

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK059				
Name of Service:	Day Dreams Creche				
Address of Service:	Lissnalta, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick				
Eircode:	V94 H5P8				
Name of Registered Provider:	Lynn Shanahan				
Service type:	Full Day Care				
Date of Inspection:	03/07/2023				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>47</td> <td>PM</td> <td>47</td> </tr> </table>	AM	47	PM	47
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan M Riordan
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

This service was established in 2004 and it operates a full day care service from 07:15 – 18:30 hours Monday – Friday from a purpose-built facility in an urban setting. Curriculums for each age group are play based and create a home from home environment. The service can accommodate a maximum of 70 children.

Children are accommodated in five rooms according to their age group i.e. Wobbler room 1, Wobbler room 2, Toddler room, Preschool room and Montessori room.

The children have access to sanitary accommodation areas, a sleep room and outdoor play facilities are available directly off each playroom.

Staffing

There are twenty staff working directly with the children in the service which includes the manager. All staff hold QQI Qualifications on the National Qualifications framework document.

There is 1 staff member working in the kitchen with HACAP qualifications.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,21,23,24,25,26,28 and 29. 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 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*

(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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge or the deputy person in charge were available on the premises as outlined in the staff roster.

(2) Twenty staff files were examined which included staff that were on leave on the day of the inspection.

The registered provider had ensured that each employee working in the service was suitable and competent as the following documents were available on file and had been reviewed.

- (a) References from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer.
 - (b) References from sources other than past employers in the case of a person who had no past employers.
 - (c) Vetting disclosures were available from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of all staff working in the service.
 - (d) Staff who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months provided police vetting from the police authorities in that state.
- (4) All staff working directly with the preschool children had childcare qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) A second validated reference was not available for one member of staff working in the service on the day of the inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A second validated reference is now available for the one member of staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

The reference and the validation of the reference was submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 9(2).

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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

(2) On the day of the inspection there were 17 staff working across 4 care rooms with 46 children present attending full day care. During the period of inspection, the minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained and an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children in each care room.

1. Wobbler room 1 - there were 0 children 0 staff.
2. Wobbler room 2 - there were 8 children and 3 staff.
3. Toddler room - there were 15 children and 3 staff.
4. Preschool - there were 13 children and 2 staff.
5. Montessori room - there were 11 children and 2 staff.
6. Afterschool - there were 10 children and 2 staff.

Additional staff were available for food preparation, cleaning and office duties.

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 healthy eating policy of the service detailed a well-balanced and nutritious menu. The full time cook freshly prepared all meals daily. Breakfast was served at before 08.45hrs. Dinner served at 11.30hrs consisted of mashed potatoes, vegetables and minced beef and an option of chilli con carne with rice was also available. Lunch was served at 14.00hrs and a snack was served at 16.00hrs.

Children were given the choice of drinking milk or water with their dinner. The crockery, cutlery and drinking utensils were suitable for the children's age as stainless steel style knives, forks, spoons and ceramic style plates were available for the older children.

The children sat together around the lunch tables in their rooms with the staff and were given as much time as they needed to eat their food. Second helpings were offered and if a child did not eat its dinner it was returned to the kitchen and they were offered it again later in the day. Drinking water was available throughout the day in each room if a child was thirsty and needed a drink.

The children who were toilet trained toileted independently with assistance given to those who needed it.

Children in nappies were changed regularly by staff whilst following the nappy change policy.

Wobblers slept in the sleep room and staff were observed to follow the safe sleep policy where physical checks of sleeping children were recorded every 10 minutes. Toddlers slept in their playroom at a designated time on sleep beds.

The children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day such as after toileting and outdoor play and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water, paper towels and liquid antibacterial soap. The children enjoyed freedom of movement within each room and in the outdoor play area.

Children were supported and encouraged to behave appropriately for their age and stage of development through having simple rules to follow and a good level of choice of activities. The staff modelled positive behaviour for the children and the children were praised for their good behaviour.

Staff were observed to be kind, caring, calm in all their interactions with the children. Each child was treated as an individual and had their likes, abilities and natural tendencies understood and respected.

Provision was made to ensure that children could form and maintain secure relationships with the adults by use of the keyperson system in each room of the service.

The staff were observed to be interested in the children, listened to them and spoke to them using soft tones of voice and positive language, engaging them in conversation and giving each child the opportunity to express themselves.

Learning journals with photographic evidence of activities undertaken and art portfolios were available to share with parents and helped support a sense of working in partnership with parents.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT

The service was operated from a purpose-built building in an urban setting. The children had access to the following rooms: Wobbler room 1 Wobbler room 2, Toddler room, Pre-school room and Montessori room.

