

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY128		
Name of Service:	Little Treasures Community Creche		
Address of Service:	North Wall Women's centre, Lower Sherriff Street, Dublin 1, Co. Dublin		
Eircode:	D01 R8Y8		
Name of Registered Provider:	Ann Murphy		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	31/07/2023		
No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM 29
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8		
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Finnegan Hayes & C. Harte		
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.
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Description of service

Little Treasures Community Creche is a community run full day care service located in a residential area in North Dublin which operates 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. The service operates from a two-storey building and is comprised of an office, kitchen, two cot rooms and three care rooms; Baby room catering for children aged 16-18months, Wobbler/ Toddler room catering to children 1.5-3 years and the Preschool room catering to children aged 4-5 years. The service caters for 56 children aged 0-6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) scheme.

Staffing

The registered provider is the general manager of the North Wall Women's Centre which operate the creche and employs 20 staff including the person in charge and two housekeeping staff and two CE staff who are currently engaged in early years training. Seventeen staff were present on the day of inspection. The registered provider was present for the duration of the inspection.

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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19(1)(a); Health, Welfare and Development of child and Regulation 23; Safeguarding the Health, Safety and Welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Wobbler room and Toddler room.

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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on 31st July 2023 in relation to an identified concern under Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. A response which adequately addressed the concern was received on 1st August 2023.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required in the absence of the person in charge.

(b) The designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived in the service.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service as evidenced through a review of paperwork and discussion with staff and management.

(2) A review of the roster and conversation with management showed that there are currently 20 staff employed by the service. The files of all staff were reviewed.

(a)(b) Thirty-Six written and verified references were available in relation to 17 staff members.

(c) Garda vetting declarations were available for 20 staff members.

(4) Evidence was available to show that 13 staff members who worked directly with the children held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) The following references were not available for review;

- Two written and verified references were not available for one staff member.
- A second written and verified reference was not available for two staff members.

(d) Police vetting was not available for the following three staff members;

- One staff member resided in one country other than Ireland for a period of more than 6 months.
- One staff member who resided in two countries other than Ireland for a period of more than 6 months each.
- Evidence was not available to show that one staff member did not require police vetting.

(4) Evidence was not available to show that four staff members who worked directly with the children held 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.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) Validated references are on file. We continue to follow our recruitment policy for all staff to furnish 2 written references which are validated by Line Manager.

(2)(d) Police vetting for 2 staff members is on file. One further check is in progress and the other staff member does not require police vetting.

(4) Evidence provided that 4 staff members are qualified in childcare.

Supporting documentation submitted

A qualification certificate was provided for one staff member, records of achievement in relation to legacy awards were provided for two staff members and an email to a college requesting a certificate was provided in relation to one staff member.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances under Regulation 9(2)(a)(b).

Regulatory compliance remains outstanding for Regulation 9(2)(d) and (4) as police vetting remains outstanding for one staff member and proof of qualification has not been received for one staff member.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times.

(2) Ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day.

- In the Baby room two adults were caring for 4 children aged 1-2 years.
- In the Wobbler/ Toddler room four adults were caring for 13 children aged 1.5-3 years.
- In the Preschool room two adults were caring for 11 children aged 4-5 years.

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:

- The service provided regular meals and snacks to the children throughout the day. The daily menu included a variety of cereals for breakfast at 9:30am, dinner at 11:45am, an afternoon snack at 2:30pm. Staff spoke about the importance of catering to the children's needs in relation to food and advised that additional food is available for the children at all times during the day; a selection of fruit, yogurt and cheese dippers were observed in the fridge in the care rooms. On the day of inspection children were observed to have a choice of mash potato, chicken nuggets or spaghetti bolognaise for dinner with many children eating a selection of what was offered and children in the toddler room were observed eating yoghurts and cheese dipper at 1:30pm.
- Nappy changing was done on a set schedule and as required to ensure the children's comfort. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently with staff available to assist if needed.
- Staff were observed to support children to keep cool in the warm weather removing the children's jumpers and opening the door to allow cool air to circulate.

