

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK157		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Northside FRC Sunshine Childcare Centre		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Northside Family Resource Centre, Ballynanty, Limerick.		
<b>Eircode:</b>	V94 APX8		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Ciara Kane		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day Care		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	18/09/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	66	PM 54
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M Riordan, E Griffin.		
<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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Sunshine Creche is a community based, full day care service in operation since September 2006. It provides a service to children from 5 months of age up to school going age. The service operates from 8:00am to 6:00pm, Monday to Friday.

The service can accommodate up to 110 preschool children at any one time. There were 95 pre-children on the register at the time of the inspection.

There are 5 well-resourced indoor playrooms along with 1 outdoor preschool facility. Sleep facilities, sanitary accommodation and nappy changing areas are all located close to each preschool room. Each play group have access to their own designated outdoor play area. Sheltered areas outdoors are accessible to the children to facilitate unlimited time outside regardless of weather conditions.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the chairperson of the committee responsible for the management of the pre-school service. There are 25 adults working in the service which includes a designated manager. All adults hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5, 6, 7 or 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. The staff engage in ongoing professional development and the following is a sample of some of the courses completed by staff: Child Protection, First Aid, Fire Safety, Manual Handling, Health and Safety, Infection Control and Data Protection, Leadership Development, Smart Healthy Eating and QRF training. They have also completed courses such as LINC, Circle of Security, Incredible Years Programme, Smart Start, Supporting Child Development and Leadership, Wellbeing and Engagement.

### 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.

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 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.

(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.

(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) 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. The organisations head of services was also available on the day of the inspection.

(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.

(c) There is a clear management structure that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of the management team.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for all 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 8 staff members who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

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

(7) All staff had induction training and were supervised on

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service.

(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and

(c) Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services Regulations 2016)

## 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) The registered provider at all times ensured that the correct number of suitable and qualified staff were available in all areas of the service.

(2) The following were the adult child ratio in the service at the time of the unannounced inspection.

Baby room there was 3 children and 2 staff,

Toddler room there were 9 children and 3 staff,

Playgroup there were 15 children and 3 staff,

Pre-school Room 1 there were 14 children and 3 staff,

Pre-school Room 2 there were 10 children and 2 staff.

Preschool Room 3 there were 15 children and 3 staff.

The adult/child ratio in all areas was correct and there were sufficient relief staff to assist at busy periods and to cover staff break times throughout the day.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of children's registration forms were reviewed with examples selected from all rooms of the service. There was a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of these children.

- (a) The name and date of birth of the child.
- (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) Provision to record the date on which the child ceased to attend the service.
- (d) The name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service.
- (e) Authorisation for the collection of the child.
- (f) Details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention. Details of the child's likes and dislikes were also recorded.
- (g) The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner where the family has registered with a general practice.

(h) Record of each child's immunisation.

(i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The registered providers ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service. This information was shared with all parents in the services.

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the persons in charge. A staff identity poster was displayed outside the entrance door to each room in service.
- (b) Details of the type of service in operation and the age profile of children for which the facility is registered to provide services. This information was distributed on a parent information booklet.

- (c) Details of the adult/child ratios in the service.
- (d) The type of care programme provided in the service.
- (e) The facilities available.
- (f) The opening hours and fees.
- (g) A record in writing was maintained of policies and procedures required in accordance with Regulation 10 and were found to be comprehensive and detailed.
- (h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child daily.
- (i) Staff rosters were maintained on a daily basis and available for inspection. This was recorded manually and electronically. These correlated with the numbers that were present on the day of inspection.
- (j) The service had a medication administration record template available that could be used in the event of a child requiring medication to be administered at the service.
- (k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child 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
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

#### Compliance Information

##### BASIC NEEDS:

Healthy eating was promoted throughout the service. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were prepared fresh each day and were served at regular intervals. Food trolleys delivered meals and snacks to each room at the service. Jugs of water and cups were accessible to all children in each of the rooms. Chicken curry was served at dinner time on the day of the inspection and children were all offered extra helpings of dinner if they were hungry. A second hot meal was offered to each child during the afternoon. Staff in each room had supplies of snacks if children required more food between mealtimes.

Sanitary accommodation was located next to each room in the service. Nappy changing facilities were provided next to the Baby and Toddler room. All toiletries for the children were safely stored and clearly labelled and were located within easy reach of the staff. Nappy changing policies were clearly displayed next to the changing units. Each room had a supply of tissues and wipes within easy reach of the staff while changing. Pedal operated, lidded bins were easily accessible for the safe disposal of waste.

Clearly labelled individual spaces and coat hooks for each child's belongings were available to support organised access and independence for the children.

Sleep rooms were located next to the Baby and Toddler rooms. Partitions separating the areas were in place. There was a sufficient number of standard cots accessible to facilitate children to rest when needed. Children were closely observed during all sleep periods and all sleep checks were documented in writing. The children over 2 years who required a sleep had access to low level beds with sheets and blankets provided.

Rest areas with soft seating, soft floor coverings, cushions and blankets were accessible in each of the rooms at the service. Staff throughout the service encouraged quiet periods during the day to facilitate each child's need for comfort, rest and relaxation.

The children had regular change of environment. They spend long periods of time outdoors and each age group had access to their own play area. The doors to these areas remained open when weather permitted, and children had a choice whether they played indoors or outdoors. Sheltered areas were provided outside for children to use on warm days or in wet weather. On the day of the inspection children were appropriately dressed for wet weather with each child wearing waterproof suits and wellies. Warm fleeces were also available for the children when the weather became cooler.

