

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY040
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Name of Service:	Dromtacker Creche Limited
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Address of Service:	Munster Technological University, North Campus, Tralee, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 NN53
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Name of Registered Provider:	Katie Sheehy
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	09/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	48	PM	44
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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).

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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 am and 6.15pm Monday to Thursday and between the hours of 8am 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 the service 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 33 adults attached to the early years service, this includes the registered provider who does not work in the service, and a student on placement. There were 4 adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. Each of the 31 adults have attained a relevant award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 person in charge, deputy in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN1121	09/04/2026	On review of the staff files, it was noted that one adult , who was not onsite did not have Garda vetting available.
Status	The registered provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

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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,*
- (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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection. In the event the person or deputy person in charge were not on the premises, a named person able to deputise was available. When the announced inspection commenced there was a named person in charge and following commencement of the inspection a second person in charge who was rostered off duty arrived at the inspection to facilitate the inspection process.
- (b) A person in charge or named deputy person in charge were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

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(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that of the 33 adults, 7 new adults that included 1 student on placement had been employed since the previous inspection. A total of 7 files were reviewed.

In addition, Garda vetting for 4 adults whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

(a) Of the fourteen references required, there were nine references from previous employers with records of validation on file.

(b) Of the fourteen references required, there were five references from a source other than a previous employer with records of validation on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 6 of the 7 new adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in regard to 3 of the 4 staff who required it.

(d) Police vetting, with certified translations where required, were on file for 3 adults who had lived outside the state for a period of longer of six consecutive months, as adults.

(4) All staff working directly with the children had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), or qualifications deemed to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(c) See the statutory notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IN1121 served.

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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.

(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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The minimum ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day.

The required adult to child ratios were observed in each of the care rooms as follows:

Morning:

Room Name and Age range of children	Number of Children present	Number of Adults present
Baby (9 months to 2years)	7	4
Wobbler (1 year to 3 years)	13	3
Pre-school (2 years to 4 years)	14	5
ECCE (4 years to 7 years)	14 (2 school aged, 12 early years)	5

Afternoon:

Room Name and Age range of children	Number of Children present	Number of Adults present
Baby (9 months to 2years)	7	3
Wobbler (1 year to 3 years)	11	3 and 1 student not counted in the adult child ratio
Pre-school (2 years to 4 years)	11	3
ECCE (4 years to 7 years)	15 (3 school aged, 12 early years)	4

(8)(a) The registered provider did ensure that 2 adults are on the premises during the hours of operation as observed on inspection and as evidenced through review of the staff roster.

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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 children attending the service were observed to have opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment in the spacious playrooms.
- The baby room had a comfortable and safe space for the children not yet walking to lie, roll, pull themselves up and learn how to walk.
- There was a selection of soft matting, cushions and seating in each of the playrooms for children to rest and relax as they so wished during the session.
- The children had plenty of opportunities to move about themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance as was observed with children in the baby room.
- The staff interacted with the children in a warm and caring manner, coming down to the children's level using low soft tones of voice.
- The staff enabled, supported and encouraged children with the various play activities they took part in during the inspection from tabletop activities in the Wobbler, pre-school and ECCE rooms to the floor play in the Baby room.
- The staff were observed to sit children on their laps, soothing and nurturing them and easing them gently into sleep time in the cots and low-level beds in the allocated sleep rooms.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets located in the playrooms, enabling them to use the toilet independently.
- Children's individual toileting needs were met as informed by the staff, for example children transitioning from wearing nappies to using the potty and using the toilet.
- The children had opportunities to play outdoors during the session, they were appropriately dressed for the outdoors, some with protective suits, coats and some had hats.

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- The person in charge informed the inspector that additional outdoor fixed play equipment is on order for the service.
- The older children had the opportunity of moving between the indoor and outdoor areas during the session, allowing them the opportunity to make decisions based on their needs.
- The older children had access to their individually labelled drink's bottles during the day.
- The younger children in the baby room had individual drink's bottles and beakers and bottles of milk and were observed to be fed by the staff sitting on the adult seating provided.