The rooms were equipped with open shelving units where children could access play equipment and materials independently. Shelving units were also used effectively as room dividers to create play spaces, such as the library area, home corner, construction area, small world area, art/ crafts area and tabletop activities area. Each of the areas were well resourced with toys and accessories including sensory and natural materials.

Sand play and water activities were open and accessible to children in the outdoor play area throughout the day which helped support sensorial development. The children had access to a large outdoor play at the rear of the facility, which was surrounded by high walls, timber fencing and gated. The outdoor play area was accessible directly off each room by staff and children. A section of the area underneath a large climbing frame was covered with an all-weather surface. Outdoor play equipment included a large climbing frame, trikes, ride on toys, playhouses and tractor tyres.

A large section of the outdoor play area had been roofed since the last inspection of the service which facilitated outdoor play in all weather conditions. Wellingtons and wet gear were available for all children in poor weather conditions and staff were aware of the requirement of applying sunscreen to all children during the summer months.

The outdoor play facilities were used by the children and staff on the day of the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

Basic Needs

- At 11.40 all children aged 2-3 years in the Toddler room were observed having a nap on floor beds in the room following their dinner. Some of the children did not sleep at this designated time as they did not appear to be tired. Consideration must be given to facilitate sleep at times when children are tired and not at prescheduled times for the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All this age group did not require a sleep on the day and staff have been advised in relation to identifying individual sleep needs of children.

Supporting documentation submitted

Not applicable.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 19(1)(a).

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Play and work equipment in each room was suitable to the age and stage of development of the children in each room.

Non-Compliance Information

- The adult couches in the Wobbler and Preschool rooms were not comfortable and offered no support to adults or children using them. The covers on both couches in the afterschool room which was used by preschool children during term times were dirty and worn.
- Books on the bookshelf in the preschool room were worn and torn and required replacement.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Couches have been replaced in the wobbler and preschool rooms and books have been replaced.

Supporting documentation submitted

Not applicable

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 21.

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: On arrival to the service, the entrance door leading into the pre-school facility was secured.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A significant risk in relation to the safety of the children was identified as the outside play area was not safe and secure as children could gain unsupervised access to the roadway, or an unauthorised person could gain access to the premises. Three gates leading from this area were unlocked and could easily be pushed open by a child. An Immediate Action notice was issued to the registered provider on 04/07/2023 in relation to Safety. A response was received on 04/07/2023 which demonstrated non-compliance identified on inspection of 03/07/2023 had been addressed.
2. A large play slide in the outside play area was not secured to the ground and posed a potential risk of injury to a child.
3. Stagnant water was observed in two containers in the outdoor play area and in a water table leading from the outdoor play area beside the portacabin.
4. The fire exit from the services outdoor play area was not clear and need to be cleaned. Play equipment such as a water table were evident in the passageway which could impede egress from the building by both staff and children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The gate in the outside area has been made secure, the slide has been removed, the containers of rainwater were emptied and removed.

The sand table was moved to provide a clear exit for staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence has been submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) no person other than-*
 - (i) pre-school child attending the service,*
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*
 - (iii) an employee, or*
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

Compliance Information

- (1) Staff ensured that each pre-school child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by staff in each room.
- (3) The manager ensured that no person other than the following can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee,
- (i) Pre-school child attending the service.
 - (ii) A person dropping or collecting such a child.
 - (iii) An employee.
 - (iv) An unpaid worker.
- (3)(b) Daily records of the entries to the visitor book were maintained.
- (4) The manager ensured that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

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) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that staff held current certification in first aid for children.
- (2)(a) A well-stocked first aid box was stored in the manager's office.
- (b) The first aid box was available at all times if required for a child.

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) A record was available of fire drill practice with the last recorded date of practice being June 2023.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual basis and most recently in January 2023.
- (4) The fire drill procedure was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) The maintenance record of the smoke alarm in the premises was not available and up to date.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The smoke alarm system has been serviced.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence has been submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 26.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was available for the preschool service and had an expiry date of 27/03/2024.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required.*

Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
1. There was evidence that the walls, doors and skirting boards in both rooms used by the preschool children and the afterschool children and the sanitary accommodation area required repainting.
 2. The cleaning schedule was not adhered to as dust and dirt was observed on the skirting boards in the main hallway of the building.
 3. The all-weather surface underneath the climbing frame had overgrown weeds growing around it.
 4. Litter such as used tissues and a used disposable glove were evident on the ground in the outside play area off the wobbler/ toddler room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A separate cleaning schedule for afterhours cleaning has been put in place.

All interior and exterior painting has been completed and all floors have been stripped and polished.

The all-weather surface has been weeded and treated. Staff were advised in relation to maintaining all areas of the service litter free.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence has been submitted of tasks completed.

Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 29.