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

The physical and the material environment of each room in the service was carefully developed, full of activities which were aimed at developing social, emotional, cognitive, physical and communication skills. The baby room had a calm atmosphere with lots of soft floor space for workers and children to relax and play. Adult seating was available for staff to hold children while feeding and comforting them. Highchairs were accessible for mealtimes. The Toddler room had more challenging areas for children who had just started walking. Low level tables and chairs were used at mealtimes and for many tabletop activities. Low level climbing frames encouraged children to further challenge their gross motor skills. The playgroup and the preschool rooms had environments that were flexible and responsive to the emerging changing needs, preferences and interests of the children.

Photographs displayed throughout all rooms showed the many activities and events children participated in.

Reading areas with a variety of books was available in all rooms. Toys and equipment were rotated, and internal and external spaces rearranged and redesigned depending on each child's preferences, interests and abilities. The outdoor preschool class spend the preschool session outdoors all year round, even in wet and cold weather. Suitable outdoor gear was worn by the children. The outdoor space provided ever-changing opportunities for new experiences as the environment changed with the seasons and the weather. Sheltered areas were available outside for storage areas and for tabletop activities. Outdoor sanitary accommodation was available with hot water outside to ensure regular washing of hands.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b) There were 8 standard cots provided in the Baby/ Toddler sleep room, 4 for the babies and 4 for the toddlers. All cots were in a proper state of repair and all mattresses appeared clean, firm and the correct size. There was sufficient space between all cots. Staff were all aware of the safe sleep guidelines and were observed closely monitoring all children while sleeping. All observations were recorded in writing. No duvets, pillows or fleece blankets were used in the cots. All children were facilitated to sleep when tired and not just at prescheduled sleep times. The preschool children over 2 years were allowed sleep on sleep mats in their designated rooms. All sleep mats had sheets and covers supplied. Blinds were pulled, lights were dimmed and staff sat with the children while they settled down to sleep. Information on children's sleep times were shared with parents.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) The mattresses on the cots did not have waterproof covers applied. These are required to adequately protect the mattresses, to ensure proper cleaning and to prevent spread of infection between the children sharing the cots.

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

## Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that all mattresses have been fitted with waterproof covers and these will be cleaned after each child has used the cots. Staff have also updated their Safe Sleep training since the recent inspection.

## Supporting documentation submitted

Receipts for mattress covers were forwarded. Copies of the Safe Sleep certificates were also submitted. Photographs of the mattresses cover in place were emailed to the office of the Early years Inspectorate.

## Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 20 have been adequately addressed.

## 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

(3)(a) The service ensured that only children attending, the person who drops and collects the children and the employees gain access to the premises.

(b) All visitors to the service were signed in and signed out by a staff member. Details of the reason for the visit was recorded. Contact details of each visitor was also recorded.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1) The daily attendance record of the children was not maintained accurately. The departure time of the children was not documented as children left the facility but was filled it at a later stage. This is required to ensure an accurate account of children on the premises is always available, particularly if the premises were to be evacuated in the case of an emergency.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

All attendance forms in each room are filled out as children arrive and leave the premises. Managers at the service spot check these records during the day.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

The agenda of a staff meeting at the service where the above action plan was agreed on record keeping was forwarded to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 24 have been adequately addressed.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had a current insurance certificate which outlined that adequate insurance was available for 115 preschool children to attend the full day care service. The insurance cover commenced on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2023 and expired on the 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-*

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure. No identification of any defects were observed or highlighted by the designated person in charge or any staff member.
- (b) The entrance to the service was secure and all visitor access was managed appropriately. The outdoor areas were safe and secured with high walls and fences preventing any unauthorised access or exit from the areas.
- (c) Protective covers were provided on light fittings where required. Lighting in the sleep areas were dimmed while children slept.
- (d) The premises throughout appeared clean and well maintained. Routine cleaning schedules were signed off by staff after cleaning duties were completed.
- (e) Adequate and suitable sanitary accommodation were noted both internally and externally in the service. The outdoor preschool had access to their own bathroom facilities outside.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (c)
1. The window in the Baby sleep room which provided natural ventilation in the area was closed on the day of the inspection. Staff stated due to the inaccessible height of the window, this window was rarely opened. To ensure adequate air circulation in the service and prevent the spread of infection openable windows or mechanical ventilation is required in all occupied rooms.
- (d)
2. An armchair in the Toddler room required repair as areas of the plastic cover were damaged, making it difficult to maintain the cleanliness of the chair surface. To prevent cross infection all surfaces must be intact and easily cleanable.
  3. The outdoor play areas accessible for the babies and toddlers required maintenance and cleaning. Weeds were observed growing in between the rubber mat tiles and large uneven size gaps between the tiles could pose a tripping hazard in this area.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The opening device on the window in the sleep room has been repaired. The opening device on the window has been added to the Health and Safety checklist which is checked daily.
2. The armchair which needed repair had been removed and a new adult chair has been ordered.
3. All outdoor areas will be maintained, weeded and power hosed by the maintenance employees of the service. Contact has been made with a Sports Surface company to visit the service and repair any works that are required.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

The following documentation was submitted:

Invoice from the electrician who repaired the window in the sleep room,  
The revised Health & Safety Childcare Checklist,  
The order form for a new chair and a photo of the new chair,  
A photo of the repaired window in the Sleep Room.

### Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 have been adequately addressed.