

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK135
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Name of Service:	Nursery Times
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Address of Service:	28 Mallow Street, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 TF21
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sarah O'Doherty
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	28/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	28
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
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Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Nursery Times is a private, full day childcare service located in Mallow Steet in Limerick city centre. It offers a service to children of all preschool ages. It is opened Monday to Friday from 7.00am to 7.00pm.

The service operates from an old-style Georgian building which was repurposed as a childcare service. It operates from 3 floor levels and the basement of the building. There is a Baby/Wobbler room and a Toddler room on the ground and first floor and 2 preschool rooms in the basement. There are two sleep rooms in operation to cater for the children under 2 years of age and for the older children who may require a sleep.

There are kitchen facilities, sanitary accommodations and manager offices in the building. There is an outdoor play area located to the rear of the building for the children.

A service for the school aged children is available each afternoon. A separate building behind the premises and one of the basement playrooms are used to accommodate the school aged children.

Staffing

The registered providers and the deputy manager works at the preschool service.

There are 14 staff employed to work at the pre-school service. Additional staff are available to work in the kitchen preparing snacks and meals and cleaning duties.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, and 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 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 registered provider was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider and the deputy were present in the service on the day of the inspection.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and roles and responsibilities of each employee.

(2) All staff files were viewed on the day and the following information was in place:

(a) There were written, past employer's references available in respect of the adults working in the service, with recorded validations where required.

(b) There were references available from sources other than past employers on file where required.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available in respect of all the adults in the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for the adults that had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(4) The adults working directly with the children in the service all held an award in Early Childhood Care & Education ranging from Level 5 to 8.

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) At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(2) On the day of the inspection there were 11 staff working across 3 rooms with 29 preschool children present in the morning and 28 preschool children present in the afternoon.

In the Baby/Wobbler room there were 6 preschool children (3 aged 0-1 years, and 3 aged 1-2 years) and 3 staff present.

In the Toddler room there were 6 preschool children (2 aged 1-2 years and 4 aged 2-3 years) and 3 staff present.

In Preschool room 1 there were 17 preschool children (all aged over 3 years) and 3 staff present.

The minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained and an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children in each room.

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 of Children:

Healthy eating was promoted within the service. Adequate, suitable, nutritious, and varied food and drink was observed to be available for each pre-school child attending the service. Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snack and meal without being rushed.

The privacy and dignity of each child was respected. Toileting and nappy changing were carried out in a sensitive manner. Each child had access to wet suits for outdoor play and a change of clothes if needed.

The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence. Regular hand washing was observed by the children. There were child friendly visual aids to support the children with effective hand washing in the service.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the preschool rooms and in the outdoor area.

Sleep facilities were available in two sleep rooms, with an adequate supply of cots available to facilitate sleep on demand for all children. Low level beds were used for the older children.

Children were monitored while sleeping and all checks were documented.

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 main entrance door to the preschool facility was closed on arrival to the service and the premises were protected by onsite cameras and alarm system. Parents were met by a staff at all times when dropping their child to the facility and at collection times.

Exit doors to the preschool rooms at basement level were closed and inaccessible to the children. The gates were in an open position and fixed to the wall. These gates were only closed and locked at the end of the day when all children and staff have left the premises. Cameras were installed and parents must ring the bell when dropping and collecting their child.

The gate at the top of the stairs from the basement remains open.

Fire Safety:

The fire exit doors to the preschool playrooms were clear at all times and security measures were in place to ensure parents and children could enter and leave under the supervision of the staff.

Non-Compliance Information

Safe Sleep:

While the service had an agreement plan with 2 families for their children aged between 15 months and 2 years to sleep on low level beds instead of a cot.

However the low-level bed for these children aged between 15 months and 2 years were not suitable for this age group.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Safe Sleep: The provider has stated in the response that:

The service has purchased 2 contour cocoon mattresses in line with Tusla Safe Sleep regulations for the Toddler sleep room.

Supporting documentation submitted

Safe Sleep:

Photos of the new beds attached.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 23 Safety point on Safe sleep.