

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015SO037
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little People's Playworld Creche
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Unit 3, Finisklin Industrial Estate, Sligo, Co. Sligo
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<b>Eircode:</b>	F91 C2FF
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jackie Mahon
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	21/11/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	21	PM	18
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L Costello and M. Riordan
<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).

Conditions if applicable

N/A

### Description of service

Little People's Playworld Creche is a privately owned and operated preschool service located within an industrial estate in Sligo town. The service is registered for the provision of a full day care service for children aged 0-6 years and operates from 7.30am to 6.00pm, Monday to Thursday and 7.45am to 5.15pm on Fridays. The service is also registered to provide a service to school age children each afternoon. The service operates from a single-story building containing five care rooms, a sleep room, a dining room and a kitchen. A large, secure outdoor play area is located to the side and front of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the owner and the manager of the service. There are an additional 5 staff employed to work at the facility. There is a staff employed to prepare, cook and serve meals to the children each day. All staff have the required qualifications 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 9 Management and recruitment, 11 Staffing levels, 14 Review of a preschool service, 19 Health welfare and development of the child, 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of the child and 29 Premises. 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, deputy manager, 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.*

*(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) (b).

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) (a) (b).

The records of all 6 adults employed in the service were reviewed.

Written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all 6 adults employed in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for all 7 adults in the service.

(d)

International police vetting was available for 2 adults employed in the service who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

All 6 adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement

## 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

All policies at the service were reviewed in April 2023 and staff were updated on all changes to the policies.

The following policies were reviewed and were deemed to be detailed and comprehensive.

- Statement of Purpose and Function
- Complaints Policy
- Policy on the Administration of Medication
- Policy on Infection control
- Policy on Behaviour Management
- Policy on Safe Sleep
- Policy on Accidents and Incident
- Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children
- Policy on Healthy Eating
- Recruitment Policy
- Risk management Policy
- Staff training Policy
- Supervision Policy

A full range of the policies was available on request for parents.

## 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 were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service. There were six adults working directly with twenty-one children in the morning of the unannounced inspection and six adults working directly with eighteen children in the afternoon.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children ratio were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 14 - Review of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary preschool service shall ensure that-*

*(a) at regular intervals, being intervals of not more than one year, a review is carried out in respect of the quality and safety of care provided by the pre-school service to pre-school children attending the service, including a review of the policies, procedures and statements of the service, and*

*(b) a record of each such review is maintained for a period of 3 years after the review is carried out.*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The registered provider demonstrated that a review of the quality and safety of care in the service is completed regularly. This included a review of policies and procedures within the services and a review of accidents, incidents, and risk assessments. All staff and student files were also reviewed every 3 months.
- (b) The review completed on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 was available for 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*

*(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*

*(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:

The service operated a three-week meal plan which provided breakfast, dinner and snacks for the children availing of full day care. Vegetarian and dairy free options were also available. On the day a main meal of chicken casserole and potato was served to the children. A bowl of vegetables including carrots, cauliflower, and broccoli was also served and children could choose what vegetables, they wanted. Children from the wobbler and toddler rooms have their meal in the dining room while the preschool children have their meals in the care room. Extra portions of potato, chicken casserole and vegetables were offered to all children. Age-appropriate crockery and

cutlery were used. Snacks on the day were provided from home and all perishable items were stored in the fridge in each care room prior to use. Snacks on the day included sandwiches, yoghurts, fruit and breadsticks. Drinking water was freely available throughout the day and a hydration station was noted in each care room which was easily accessible to children in all care rooms.

Nappy changing procedures were observed to be in line with the services policy. Positive engagement and interaction with the children were observed throughout this process. The older children who were toileting independently were prompted to do so and supervised if required.

The sleep needs of the younger children were met, this was observed on the day by children sleeping at a structured time of 11.50 to 14.00. A designated sleep room was available with two standard cots in use on the day and 10 floor beds. Sleep was monitored by the physical presence of one staff member in the sleep room throughout the sleep time. Sleep checks were completed at minimum intervals of ten minutes and all checks were recorded.