Supporting relationships:

- A warm and welcoming atmosphere was evident in the service on arrival. Staff were observed to be kind, caring and respectful in their interactions with the children. Staff were knowledgeable of the children's preferences and dispositions and spoke kindly of their families. Staff were observed to reference significant life events the children were experiencing and an inclusive, friendly vibe was evident.
- Mealtimes were observed to be a relaxed social event where staff sat and chatted with the children. Children's choices and preferences around food were encouraged and supported by staff.

Physical and Material Environment

- Tables and chairs were appropriately sized to the age of the children in each room for example different size tables and chairs were available in the Wobbler/ Toddler room to ensure children could engage in mealtimes and tabletop activities in comfort.
- Low shelving ensured the materials available were easily accessible to the children.
- An outdoor area which had a soft play surface and a range of equipment which promoted gross motor and sensory play was available for use.

Non-Compliance Information

1. Interest areas were not clearly defined, and materials were not grouped appropriately to support spontaneous play experiences. For example, supporting equipment for two play kitchens were stored across the room while there was limited supporting equipment available for the doll's houses. Having a range of equipment which is grouped thematically supports children to play spontaneously and independently.
2. The cot room within the Wobbler/ Toddler room did not provide an atmosphere that was conducive to rest or sleep for the four children present. The lighting in the room could not be dimmed due to a sky light and an open doorway which led to the wobbler/ toddler room. Children who do not require sleep were observed playing in the care room and staff were observed to sing songs while the children played; the noise level was not conducive to sleep.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. At the time of TUSLA inspection, our setting was preparing for painting and renovation work. Interest areas & children's artwork were moved in preparation for same. Following renovations/painting to the toddler room, interest areas & a variety of materials are now back in place ready for the children. Toddler room is freshly painted. New resources & materials placed in room (incl. sofa for cosy area).
2. Skylight in Toddler sleep room now has a shade to reduce sunlight. We will reschedule play activities at different times so it's quieter when children are sleeping.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photos have been reviewed in relation to above.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances under Regulation 19.

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:

- Internal doors were secured appropriately with high handles to prevent children leaving the service unsupervised.
- Safety locks were fitted to presses to prevent children accessing unsafe materials.
- Blind cords were appropriately secured to prevent injury to the children.
- Nappy changing units were safe and sturdy and children's nappy changing items were stored in individual boxes within easy reach.
- Low handrails were fitted to the stairs for use by the preschool children.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing was observed to be done frequently throughout the day, after activities, toileting and before and after meals.
- Aprons and gloves were available and used by staff during nappy changing.
- Sanitary areas were maintained in a clean, hygienic manner.
- Soothers were stored in individually labelled boxes.
- Windows and doors which opened into the secure garden were opened to allow fresh air to circulate in the service.
- Sheets and blankets were used for individual children and laundered daily in the service.

Safe Sleep:

- Cots were maintained in a good state of repair.
- Cots were positioned 50cms apart.

Fire Safety:

- Staff were knowledgeable of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency.
- Fire exits were clearly identified and unobstructed during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The service entrance was not adequately secured when the inspectors arrived in the service and later in the day. A receptionist was present in the area however an unauthorised person could have entered the service.
2. Water in the low sink in the Toddler room which was used for handwashing by the children present was not thermostatically controlled and the temperature was recorded to be 58.5°C at 10:48am. An immediate action notice was issued to the provider.
3. A cable off a decorative light which was present above a cot in the Wobbler cot room was not adequately secured to the wall and presented a risk of injury as it was within reach of the child in the cot.
4. A shutter in the outdoor area was protruding from its holder and was not adequately secured. This posed a risk of injury to the children. Documentation was available which showed the service is in the process of having the shutters fixed. The person in charge reported this should be completed in the coming weeks.

Infection Control:

5. Pedal operated lidded bins were not available in the nappy changing areas used by the Baby room and Wobbler room for hygienic disposal of contaminated items.
6. Two sofas which were present in the Wobbler/ Toddler room were torn with foam exposed. This prevented adequate cleaning and posed a choking hazard should the children ingest the foam.
7. Hand towels and toilet roll were not hygienically dispensed in the service for example hand towels were observed on the side of the sink in the Toddler room. This were observed to be splashed with water following handwashing while toilet rolls were observed on the cistern of the toilets used by the Wobbler and Toddler rooms. This posed an infection control risk due to excessive handling and cross contamination.

