

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY040				
Name of Service:	Dromtacker Creche Limited				
Address of Service:	Munster Technological University, North Campus, Tralee, Co. Kerry				
Eircode:	V92 NN53				
Name of Registered Provider:	Katie Sheehy				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	24/04/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>40</td> <td>PM</td> <td>45</td> </tr> </table>	AM	40	PM	45
AM	40	PM	45		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry.				
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy				
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

Description of service

This community-based purpose-built early years service is registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day care to children aged between 0 and 6 years. The service is open between the hours of 8:00 am and 6:15pm Monday to Thursday and between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:15 pm on Friday.

There are 4 care rooms in operation, a sleep room in the baby and wobbler/toddler rooms and sanitary accommodation located in each of the care rooms. The children attending have access to designated areas to each of the care rooms located to the rear and to the side of the building.

Staffing

There are currently 29 adults attached to the early years service, 28 of whom are involved in the direct care of the children. The registered provider is not service based and does not work directly with the children who attend the setting.

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 inspections 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, the deputy 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) The registered provider had appointed a person in charge to oversee the operation of the service. There were two deputy managers also in place.
- (b) The person in charge and the named deputy were on duty in the service when the inspector arrived to facilitate the inspection process.
- The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or a deputy were available at the service during the hours of operation.
- (2) Since the previous inspection on 18 July 2024, it was established that eight adults had commenced working in the service. The recruitment records in respect of a total of nine adults were assessed.
- (a) Of the eighteen required references, 11 references were from previous employers with records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the eighteen required references, 7 references were from another source other than a previous employer with records of validation on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for each of the nine adults. It was also noted that Garda vetting disclosures which had expired since the previous inspection, had been renewed in respect of two additional staff members. 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 on file for two adults, who had resided in another jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years.
- (4) Copies of certificates in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), or as recognised by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) were available on file in respect of the eight staff members. A qualification was not required for the registered provider.

Non-Compliance Information

9(2)(c) Three staff members, who has previously been on student placements in the service and have subsequently been employed by the service had not been re-vetted by the service before they had commenced employment, as is required.

(d) Police vetting was not on file for one staff member who resided outside of the jurisdiction as an adult for a period of longer that 6 months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) The three vetting applications were applied for on the day of the inspection. There will be a list for the expiry dates for Garda vetting displayed in the office.

(d) The Police vetting was received and attached to the CAPA form.

Supporting documentation submitted

(c) The three Garda vetting disclosures required were received.

(d) The one Police vetting required was received.

Summary Comment

The requirement for the regulation has been met.

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) There was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance on the day of inspection.

(2) The minimum adult child ratio was observed in all care rooms which were operational as follows:

Morning:

Room Name and Age range of children	Number of Children present	Number of Adults present
Baby (8 months to 2years)	9	3
Toddler/Wobbler (23 months to 3 years)	9	4
Junior Pre-school (2 years to 4 years)	11	3
Senior Pre-school (4 years to 10 years)	11 (7 school aged, 4 early years)	3

Afternoon:

Room Name and Age range of children	Number of Children present	Number of Adults present
Baby (8 months to 2years)	9	3
Toddler/Wobbler (23 months to 3 years)	10	2
Junior Pre-school (2 years to 4 years)	14	3
Senior Pre-school (4 years to 10 years)	12	3

4(a) (b): The minimum adult-child ratio was maintained in the service during the sessional service hours.

8 (a) At least two adults were present at all times throughout the inspection period and on the premise at all times as evidenced by the staff roster.

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;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The following records were recorded:
- (h) Details of attendance for the children were recorded electronically.
 - (i) Details of the staff roster were recorded.
 - (j) Administration of medication forms with signed parental consent were open to inspection, all details completed in full for the sample records reviewed for each of the care rooms.
 - (k) The Accident/Incident forms for the care rooms inspected were found to have all the necessary details completed in full.

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

- The children's toileting and hygiene needs were attended to regularly during the day. The staff supported and encouraged the children with self-toileting as was needed.
- Nappy changing was carried out as required during the day. The children were spoken to and interacted with during nappy changing by the staff

- Snacks and hot meals were served throughout the day with appropriate gaps between the meals. Some food served at snack time was provided by the parents.
- The hot meals served in the service are supplied by a catering company. The meals are re-heated and plated by a designated person in the kitchen.
- All snacks that are provided by the service are prepared and plated in the kitchen, each meal is delivered directly to the care rooms.
- On the day of the inspection, the hot meal observed served was mashed potatoes, carrots and minced beef. The food for snack time observed included yogurts, bread rolls, apples, strawberries and bananas.
- Additional servings were available to the children if they required it.
- The inspector observed children who requested crackers and fruit after the main meal were provided with same.
- The inspector observed children were accommodated to eat when they were hungry as was observed late morning in the Junior pre-school room.
- Children had water to drink at the mealtimes and it was available throughout the day.
- Children in the baby room had bottles of milk supplied by the parents, the bottles were clearly labelled with the child's name and they were stored in the fridge.
- There were feeding chairs available in the baby room and in the Toddler/Wobbler room for the younger children's use at mealtimes.
- The younger children were assisted with eating, with the older encouraged and supervised feeding themselves.
- The mealtimes observed were relaxed and unhurried.
- The children in each room enjoyed freedom of movement within the rooms and they had some time in the outdoor play areas.
- The children were given the choice of activities in the care rooms and when they wished to opt out of or change the activities or rest/relax in the designated rest areas.
- The rest areas provided in each of the care rooms were furnished with low level seating, matting and cushions.
- The staff were observed to be kind, caring and nurturing to the children that were in their care.

