

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK168
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Name of Service:	Sunny Lane Creche
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Address of Service:	Sunny Lane The Avenue Main Street Castleconnell Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 73F4
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Name of Registered Provider:	Anne McNamara
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	72	PM	67
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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
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

This full day care service is located in a rural village setting. It provides care to children aged between 1 – 6 years and is open from Monday to Friday between 07.45 hrs and 17.15 hrs including a sessional service from 09.00 hrs to 12.00 hrs for 38 weeks of the year. There are 5 playrooms and facilities for outdoor play are available on site.

Staffing

There are 23 adults on the staff roster and employed in the service.

This is inclusive of the following.

- 19 staff with childcare qualifications work directly with the children which includes the registered provider.
- 4 additional staff which includes kitchen staff , administrative staff , school aged staff and a maintenance staff member.

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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4)

Regulation 10

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Regulation 11 (2)

Regulation 19 (1)(a)

Regulation 25

Regulation 26

Regulation 28

Regulation 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 registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

(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 named person in charge and a deputy was available to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection the registered provider was present and the staff roster indicated that the registered provider or the deputy were available on the premises each day.

(2) The files of all 23 staff members working in the service were reviewed.

(a) There were 37 written and validated references submitted by staff from previous employers on file.

(b) There were 9 written and validated references submitted by staff from sources other than past employers.

(c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for all the staff employed to work in the service.

The Garda vetting for the staff was dated within the last three years as per the regulatory notice, EYI-RN12.3 renewal of garda vetting, published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 1st of January 2024.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside of jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months.

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(4) There were 19 staff members with the appropriate childcare qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies were reviewed and contained the required information for staff to ensure the safe care of children at all times.

- Safe Sleep Policy
- Outings Policy

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 registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. On the day of the inspection there were 15 childcare staff working with and supervising 72 children in the morning and there were 14 childcare staff supervising 67 children in the afternoon.

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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.

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. Dinner consisted of mince meat, vegetables and mashed potatoes. Most children were observed to self-feed and were given assistance by staff where required. The menu for the day was displayed at the entrance to the service which kept parents informed and facilitated good communication between the service and parents. Drinking water was available throughout the day in each room if a child was thirsty and needed a drink. The children sat together at the tables and were given as much time as they needed to eat and enjoy their food.

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.

Children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day such as after toileting 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. Staff were observed to wash their hands regularly throughout the day.

Children could rest and relax as desired throughout the day in each room in the library area on adult/child sized couches, cushions and on floor mats. Each room appeared homely, comfortable and inviting for the children as additional floor mats and seating were provided.

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.

Wobblers were observed to be held and cuddled and their positions were changed regularly.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within each room and in the outdoor play area. The outdoor play space was used at intervals throughout the day and supported children's physical activity and social interaction.

The 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

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children and the children were praised for their good behaviour. Art and craft activities observed on the day included children who made Mother's Day cards and Saint Patricks day cards.

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 through the use of the keyperson system in each room. Staff had a good understanding of the benefits of the use of the keyperson system.

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) Two staff held current certification in first aid responder for children and were available at all times while the service operated.
- (2)(a) A first aid box was stored in the entrance hallway.
- (b) The first aid box was available at all times if required by a child.

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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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last recorded date of practice of fire drill was February 2026.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last maintained in September 2025 and the smoke alarms were last maintained in March 2026.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the entrance hallway and in each room of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The Insurance certificate for the service was available and adequate and had an expiry date of March 2026.

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.*

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Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (a) The premises was of sound and stable structure and there were no visible defects.
- (b) The entrance and exit doors were secure to prevent children from exiting and to prevent unauthorised access.
- (c) Heating , ventilation and lighting were adequate in each area of the service.
- (d) Each room and each sanitary area was clean and well maintained.
- (e) Suitable sanitary facilities were available for both staff and children.

All waste was managed appropriately.

Hygienic hand washing, drying and nappy changing facilities were available.