

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MO057		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Juniors Childcare		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Spencer Manor, Spencer Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo		
<b>Eircode:</b>	F23 HX79		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Toni Hamrock		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20/07/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	22	PM 22
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M Farrell		
<b>Title:</b>	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).

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

Juniors Childcare is a privately owned and operated parttime service that is registered to cater for children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. The service is located in a residential area of Castlebar in County Mayo. The service is registered to open from 08:30 - 18:00 hours however was operating from 8:30-14:00 hours during the summer months. There are two playrooms, a kitchen, office and sanitary facilities provided with enclosed outdoor play areas to the sides and front of the building.

### Staffing

Six staff including the registered provider work directly with the children in the service.

### 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. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23 and 27 however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under regulations 16 and 24. 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*

*(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) There was a designated person in charge in the service and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
  - (b) The designated person in charge or deputy were available on the premise throughout the period of inspection.
- (2)
- The person in charge advised the inspector that two new staff had started working in the service since the last focused inspection of the 25 May 2021. The vetting information for the other four staff had been reviewed on previous inspections. The following vetting documentation and qualifications were available on file or not required for the two new staff members:
- (a) There was one written validated reference from a past employer for one staff member.
  - (c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána for both staff.
  - (d) International police vetting was available for required time frames for one staff member.
- (4)
- Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available on file for the one of the staff new to the service since the last inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) There were no written validated references from past employers available for one staff member.  
The second written validated reference on file for one staff was not from a past employer but the staff member's employment history detailed that they had previous employment.
- (4)
- The qualification documentation on file for one staff member did not demonstrate that the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent had been achieved.

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

The registered provider advised in written responses that:

### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

- (2) (a) Written references have been acquired from one staff member. The other staff member is on holidays and the reference will be obtained on her return.
- (4) After the inspection the staff member has started another module of level 5 and will have it completed by November.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Copies of written references and documents relating to the enrolment of a staff on a course in Early Childhood Care and Education were submitted.

### **Summary Comment**

The non-compliance in relation to regulation 9(2)(a) has been addressed by the service.

The non-compliance relating to regulation 9(4) remains outstanding until the staff member has obtained 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. It is acknowledged that the registered provider has stated that the staff member is in the process of completing the required qualification. This non-compliance will be subject to review at the service's next inspection.

## 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) There was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children on the day of the unannounced inspection with 4 adults working directly with the 20 preschool children present on the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service. A further two preschool children arrived later to the service. A fifth adult was present in the service and worked directly with the children from 10.05 until 12:25 hours.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the relevant minimum adult to children ratios were adhered to in the service. There were 4 to 5 adults working directly with the maximum of 22 preschool children that were present on the day. Some children moved between the two playrooms and at times the children from both playrooms were amalgamated together to play in one of the outdoor areas.

## 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:

(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.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (j) There was no record system available for inspection for the recording of medication should it be required to be administered to a child.
  - (k) There was an accident and incident book available with details of accidents and incidents that had occurred in the service. However, insufficient details were recorded for the most recent accident/incident logged in the service with the first name only of the child involved recorded and was not signed by the staff members. There was no evidence that information regarding the accident/incident had been provided to the child's parents.

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

The registered provider advised in a written response that:

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

(1) (j) & (k)

A medicine record book and new accident report book are now in place and all staff are aware of procedures. A meeting was held with staff on documenting medicine and reporting accident sheets. All staff are aware of the procedure when reporting accidents and administering medicines.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted:**

None

### Summary Comment

The actions taken have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on inspection.

### 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

- The inspector was advised by the staff that none of the children were attending the service's summer camps for longer than five hours per day. Accordingly, warm meals were not being sourced from the outside caterer that the service uses when full day care service hours are in operation. The children brought in food from home for their morning meal that was eaten at 11:00 hours seated in groups at tables in the playrooms. Some of the children also ate food from the lunch boxes at a second mealtime at 13:00 hours where cheese and ham sandwiches were also provided by the service. The staff sat with the children to supervise them eating and included all the children in conversations.
- The staff were observed to change children's nappies at regular intervals in the nappy changing unit provided. The staff chatted to the children during nappy changes and helped them to wash their hands following the process. Children who were toilet trained were supported by the staff to use the toilet by themselves when they needed to with help provided by if needed.
- The children regularly washed their hands supervised and helped by the staff as needed for example before eating, after using the toilet and playing outdoors. Boxes of tissues were available at low levels for children to clean their noses when needed. Suncream was applied to the children by the staff members when needed.
- All children attending the service were aged over two years of age. At the time of the inspection the service was running summer camps and operating between 8:30-2pm. Stackable beds were available in the service should a child wish to sleep/rest however on the day none of the children needed to. The children had access to rest areas with soft seating if they wished to rest/relax during the day.
- The children spent most of their time playing outdoors during the inspection returning indoors only to use the toilet and at mealtimes. When outside children enjoyed playing on ride on toys, running on the artificial grass and using play equipment including climbing systems and slides.
- Positive approaches to behaviour management were used by the staff who were warm in their approach and manner. Children when upset were comforted by staff members who took time to identify why the child was upset.