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 doors to the service were secured ensuring that no child could leave the service unsupervised and no unauthorised person could gain access to the premises.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.
- The cleaning products seen on inspection were stored out of the reach of the children.
- Temperature reducing medication was stored out of the reach of the children in its original container.

Infection Control:

- At each of the sinks used by the children and the adults there was a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels to facilitate effective hand washing.
- Lidded pedal operated bins were provided in the service.
- The staff were observed to wear single use disposable gloves, disposable aprons and washed their hands before and after each nappy change. The children's hands were washed after nappy changing.
- The potties observed were clean and dry.

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep room in the baby room and the sleep room in the toddler/wobbler rooms were observed to be used during the inspection for sleeping children. Some children over 2 years were sleeping on low level beds.
- Sleep checks were conducted every 10 minutes.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. There were 2 broken horizontal slats on 1 cot in the sleep room serving the baby room. The inspector was informed this cot is not in use for sleep.
2. There was a cable attached to a monitor accessible near 1 cot in the sleep room serving the baby room posing a risk of injury to the children.
3. The legs of 1 feeding chair in the baby room were loose and unsteady posing a risk of injury to children.
4. The edging of a large floor rug in the baby room was fraying with loose threading posing a risk of injury to children.

5. There was a broken plastic container with sharp edges accessible on the low-level window ledge in the Junior pre-school room posing a risk of injury to children.
6. Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for twenty-nine staff members. However, four vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EY-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'. It is acknowledged the process of renewing the Garda vetting had begun for these four staff.

Infection Control:

7. The perishable food items for the children attending the Junior pre-school room were not refrigerated posing a risk of food spoilage.
8. The vinyl covering on the low-level couch in the Junior pre-school room was torn, posing a risk of cross infection as it could not be adequately cleaned.
9. The large rug on the floor in the rest area in the Junior pre-school room was unclean posing a risk of cross infection.
10. The large rug on the floor in the Toddler/Wobbler room was unclean posing a risk of cross infection.
11. The carpet on the activity unit in the Toddler/Wobbler room was unclean posing a risk of cross infection. This non-compliance was founded at the last inspection of 18.07.'24. The response from the service stated that the carpet will be replaced and regular deep cleaning will be carried out, this was not found.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The cot has been repaired and it is in use.
2. The cable has been placed into a plastic tubing. The service will ensure that all cables are placed in the correct plastic tubing.
3. The chair was removed from the room on the day of the inspection. A new highchair was provided, there are 7 highchairs in total. The service will ensure the chairs are checked for suitability when cleaned each time.
4. The old rug was removed, it was replaced with a new rug. All soft furnishings will be checked at the end of the day when cleaning takes place.
5. The broken container was removed and replaced with a new one. The service will ensure that any containers that are cracked will be removed more promptly.

6. The Garda vetting was renewed for each of the four staff members.

Infection Control:

7. All the perishable food will be placed in the fridge on a daily basis and the pre-school staff were informed of this. A new reminder sign has been placed in the room by the lunchboxes to remind staff.

8. The sofa has been removed and replaced with a new one.

9.& 10 The rugs have been deep cleaned by a cleaning company. The company will carry out the deep cleaning every 3 months and it will be done internally every month.

11. The carpet will be replaced; this will be completed for the start of the new academic year. The carpet will be deep cleaned every 2-3 months by an outside company to maintain high standards of hygiene.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. A photograph of the repaired cot.

2. A photograph of the cable encased and secured to the wall.

3. A photograph of the timber highchair purchased.

4. A photograph of the new rug in place.

5.. A photograph of the new plastic container.

6. Copies of the Garda vetting for each of the four staff members was received.

Infection Control:

7. A photograph of the reminder sign to place the perishable food in the fridge.

8. Photographs of the new sofa.

9 & 10. The statement is accepted as evidence.

11. The statement is accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has been met.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there were staff available at all times with first aid responder (FAR) training. There were 10 staff members with a completed in date FAR certification.

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) The service had maintained in writing a record of the following: -

- (a) A record book to record each fire drill that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 11.04.'25.
- (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance checks of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm. The records on file demonstrated the last check for the smoke alarm was 12.02.'25 and for the firefighting equipment was 18.07.'24.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the service.

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,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

Compliance Information

- (a) Visually the building appeared to be sound and stable.

Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
1. The paint on the low-level timber sills in the childcare rooms was worn and chipped.
 2. There were gaps present on the marmoleum floor covering in the centre area of the floor in the senior pre-school room.
 3. There were areas of the ceiling in the Junior pre-school room observed to be stained.
 4. There were sections of the wall skirting in the junior pre-school room missing, the person in charge informed the inspector that these had not been replaced after the floor covering was installed.
 5. There were 2 of the 6 ceiling lights in the Junior pre-school room not in working order.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) The windowsills will be painted. This work will be complete by the of June.
2. Pricing for replacing the floor covering has been requested, it will be replaced by September.
3. The ceiling is due to be painted over the summer.
4. The skirting will be completed.
5. The electrician replaced the bulbs, but they did not work. The units will have to be replaced and this will be completed by the end of June.

Supporting documentation submitted

- 1.- 6. The statements are accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has been met.