

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015LK154 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Tait House Community Creche |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Tait House, Collins Avenue, Roxboro Road, Limerick. |
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|                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | V94NXT8 |
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| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Michael Quilligan |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|

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|----------------------|----------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Full Day |
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| <b>Dates of Inspection:</b> | 18/07/2023 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 27 | PM | 27 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

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

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

### Description of service

This full day community service is located in an urban area of Limerick city, and it provides full day care, part time and sessional care to children aged from 0 to 6 years of age. The opening hours are from 08:30 – 17:30 hours, Monday – Friday for 51 weeks of the year. The service has a maximum capacity for approximately 80 preschool children. The premises is a single storey purpose built childcare facility with 5 playrooms in operation, dedicated sleep area within the rooms, sanitary facilities for children and adults, kitchen, office and outdoor play areas to the front and rear of the premises.

### Staffing

There were 15 staff members working with the children including the manager and deputy manager and 5 staff members were on leave.

An additional 5 staff members are scheduled to work in the kitchen preparing snacks and meals, in the office and to complete cleaning and maintenance work.

All staff working with the children have achieved an 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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 8,9,11,19,21,23,25,26,28 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.

## Additional Information

19/07/2023

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider as there were 5 adults working in the service who did not have evidence of Garda vetting disclosures.

Please refer to Regulation 9 – Management and Recruitment in the body of the report.

20/07/2023

All outstanding Garda vetting for 5 adults was obtained and submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part II - Registration and Register

#### Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.*

(1) The registered provider did not notify Tusla, early years registration office in writing that there had been a change in circumstances in relation to the person in charge in the service.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The early years registration office was notified on the 21/12/2022 by the service of the proposed change. The registration office was emailed on the day of inspection by the service manager. The inspectorate office replied on the 19/7/23 confirming the change in management.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Notification of change in circumstance sent.

#### Summary Comment

The action as stated by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified.

### 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.*

*(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:*

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

### Compliance Information

- (1)(a) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) The registered person in charge and the deputy person in charge were available on the premises as outlined in the staff roster.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and roles and responsibilities of each employee. Team leaders were appointed in each room of the service.
- (2) The files of 25 staff members were checked and the following documents were available for inspection:
- (a) References from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer were available for 24 staff.
  - (b) References from sources other than past employers in the case of a person who had no past employers were available.
  - (c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in was available in respect of 20 staff.

(d) Police vetting was in place for 3 staff members who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) All staff working directly with children attending the service had an award in Early childhood Care and Education ranging from Level 5 to 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) References from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer were not available for one staff member.

(c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were not available in respect of 5 staff who worked in the service.

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the 19/07/2023 requesting that these 5 staff must not have access to the children until Garda Vetting disclosures has been obtained and reviewed by the registered provider.

(7) Training records in relation to the policies and procedures pertaining to the service were not available or completed by the person in charge for all staff.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)

(a)

A file review has taken place and references requested have now been obtained.

(c)

Garda vetting for all staff was submitted into the inspectorate office.

Going forward a copy of the Garda vetting for all persons working in the service will be on file before they can begin working in the creche.

(7)

Individual employee training records are now on file for each staff member.

Going forward each training record will be updated and signed by management.

#### Supporting documentation submitted:

Copies of required documents.

### Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified. This actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

### 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 10 staff working across 5 rooms with 27 children present in the morning and 27 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 years) children and 2 staff present.
- Wobbler room - there were 5 (1.5- 2 .5years) children and 2 staff present.
- Toddlers room - there were 6(2-3 years) children and 2 staff present.
- Preschool room - there were 5(2-3) children and 2 staff present.
- Montessori room - there were 6 (3-4 years) children and 2 staff present.

An additional 5 staff were available to cover for staff breaks /office management. Staff rosters demonstrated there were at least 2 staff on the premises at all times.

### 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, a*

#### 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 pasta, mashed potatoes, vegetables and a tomato-based sauce. 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. Children in the Montessori room were given the opportunity to pour their own drinks and serve their own food during meal and snack time using a variety of suitably sized utensils. 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.

Children were 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 adults modelled positive behaviour for the children and the children were praised for their good behaviour.

Relationships around children were supported as the core staff in the service had not changed since the last inspection and children were familiar with staff as they used the keyperson system in each room of the service.

Staff had a good understanding of the benefits of the use of the keyperson system.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The service was operated from a purpose-built building in an urban setting.

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 and arts and crafts area. Other interest areas included: sand play area and tabletop activities area.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### BASIC NEEDS:

1. There were 5 secure outdoor play areas available for use and the weather was dry and sunny however children in the Preschool , Wobbler room and the Baby room did not go outdoors to play in the fresh air until 15.30 hrs.
2. Children did not have the choice of playing or moving freely between the outdoors and indoors as doors leading to the outside play area in each room remained closed and locked at all times.
3. The rest area in the preschool room was not sufficiently developed and resourced to make the area inviting for the children. Bean bags were dirty and did not provide sufficient support for the children to sit on comfortably.
4. For dinner the children were provided with plastic plates and cups however as all the children were aged between 3 to 5 years the crockery and utensils used was not suitable for their age and stage of development.

#### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT:

5. All walls in each of the playroom were overpopulated with posters, art work and service information which may result in sensory overload.
6. Most of the work displayed was located too high on the walls which meant that children could not enjoy looking at what was displayed.
7. The outdoor play area at the rear of the service was poorly developed , resourced and visually not pleasing. This may impact on the children's play and extended learning.
8. There were insufficient natural and open-ended play materials available for the children for example twigs, stones, play dough and found materials such as seashells to encourage the children to think for themselves and extend their learning.

