

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK106
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Limerick Social Service Council Early Years Service
-------------------------	---

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Limerick Social Service Centre, Henry Street, Limerick, Co. Limerick
----------------------------	--

<b>Eircode:</b>	V94 2W14
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Brian Ryan
-------------------------------------	------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional
----------------------	---------------------

<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	19/10/2023
-------------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	52	PM	42
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Browne
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
---------------------------------	----------------

## Description of service

This full day care service is located in the city of Limerick and it provides full day, part time and sessional care to children aged from 6 months to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 08 30 and 17 30 hours for 48 weeks of the year. The service operates from the social service building and has sole access to the playrooms located on the ground floor and first floor. There are 4 playrooms in operation, 1 dedicated sleep room, sanitary facilities for the children and adults and a staff room. Outdoor play areas are located to the side and rear of the premises.

## Staffing

There were 16 staff present on the day of inspection including the person in charge working directly with the children.

There were 2 college students present and 3 adults employed under the community employment scheme.

Additional staff such as the cook and the receptionist were on the premises.

The registered provider does not work in the early years' service.

## 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 premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 24, 26 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for 14 staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed to work at the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for 3 staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) All staff working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) Two written and validated references were not available on file for 2 staff members. The two staff had only one reference instead of the required 2 written references.
- (d) Police vetting was not available for 3 staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (a) The outstanding references will be on file by end of this week. These will be submitted to the inspectorate as evidence.
- (d) Police vetting has been received for one staff member and the other two staff have been trying to obtain the police vetting form their home country.
- The service will ensure all the required documents will be on file before an employee commences employment in the service.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the police vetting for the one staff member submitted.

### Summary Comment

- (2)(a) This non-compliance remains outstanding as evidence that references have been obtained has not been submitted.
- (d) This non-compliance remains outstanding as evidence that 2 staff members have obtained police vetting has not been submitted.

## 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) At all times during the period of the inspection the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

On the day of the inspection there were 15 staff working across 4 rooms with 52 children present in the morning and 41 children present in the afternoon. The minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained and an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children in each room.

- Baby room - there were 5 (6mts- 1.5 yrs.) children and 2 staff present.
- Toddlers room - there were 16 (1.5-3 yrs.) children and 4 staff present.
- Preschool room 1 - there were 10 (2.8 -3yrs.) children and 2 staff present.
- Preschool room 2- there were 21 (3-4 yrs.) children and 7 staff present.

The person in charge was available to cover for staff breaks if required and office management. Staff rosters demonstrated there were at least 2 staff on the premises at all times.

A designated person was available to prepare and cook food for the children attending the service.

### 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

##### **BASIC NEEDS:**

The healthy eating policy of the service detailed a well-balanced and nutritious menu. The full time cook freshly prepares all meals daily. Dinner consisted of a choice of pasta, mashed potatoes, vegetables and a chicken curry . Snack consisted of a selection of fresh fruit. Drinking water was available throughout the day in each room if a child was thirsty and needed a drink. Milk was offered to the younger children with their afternoon snack. The children were given plenty of time to eat and enjoy their food and staff sat with the children which allowed for a quieter, calmer and unhurried atmosphere at mealtimes .

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

Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water, paper towels and liquid antibacterial soap.

Children could rest and relax as desired throughout the day in each room in the library area on child sized couches, cushions and on the floor mats. Children under 2 years of age slept in traditional type cots and were observed to be checked by staff every 10 minutes in line with the safe sleep policy of the service.

Staff were observed interacting well with the children, using soft tones of voice, using the child's name and getting down to their level and making eye contact.

The key person system was evident in the playrooms where a list demonstrated which staff member worked with a particular group of children. This supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with staff.

Staff were observed to be actively involved in children's play where they initiated play and joined in the games when invited by the children.

Children were observed to play outdoors in the morning and the afternoon and were appropriately clothed for the weather conditions at the time.

##### **PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:**

This full day care service comprised of 4 playrooms, sanitary accommodation areas and large outdoor play areas.

Adequate and varied play equipment suited to the age and stage of development of the child was available in each room and in the outdoor play area. Surplus play equipment was in storage and used on a rotational basis following cleaning. Sand play and water play activities were evident in the playrooms where children played in small groups and enjoyed this tactile play.

Children were observed playing in the secure outdoor play areas which were well resourced with outdoor play equipment such as playhouses, ride on toys, mud kitchens, climbing frames, sand boxes and plants.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Staff ensured that each pre-school child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by staff.

The service recorded children's entry and exit from the service digitally and also on roll book.

(3)(a) The person in charge had 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.

### 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) The fire drills were practiced on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill took place on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023.
  - (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2023 and a record was maintained of the number, type, and maintenance of the firefighting equipment. The fire and smoke alarm system was serviced on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a 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-  
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(e) Suitable sanitary facilities were not available in the newly opened preschool playroom as hot water thermostatically controlled at 43 degrees Celsius was not available at the wash hand basin in the sanitary accommodation upstairs. The recorded temperature was 16 degrees Celsius which was too cold for effective hand washing to reduce the risk of cross infection.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

(e) A new boiler has been installed to ensure that thermostatically controlled hot water at no higher than 43 degrees Celsius is available at the wash hand basin in the upstairs sanitary accommodation for the children attending the sessional service.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence

#### Summary Comment

The action as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 29 point (3) has been adequately addressed. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.