) The first aid boxes were available if required by a child attending the service. First aid boxes were taken outside during outdoor play as well as on outings such as walks in the village.

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.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a) There was a written record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service.

(b) There was a written record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. The firefighting equipment was serviced annually, most recently in June 2024. The smoke alarms were serviced on a quarterly basis, most recently in April 2024.

(3) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the walls in each activity room.

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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

An insurance quotation was submitted to the Registration Team prior to this inspection.

The Registered Provider must ensure that adequate insurance is in place prior to the commencement of the change. The change approval is contingent on the registered providers compliance with Regulation 28.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

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

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (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.*

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(a) The premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure.

(b) The service was safe and secure. Entry to the service for most of the children was via the front door into the entrance lobby. The door from the entrance lobby to the rest of the building was secured with access managed by staff. Entry to Holly room was via an external set of steps that led to the door in the outside wall of the room. Access through this door was managed by staff in the room. The door had a glass partition in the top half to allow staff to see who was seeking access before opening the door to them. There were handrails on the internal and external stair cases used by the children and staff. Stairways were well lit and covered with slip resistant materials. There were stair gates at the top and bottom of staircases.

(c) Each room was naturally lit through windows in the external walls, supplemented by electric ceiling lights. Rooms were naturally ventilated through openable windows. The rooms were heated by an oil-fired central heating system with wall mounted radiators in each room. There were three radiators in Holly room. Heating was not turned on during the inspection as the day was warm so heating was not required.

(d) The premises were well maintained, clean and in good repair. There was a cleaning schedule for the service and maintenance staff who helped to maintain the grounds and the building.

(e) There were sanitary accommodation areas throughout the main building and in the modular building as follows:
 Basement: One toilet, nappy changing unit and hand washing sink.
 Ground floor: One toilet and wash hand basin for staff; two nappy changing areas and one toilet with wash hand basins.
 First floor: One toilet and wash hand basin for staff; two toilets, a nappy changing unit and three wash hand basins.
 Second floor: Two toilets and two wash hand basins.
 Modular building: Two toilets and two wash hand basins (One for staff and one for children).
 The required ratio of toilets or nappy changing units for the children was 1 to 11, with one hand washing sink for each toilet or nappy changing unit.
 The required ratio of toilets and hand washing sinks for staff was 1 to 8.
 Therefore, there were four nappy changing units, which was sufficient provision for up to 44 children who require nappy changing; three staff toilets, which was sufficient for up to 24 staff and 7 toilets for children, which was sufficient provision for up to 77 toilet trained children.
 There was sufficient sanitary accommodation for the service to increase from 83 children to the proposed 103 children.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*
- (3) *A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*
- (4) *Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides—*
 - (a) *a sessional pre-school service, and*
 - (b) *a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).*
- (5) *A registered provider of a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a minimum of 2 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.
 (1)(2)(3)(4): On the day of inspection the newly enlarged Acorn room (baby room) and the Holly room (ECCE room in AM) were measured. The total clear floor space available was:

Acorn room: 21m², which could accommodate a maximum of 6 children aged 0 – 1 years old (3.5m per child) or 7 children aged 1 – 2 years old (2.8m per child).

Holly room: 28.35m², which could accommodate a maximum of 15 children aged 2.5 – 6 years old attending on a sessional basis (1.818m² per child).

The other rooms in the service was measured previously as follows:

Willow room (Wobblers): 31.35m², which could accommodate a maximum of 11 children aged 1 – 2-years old (2.8m² per child).

Beech room (Toddlers): 31.11m², could accommodate a maximum of 13 children aged 2 – 3 years old (2.35m² per child).

Maple room (Junior Pre-School 1) 30.6m², which could accommodate a maximum of 16 children aged 2.5 – 6 years old attending on a sessional basis (1.818m² per child) or 13 children aged 3 – 6 years old attending on a full day care or part time basis.

Hawthorn room (Junior Pre-School 2 – modular building): 26.8m², which could accommodate a maximum of 14 children aged 2.5 – 6 years old attending on a sessional basis (1.818m² per child).

Cherry Blossom room (Senior Pre-School 1): 30.28m², which could accommodate a maximum of 16 children aged 2.5 – 6 years old attending on a sessional basis (1.818m² per child) or 13 children aged 3 – 6 years old attending on a full day care or part time basis.

Pear room (Senior Playschool 2): 30.44m² which could accommodate a maximum of 16 children aged 2.5 – 6 years old attending on a sessional basis (1.818m² per child).

Based on the above measurements and proposed usage of each room there was sufficient space for the proposed increase from 83 to 103 children.

(5) Not applicable to this service.