9. Crayons and paper were not accessible to the children in Wobbler room and activities such as painting colouring and sand play were mostly adult directed. This may impact on the children emerging interests, likes, preferences and behaviour.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The issue of all children going outside was discussed during a staff meeting.  
Going forward a timetable for outdoor activity will be put in place and signed off by lead educator and management.
2. Doors to be left open and unlocked when weather allows. This will be discussed during staff meeting with lead educators. The service will source a latch and hook mechanism so that staff can leave doors open safely. These will be fitted when maintenance staff member returns from annual leave.
3. New equipment to be supplied to develop the rest area. Bean bags have been removed.  
The service will ensure that any equipment that needs to be replaced is done. Room materials list to be developed and materials to be checked bimonthly and signed off by management. Sails and paint and new cushions have been obtained to develop rest area room.
4. New crockery equipment to be obtained and will be age appropriate and the service will ensure that all dinner cutlery is age appropriate.
5. and 6.  
All posters and artwork have been removed from the walls. Artwork will now be displayed on a designated area and will be at child height level. The service information will be now contained in the wall mounted display units. This issue will be monitored by management monthly.
6. The rear outdoor play area will be developed with more natural spaces and new equipment to be sourced. This will be monitored monthly and any equipment that's broken will be replaced.
7. More natural and open-ended materials will be provided, the service will involve the children and parents in collecting as much natural materials as possible to help extend the child's play experience.
8. All staff will monitor the areas to ensure open-ended materials, and equipment are replaced when necessary.
9. The art supplies will be placed on a low-level table in the Wobbler room to ensure the children have access at all times during day. Sand play side and slide are open at all times for the children to explore. This will encourage more child led play activities.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographs and invoices of materials purchased.

### **Summary Comment**

The action as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

## 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.*

### Non-Compliance Information

1. There was an insufficient variety and quantity of play equipment in each of the outside play areas.
2. There was no seating outdoors for the children and adults to sit together.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

1. New equipment to be obtained for outside areas.
2. The service has sourced some seating which has been placed in the outside areas.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographs and invoices of equipment purchased.

### **Summary Comment**

The action as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

## 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.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. A sun canopy which extended from the roof of the building over the outside play area was broken and had filled with water. This posed a potential safety hazard to both the staff and the children.

##### Infection Control:

2. There was a foul odour in the sanitary accommodation area as the nappy changing waste disposal bins were emptied only once a week. This posed a risk of cross infection.
3. Aprons and gloves were not removed by staff once nappy changing occurred as staff were observed returning to the playroom with the child without having removed them. This increased the risk of cross infection.
4. Childrens hands were not observed to be washed following nappy changing or before children ate their snack. This increased the risk of infection.

##### Administration of Medication:

5. The service policy of providing sunscreen for children without having determined that each child was not allergic to sunscreen.

#### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. The canopy is to be removed and replaced with manually operated canvas panels.

##### Infection Control:

2. The bins are now being removed twice a week. Removal of bins will be monitored and signed off by management.
3. The issue of aprons and gloves was discussed during staff meeting and all staff were informed of the procedure and signage was placed in both changing areas. Management will monitor the situation and ensure that all staff remove gloves and aprons before entering the playroom.
4. Staff were updated about hand washing and the risk of infection.

### Administration of Medication:

- 5 All parents will be asked to supply their own sunscreen and parents will have to sign a consent form stating that their child is not allergic to the suncream.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs

### Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

## 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) The registered provider had ensured that a person trained in first aid response for children was at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. There were 14 staff members trained in first aid response with an expiry dated for March, April and July 2024.

(2) A suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in all the playrooms in the premises.

(b) was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

## 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) Fire drills were carried out monthly and the most recent drill took place on the 24/06/2023.
- (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment was available on the premises with the firefighting equipment serviced in September 2022.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed at the main entrance area of the service and in all the playrooms and the fire assembly point was clearly visible at the front entrance to the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(b) There was no maintenance record available of the most recent servicing of the fire alarm system for the service.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)(b) The fire alarm system was serviced on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 2023.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the updated certificate of servicing and testing.

### Summary Comment

The action as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified. This will be reviewed on next inspection.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured, evidenced by the current certificate relevant to the type of service being operated and it had an expiry date of 27<sup>th</sup> of March 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, and*

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
1. The entrance hallway to the service was not cleaned and maintained as the floors, skirting and entrance door were dirty.
  2. Paintwork on the outside windows in the outdoor play area was not maintained.
  3. Floors and floor mats in the preschool room were dirty and dusty.
  4. A rubber safety protector around a pole in the outside play area was torn and in a poor condition.
  5. Cleaning checklists were available and displayed in the service however the following information was not recorded to demonstrate that regular and thorough cleaning of the service took place.
    - Signature of the person who had completed the cleaning tasks.
    - Signature of a member of management who had checked to ensure that cleaning procedures had been completed satisfactorily.
    - Frequency of cleaning.
    - Days of the week where a deep clean took place.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- 1 The entrance area has been cleaned. The mat has been replaced with a new one and the door has been cleaned. Management will ensure that entrance area is cleaned daily.
2. There will be a panel fitted onto the affected area and painting and varnishing will be completed when maintenance staff member returns from annual leave. Management will ensure that panels will be maintained when required and regular inspection will take place by maintenance staff.
3. Floors have been washed and buffed. Mats hoovered and washed, and new mats obtained. Management and lead educators will ensure that floors and mats are cleaned daily and signed by management.
4. A new pole cover has been ordered and waiting to be delivered. A temporary measure has been put in place until the cover arrives.
5. A new cleaning schedule has been implemented and it will be signed by staff using their initials. It will also be signed by the lead educators and management. Groups will be relocated to facilitate deep cleaning.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs and invoices.

#### Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified. This will be reviewed on next inspection.