- The staff were observed to speak with parents at drop off and collection times, handing over information on the children's day in the summer camp.
- The staff worked well as a team on the day, linking in with each other to coordinate activities. Children from both playrooms were amalgamated at times in outdoor play areas when for example facilitating adequate staff cover for nappy changes.
- Most of the children's time was spent playing in the enclosed outdoor areas during the inspection. Both outdoor areas had canopies extending from the building providing shelter to sections of them. The outdoor area directly accessible from the Peppa Pig playroom had an additional shelter made from wood and plastic. This area had ground cover of pebbles, cement and paving stone paths and sections of impact absorbent ground cover under some of the play equipment. Children were observed to play here with a range of toys including messy play at a sand table and a mud kitchen. Other children played with plastic shapes and a toy garage. A table was set up in the sheltered area with art equipment where children sat and coloured in pictures. One of the staff engaged in play with children who were "bathing" dolls at a water table. Fixed play equipment to encourage children's physical activity included a pirate ship, low climbing systems and crawling tunnels. Seating provided in this outdoor area included a wooden picnic bench and brightly coloured buddy bench.
- The outdoor area beside the Rainbow playroom had artificial grass ground cover and contained a securable shed for storage of toys. Rocker toys, hoppers, a low-level slide were played on by children in this outdoor area on the day.

### 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 enclosed outdoor areas where the children spent most of their time playing were secured to prevent children from leaving unnoticed and to control access to the space. The entrance doors to the building were secured during the inspection. A high handle was in place on the kitchen door preventing small children from accessing the area when the door was closed. Cleaning products were stored on high shelving in the playrooms and sanitary unit and in the sluice room and were inaccessible to children. Toys and play equipment were in satisfactory condition and suitable for the age and developmental stages of the children using them on the day.

##### Infection Control:

The staff wore aprons and gloves that were provided in the nappy change area during nappy changes. The children were prompted and supported by the adults to wash and dry their hands using liquid soap, warm water controlled under 43 °C, and the paper towels provided at the wash hand basins in the sanitary units. The children were observed to wash their hands after playing outdoors, before eating, after using the toilet and nappy changes. Records of cleaning were kept by the staff on cleaning checklists. Boxes of tissues were accessible to children to clean their noses with when needed.

##### Administration of Medication:

The staff advised the inspector that at that time no children in attendance required medication to be administered whilst in attendance in the service.

##### Safe Sleep:

All children attending the service were aged over two years of age. At the time of the inspection the service was running summer camps and operating between 8:30-14:00 hours and on the day no children required to rest. Stackable beds were available in the service should a child required to rest.

##### Fire Safety:

The emergency exits were found to be free from obstruction during the inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

## Infection Control:

- The covering of soft seating in the outdoor area beside the Rainbow playroom was torn with foam exposed posing difficulties in cleaning and posed an infection control risk.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Infection Control:

- The soft seating was removed from the premises. The soft seating will be replaced with new seating.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Infection Control:

No documentation submitted.

## Summary Comment

The action submitted has addressed the regulatory non-compliance found on inspection.

## 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.*

## Non-Compliance Information

(1)  
There was no record available of the checking in and out of preschool children attending the service for the day of the inspection.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(1)  
The registered provider advised in writing that:

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The service will be using an electronic application from September to log children in and out of the service.

### Supporting documentation submitted

None submitted.

## Summary Comment

The action taken will address the regulatory non-compliance found and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

During the inspection, most of the children's time was spent playing outdoors and the staff positioned themselves strategically in the outdoor area to supervise the children primarily by sight. Children who were able to use the toilet by themselves were supported to do so but were within earshot of staff if they needed help. The adult: child ratios were maintained at all times on the day.