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:

- All visitors to the service used a buzzer system at the main entrance door to reduce the risk of unauthorised access.
- Cleaning agents seen on inspection were stored high out of the reach of the children.
- The outdoor area was secured with a secured gates and fencing.

Infection Control:

- There was lidded, sealed pedal operated bins used for the hygienic disposal of used nappies in the nappy changing facilities.
- An adequate supply of single use plastic aprons and gloves were available for nappy changing procedures.

Safe Sleep:

- The inspector observed the staff conducted physical sleep checks on the children who slept in the sleep rooms in the sleep rooms.
- The inspector reviewed the electronic sleep records that demonstrated that the children's breathing, colour and position were assessed at 8-minute intervals.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The glazing on the low-level window and door panels in the Wobbler, pre-school and ECCE rooms did not have visibility strips in place posing a risk of children making contact with the glass, posing a risk of injury.

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2. The toilet seat in one bathroom in the ECCE room was not secure posing a risk of injury to children.
3. The vinyl covering on a single chair in the quiet area in the Wobbler room was torn with the soft lining exposed, posing a risk of injury to children.

Infection Control:

4. Not all children in the Wobbler room washed their hands after returning from playing outdoors posing a risk of cross infection.
5. The inspection observed a staff member cleaned the noses of 3 children wearing the same gloves and disposed the tissues after each child's use in the swing top bin in the room posing a risk of cross infection.
6. There were swing top bins used for the disposal of used paper hand towels for example in the ECCE and pre-school rooms posing a risk of cross infection.
7. The large colourful rug on the floor and the removable covers on the bean bags in the rest area in the pre-school room was unclean posing a risk of cross infection.
8. The large colourful floor rug and the fabric covered cushions in the Wobbler room were unclean posing a risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The visibility strips are in place.
2. The toilet seat has been replaced. The toilet seat check has been added to the weekly health and safety checklist.
3. The armchair has been removed, and a replacement has been ordered. The condition of the children's seating will be monitored more closely.

Infection Control:

4. The management re-issued the infection control policy to the staff and spoke to them about handwashing and the importance of children's handwashing. Handwashing posters are in place as a reminder.
5. This point was covered when the infection control policy was re-issued to all the staff members and when the staff were spoken to regarding handwashing. The staff will ensure that they are washing their hands after cleaning each child's nose. The bin was replaced with a pedal bin. The service will ensure that pedal bins are in all areas in the service.
6. The pedal bins are in place in each of the rooms.

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7. The rugs were deep cleaned, and the service is researching the purchase of wipeable rugs. The bean bag covers have been washed and returned to the room. The bean bags have been added to the laundry list, they will be cleaned more frequently.
8. The rug and large cushions have been cleaned and returned to the room.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- 1.. Photographs of the visibility strips in place.
2. A photograph of the toilet seat in place.
- 3.. An invoice for the replacement chair.

Infection Control:

4. The statement is accepted as evidence.
5. The statement is accepted as evidence.
6. the statement is accepted as evidence.
- 7.& 8. An invoice for the deep cleaning of rugs and upholstery.

Summary Comment

All documentation was examined. The requirement for the 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 in-date certifications for First Aid Responder (FAR) training were furnished to the inspector to evidence that 12 adults attached to the service had completed (FAR) training. There was an adult available at all times during the opening times in the service.

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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 template to record each fire drill that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 19.3.'26
 - (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 13.10.'25 and for the firefighting equipment was 08.07.'25.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the service.

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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 premises appeared to be sound and stable.

Non-Compliance Information

(d)

1. The low paint on the low-level window boards was scuffed in the Wobbler, Pre-school and ECCE rooms.
2. There was 1 slat on the timber picnic table that was removed and had not been replaced.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The windowsills will be painted before 15.5.'26. The service will ensure the health and safety office reviews the paint regularly and the windowsills will be painted when needed.
2. The picnic bench has been removed and it will be replaced. The maintenance of the outdoor furniture will be monitored and fixed/replaced as needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. The statement is accepted as evidence.
2. An invoice for the replacement bench.

Summary Comment

All documentation received was examined. The requirement for the regulation has been met.