### **Physical and Material Environment:**

The three care rooms were designed to facilitate various experiences for the children. Sensory opportunities were available through the use of arts and crafts equipment and sensory tables filled with sand and rice. Fine motor development was supported using jigsaws, blocks and puzzles. Opportunities for imaginary and role play were provided in the home corner and dress up area as well as construction area. Staff members were observed to be on the floor at the child levels engaging in imaginary play with the children. The wobbler and toddler rooms were resourced with equipment suitable to the age and stage of development of the younger children in these rooms, including home corners, construction areas, animals, and musical instruments. All equipment was stored on open shelving at children's heights so that freedom of choice could be facilitated. The preschool room accommodating the older children offered various interest areas and children moved freely from one area to another.

The outdoor play area provided an alternative change of environment for the children. The outdoor area is divided into 2 designated spaces. A large grass area has tunnels, tyres, slides and swings. There is a large tarmac area that allows for use of bikes and trikes. Mud kitchens and playhouses was located outside to provide children with lots of imaginary play opportunities.

### **Programme of Activities:**

Ongoing observations and assessments of each child's progress were documented which helped create a picture of each child and their learnings. Observations were individual to the child and recorded tasks completed and goals for the future were identified. Evidence of planning in line with the Aistear curriculum were demonstrated

including identity and belonging and exploring and thinking. There was a focus on seasons and nature with lots of Halloween activities and autumn related art and craft works completed.

### Supporting Relationships:

Staff members were observed to be respectful, gentle, and kind in their interactions towards the children in their care. Staff were observed to get down to the child's level to communicate with the child. During mealtimes the staff members sat at the table and engaged in social conversation with children promoting a relaxed atmosphere. The service took measures to promote family and belonging and family walls were displayed in all care rooms. The children were observed to be happy and content in the company of the staff.

## 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 into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The outdoor perimeter was secure with waste bins stored out of reach of children.

#### Infection Control:

- There were adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes.
- Children were observed to wash their hands regularly including before snacks and meals.
- Child friendly hand wash posters with picture instructions were placed above the wash basins

### Administration of Medication:

- There was no medication administered on the day of the inspection.

### Safe Sleep:

- The service had a designated sleep room with a total of four standard cots. Two in use on the day of inspection.
- The sleep room temperature measured 19.5°C on the day of inspection which is in line with the required safe sleep temperatures

### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.

## 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) On a visual inspection the service appeared to be of a sound and stable structure.
- (b) The main entrance to the service was secure on the day. The outdoor perimeter consisted of a mix of high wooden and concrete fencing which was secure on the day of inspection.
- (c) The service consisted of a mix of natural and artificial lighting in the care rooms. Ventilation was provided naturally by openable windows in all care rooms. Mechanical ventilation was available in the sanitary areas.
- (e) The service was equipped with adequate sanitary facilities.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (d) The service had several walls that required painting including the wobbler room and hallway as there was flaking paint in these areas. It is acknowledged that the registered provider discussed with the inspectors the maintenance plan for these areas.

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

## **Corrective and Preventive Action**

Arrangements have been made for all painting throughout the building where required is to commence throughout the Christmas closure. Regular checks will take place on the paint work throughout the building and will be done during weekends if possible, or on scheduled closure dates.

## **Supporting documentation submitted**

No supporting document submitted.

## **Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions submitted have been reviewed by the inspectorate and the non-compliances identified in inspection remain outstanding. Photographic evidence is required on completion of painting in January 2024.

## 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.*

## Non-Compliance Information

- (i) The Staff rosters available for inspection were not up to date and was not reflective of the staff members on duty on the day of inspection. One staff on the roster had left and a new staff member had commenced work at the service. Details of these changes were not updated on the roster.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (i) The staff rosters were updated and on display by the Thursday 22/11/2023. The staff roster now reflects the staff members on duty. As a staff member leaves, or a new staff member comes, we will update our staff roster to reflect these changes, ensuring that all staff are reflected accordingly.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence submitted.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliance found on inspection has been reviewed by the inspectorate. This regulation 16 (i) is now compliant.