Administration of Medication:

8. Written health care plans were not available for two children who required emergency medication. While staff were aware of the need to administer emergency medication, they were not clear of all the steps to be taken in the event of an emergency situation occurring for example whether to ring an ambulance and at what stage this would be done. A written health care plan is required to ensure the children receives adequate care in the event of an emergency.
9. Prescription medications were not labelled with the owner's name which posed a risk of the wrong medication being administered to a child in the service.

Safe Sleep:

10. An ambient temperature of 16-20°C was not maintained in the cot rooms where children were sleeping. The temperature of the cot room in the Baby room was recorded to be 22.3°C at 12:41pm while one child was sleeping, and the temperature of the cot room used by the Wobbler room was recorded to be 21.9°C at 12:49pm while four children were present; one of whom was asleep.
11. The form used to record the 10-minute checks of sleeping children did not allow for the time of the physical check to be recorded contemporaneously and staff did not record the breathing, colour and position of the child in line with the service policy. The registered provider advised that the incorrect form had been used on the day of inspection and a form which does allow for the correct recording of the required information was available in the service.

Fire Safety:

12. Attendance was not recorded in a timely manner in the Wobbler/Toddler room. The attendance of the eight children present in the Toddler room had not be recorded at 10:43am while the attendance of a child who arrived in the Wobbler group at 9:05am had not been recorded at 10:20am.
13. There was no recorded fire drill for June and July 2023. Monthly fire drills are required to ensure the safe evacuation of staff and children in the event of a fire emergency.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. We are very conscious of safeguarding our children and ensure that entrance door is secure & can only be accessed by keypad. This was a rare occurrence given the time of day i.e. children arriving late, food delivery etc.

2. A plumber was contracted by the service and has adjusted the thermostat to ensure the water does not exceed 43°C.
3. Decorative light above cot in sleep room has been removed given risk to children.
4. Exterior shutters were all replaced on 3rd & 4th August, eliminating any potential danger.

Infection Control:

5. Bins in both nappy changing areas have been replaced with pedal operated variety.
6. The sofas in toddler room have been replaced by new ones. This formed part of our planned refurbishment.
7. Hand towel dispenser has been fixed for use and two toilet roll holders installed in downstairs toilets.

Administration of Medication:

8. Medication for 2 children is now stored in plastic containers. Child's name & instructions are in each.
9. Staff member's medication is now labelled & kept out of the reach of children.

Safe Sleep:

10. New thermometers have been installed in toddler & baby sleep rooms to ensure temperature is maintained between 16 & 20 degrees.
11. Incorrect Sleep Record was used during the month of July – this was an administration error. All staff attended feedback session on TUSLA inspection. We included internal workshop on 'Safe Sleeping in Childcare Setting' (09/08/23).

Fire Safety:

12. Attendance records are generally kept up to date for Health and Safety and Fire Drill reasons. Given the TUSLA inspection this was an oversight as early years educators wanted to demonstrate quality childcare provision.
13. Fire Drill that took place on 16/06/23 was noted but not recorded in file. Drill scheduled for 24/07/23 did not take place as there was an issue with the fire alarm. This was addressed by a fire company on the 08/08/23.

Preventative action:

All staff will be updated with organisational & childcare policy updates in scheduled internal workshops throughout the year. This will be monitored by General Manager & Childcare Coordinator via childcare internal audits, we will increase the number conducted each month.

The DLP and Deputy DLP will continually monitor paperwork and ensure that Little Treasures Community Creche is compliant with all record keeping & safety requirements.

Senior Room Leaders will report safety issues to senior management.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documents and photos in relation to above have been reviewed by the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances under Regulation 23.

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) The registered provider ensured that a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) was available to the children at all times. FAR certification for nine staff were reviewed in line with the roster.

(2)(a)(b) Two suitably equipped first aid boxes were available in the service out of reach of the children but easily accessible to staff if required.

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 fire drills which had taken place from January to May 2023 in the service were available for review.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises was available for review. The record showed that the firefighting equipment was serviced on the 12th September 2022 while the smoke alarms were serviced on 11th January 2023.
- (4) Fire evacuation procedures were displayed throughout the service in care rooms and communal areas.

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. The expiry date of the insurance was the 27th March 2024.