

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LS022
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Name of Service:	Crettyard Childcare
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Address of Service:	The Parish Centre, Newtown, Crettyard, Co. Laois
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Eircode:	R93 Y7K4
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Name of Registered Provider:	Niamh Campion
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	05/12/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
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Inspection undertaken by:	K. Murphy
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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

The age range of children that the service is registered to accommodate is 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates on a Monday to Friday basis. The service is operated by a community provider. The Early Years' Service is located in a single storey community facility. One pre-school room, a kitchen and an office are provided. Outdoor play areas are attached to the rear of the service. Onsite parking and set down facilities are provided. The service is rural in its location in the village of Newtown Crettyard, County Laois.

Staffing

There were three adults present on 5 December 2024 including the designated person in charge. The registered provider does not work directly with the children and was not present during the inspection.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the co-operation 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.*

(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 and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

The designated person in charge and deputy were present for the duration of the inspection.

Five staff files including the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from past employers or from a source other than a past employer in respect of the four staff files reviewed. Two written references from a source other than a past employer were available in respect of the registered provider.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the staff files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Staff members working directly with children held qualifications at levels 5 to 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.

(2)

There were nineteen children attending the service supervised directly by three adults.

(8)(a)

The staff roster indicated that two adults are on the premises at all times.

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)

In a sample review of twelve child records the details relating to (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)(i) were in place.

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)

The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development. Children were encouraged to be independent in caring for their belongings and putting on their coats. A daily leader system was in place to build confidence in the children and promote turn taking. Children were supervised to use the toilet independently and regular hand washing was observed. All children were observed to enjoy free play, choosing their own activity to participate in and playing in the outdoor play areas supervised by staff.

A key person system is in operation in the service which helped to promote the emotional security for children. There was a calm and happy atmosphere in the service. Children were content with their carers and staff were familiar with each child and their personality. Adults were observed to be positive towards children evidenced by individual names used, eye contact and praise for children on completion of activities. Good teamwork between the staff members was observed during the inspection.

During snacks and mealtimes, the staff sat with small groups of children, providing support and offering assistance as required. Children were dressed appropriately in coats and hats for outdoors and enjoyed the play experiences in the outdoor play area.

The service worked in partnership with parents and used a social media platform to provide daily and weekly updates to parents. A newsletter is circulated to families at the end of each month. Artwork and observations are shared with parents. The children's learning journals depicted children's developmental progress and activities during the year.

A range of developmentally appropriate experiences were available for all children. Areas of interest were noted in the room and included a home area, construction area, arts and crafts, dress up, sensory play and small world items.

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-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child 19 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(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.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable and adequate play and work equipment were provided indoors and outdoors.

(b)

Soft furnishings provided appropriate rest facilities in the pre-school room for any child who wished to avail of rest and relaxation.

(3)(a)

A large garden area was located to the rear of the service and available to the children. The perimeter was secured by a high-level concrete wall and wire fence. A separate sheltered play area with an all-weather absorbent surface was located adjacent to the pre-school room. The outdoor area was equipped with a variety of swings, slides, rockers, tables and benches, a covered sand pit, a seesaw, a stationary wooden train for imaginative play as well as wall mounted chalk boards, a music wall, a water wall and a variety of bikes and trikes.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

Parents provide the meals and snacks for their child. A range of protein filled rolls, sandwiches, crackers and a selection of fruit, vegetable and dairy products was noted during the mid-morning snack. Additional food was available in the service if required by a child. Milk and water were available. A refrigerator was available for the storage of perishable foods.

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 service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. A coded system was in place for access to the service. The Inspector signed the visitors book in the reception area of the service.

Daily checklists were available and reviewed in respect of the pre-school room and the sanitary accommodation. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. Cleaning schedules were available. Warm water, hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the pre-school room and the sanitary accommodation. The temperature of the water recorded at the wash hand basins was approximately 38 degrees Celsius.

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the pre-school room and in the associated sanitary accommodation for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature. Medication was stored correctly in the service.

Fire Safety:

Fire exit routes were unobstructed in the service. A fire assembly point was noted to the front of the service.

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 adults were qualified in first aid response (FAR). The roster indicated that FAR cover was provided during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)
A first aid box was available in a prominent location in the service.

(b)
A first aid box was readily available to children in the pre-school service.

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 firefighting 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)

There was a record of fire drills carried out in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 12 November 2024.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were serviced on the 21 October 2024 and 10 September 2024 respectively.

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were noted in conspicuous locations in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service and the expiry date noted was 27 March 2025.