

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY066				
Name of Service:	St. Sheelans Childcare Centre				
Address of Service:	Templemore, Templemore, Co. Tipperary				
Eircode:	E41 NY60				
Name of Registered Provider:	Linda Nesbitt				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	26/06/2024				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>34</td> <td>PM</td> <td>30</td> </tr> </table>	AM	34	PM	30
AM	34	PM	30		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary				
Inspection undertaken by:	L McGeeney				
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

TÚSLA An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency	Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2015TY066	1 of 10
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This community operated full day care service was established to provide care and education to children aged 0 – 6 years old. The service operates Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. This includes a daily three-hour session funded under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) for eligible children, Monday to Friday, 9am to 12pm for 38 weeks of the year.

The service is operated from purpose built, two-storey, detached premises on the grounds of a further education institution in the town of Templemore in north Tipperary. The premises contains three activity rooms downstairs and two upstairs, two sleep rooms, sanitary accommodation areas, offices, kitchen, a large outdoor play area downstairs and a second outdoor play area upstairs.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. The service manager is the person in charge on a daily basis. There are 19 staff employed in the service, including management, administration and catering staff as well as 15 staff who work directly with the children.

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 9(2)(4)(7), 11(1)(3)(8), 15, 19(1)(b), 24, 25, 26(1)(4), 28 and 29.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Record of a Pre-School Child.

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 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

(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.

(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

The staff files of 19 members of staff were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

(2)(a) Written, validated references from past employers were available in respect of 17 members of staff.

(b) Written, validated references from a source other than a past employer were available in respect of 5 members of staff.

(c) Garda vetting had been carried out in respect of each member of staff. Relevant records were held on file.

The service carried out re-vetting of staff on a three-yearly basis.

(d) Police vetting was carried out in respect of staff who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or longer. Relevant records were held on file.

(4) Staff who worked directly with the children held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5, 6 or 8 on the national qualifications framework.

(7) The service had an induction programme for new staff, with a record maintained of the learning undertaken by staff. Staff were supported and facilitated to engage in ongoing professional development. Staff undertook training in health and safety processes such as first aid, manual handling, fire safety and food hygiene as well as further studies in aspects of early childhood care and development. Training certificates were kept in the staff files.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore 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) There were 11 staff working directly with 34 children aged between 14 months and 5 years old on the morning of the inspection. The staff and children were divided between 4 rooms: 3 downstairs and 1 upstairs. In the afternoon, the number of children had reduced to 30. The staff manager was available to provide assistance in the rooms if required. The catering staff who were present in the service were not included in the adult to child ratios.

(3) The adult to child ratios were maintained within the requirements in each area throughout the inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least 2 staff present in the service while it was in operation.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) A sample of five registration forms were reviewed as part of the inspection process. The forms contained the required particulars as detailed under parts (a) to (j) of this regulation.

(3) The children's registration forms were open to inspection by those who were authorised to see them.

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-
- (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

The following practices were observed on the day of inspection which supported the health, welfare and development of the child:

(1)(b) The service was in 'summer mode' when the daily routines were more relaxed and there were less children present as children who attended on a sessional basis during term time had finished for the summer.

On the morning of the inspection the younger children, aged 14 months to 3 years old, spent a long period of time playing outside. The children were free to move around to the areas which interested them. The staff were observed to be present to the children and to encourage and support their play and exploration. For example, one member of staff was working with 6 children at the sand table, one member of staff was in the covered area with 3 children dancing and singing to music, another member of staff was with a group of children in the sensory/soft play area while other staff supervised children using ride-on toys and play houses. Before the children went in for lunch a member of staff brought out the bubble machine for the children, which they were excited about.

The older children were taken on an outing to the town park on the morning of the inspection. They walked there and back and were enthusiastic in telling the inspector what they had seen and done while in the park, such as, feeding the ducks, finding the fairy houses and playing in the playground.

The summer months were used as a time to transition children who were moving on to a new room and age-group cohort. This process was carried out according to the pace set by each child and might include the child spending short periods of time in the new room each day, increasing in length until the child was settled into the new environment.

The children washed their hands when they came in from outdoor play and sat down to their midday meal. Meals were eaten in family dining style in most of the rooms. The atmosphere in the rooms was relaxed with children and staff chatting while the children ate. They were given as much time as they needed to eat. Younger children were encouraged to self-feed with assistance given as required. The staff were aware of any special dietary requirements of the children such as food intolerances, timing of meals and portion size and managed these according to the child's needs.

The staff were responsive to the children's needs, for example, picking up a child if they wanted to be held or comforted or asking the children what they wanted to do next.

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

(1) The staff were responsible for recording the arrival and departure times of the children in their care. Children's attendance records were maintained in books designed for that purpose.

(3)(a) The service manager or another staff member met visitors to the service at the entrance door before allowing them access to the service if appropriate. Visitors signed in at reception using a record book designed for that purpose.

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) There were six members of staff with current certification in first aid response (FAR), four of whom were present on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) Suitably equipped first aid bags were available in each activity room, displayed on hooks where they could be easily accessed when required. Staff brought a first aid bag with them when going on outings with the children.

(b) The first aid bags were available if required by the children attending the 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) A written record was maintained of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service, most recently on 21 June 2024. An electronic application designed for use in early years services was used to record the fire drills.

(b) A written record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. Firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual; basis, most recently on 2 February 2024. The smoke alarm system was serviced on a quarterly basis, most recently on 29 February 2024.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the walls throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had current insurance to cover up to 60 children attending at any one time valid until 27 March 2025.

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.

Compliance Information

(a) The service had remedial works carried out on the roof since the last inspection on 20 July 2023. The area of the roof that made up the ground surface of the upstairs outdoor play area was repaired to prevent leaks and to enable all of the area to be used by the children as an outdoor play space. This extended the available play space when compared to that which was in use at the time of previous inspections.