

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY073
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Name of Service:	Templemore Community Pre School
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Address of Service:	Bank Street, Templemore, Co. Tipperary
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Eircode:	E41 X433
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Name of Registered Provider:	Renee Ludlow
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	06/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	4
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
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Inspection undertaken by:	L McGeeney
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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

This community sessional and part-time service was established to provide care and education to children aged 2 – 6 years. The service operates Monday to Friday, 8.50am to 1pm, for 38 weeks of the year.

The service operates from purpose-built premises in the town of Templemore in north Tipperary: a detached, single storey building behind the main building used by Templemore Community Social Services. The service consists of a large room which can be divided into two when needed by use of a floor to ceiling, folding partition wall. On the day of inspection the partition was closed for part of the morning to facilitate the community mother and toddler group in the back room while the service operated from the front room. When the mother and toddler group ended, the partition was opened to give the children in the service use of the full space.

Other facilities in the premises include sanitary accommodation areas, kitchen/dining room and access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. The designated person in charge works in the service each day, with two other staff, including one member of staff employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM).

The service also accommodates childcare, Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and transition year students to engage in work placement and work experience.

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), 11(1)(2)(4)(8), 20, 21, 22, 24(1)(3), 25, 26(1)(4) and 28.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9 Management and Recruitment.

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.

Compliance Information

The staff files of one new member of staff and the student who was present in the service on the day of inspection were reviewed as part of the inspection process. The staff files of the other two members of staff had been inspected previously and were found to be compliant.

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

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

(c) Garda vetting had been carried out in respect of the staff member and the student. Relevant records were stored on file. The service had a system in place for renewing staff Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as neither the member of staff nor the student had lived outside the state for a period of six months or longer.

(4) Staff employed to work directly with the children held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5, 6 or 7 on the national qualifications framework.

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.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-

(a) a sessional pre-school service, and

(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).

(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 3 staff working directly with 10 children aged between 2 and 5 years old on the morning of the inspection. There were 2 staff working directly with 4 children who attended the service on a part-time basis, in the afternoon. A student doing childcare studies as part of a Leaving Certificate Applied course was also present in the service but not included in the adult to child ratios.

(2)(4) The adult to child ratio was maintained at greater than the minimum requirements throughout the inspection.

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

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 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) The children had access to both indoor and outdoor spaces on a daily basis. The indoor space included a large, rectangular room that could be divided when other community groups needed to use the space. The service had access to the entire room for four days of the week and for half the morning on the fifth day, when the community mother and toddler group used the back room that was created when the partition walls were closed. The room, when divided, remained large and spacious for the children.

The children enjoyed a change of indoor environment by moving to the kitchen/dining room to eat their lunch.

(b) There was a cosy area where the children could rest when they wanted to and a child sized bed where a child could sleep if required. The staff said that the children rarely required to lie down or sleep. Blankets and pillows were available for the bed when needed.

(3)(a) The children had access to two outdoor spaces: the main outdoor play area and the entrance courtyard. The outdoor play area was enclosed with stone walls, fencing and gates. It had grass and soft fall surfaces with some paved areas and concrete paths. Staff said that this area wasn't used on wet days as the paved areas were slippery. The paving was due to be power washed which would stop it being a slipping hazard in wet weather. In the meantime, the children had access to the enclosed courtyard between the entrance gates to the site and the entrance door to the service. This area was paved with brick pavers and was able to be used in all weathers. There were planter boxes along the wall where the children planted flowers and bulbs.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service was very well equipped with a range of toys, materials and furniture suitable to the age and stage of development of the children attending the service. There were child sized tables and chairs in the main part of the room for tabletop activities and in the dining area of the kitchen where the children sat to have their lunch. Child sized sofas were available in the cosy area at the back of the room where the children could rest and relax. There was a desk and adult seating for the staff where they did paperwork activities.

The indoor environment was laid out in a number of defined interest areas which were appropriately resourced, including the home corner, art area, stationary car area, small world areas and construction area. There were low level, open shelves near the tables where puzzles and manipulative play toys were stored and easily accessible to the children.

The outdoor area was equipped with fixed units such as the tree house and slide, bridge and slide, post office and shop. There were also sand and water tables, balls, ride on toys and push toys.

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

The service had a healthy eating policy. The service provided lunch for the children each day while many of the children also brought a packed lunch from home. The children had the option to eat from their own packed lunches and the food provided by the service, according to their desires and level of hunger. On the day of inspection the lunch provided by the service was ham sandwiches, bananas and fromage frais. Children brought their own drink bottles of water or squash, which were refilled with water when empty.

Foods brought in from home included crackers, smoothies and fruit (apples, dragon fruit, raisins, grapes and strawberries).

Three of the children on the register were on special diets which were taken into consideration when preparing the lunches.

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

Compliance Information

(1) Staff were responsible for recording the arrival and departure times of each child on a daily basis in the attendance register.

(3)(a) The person in charge met all visitors at the door before allowing them access to the premises.

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 two members of staff present in the service on the day of inspection who held current certification in first aid response (FAR), valid until 2025.

(2)(a) There was a suitably stocked first aid box on the desk in the room where it could be easily accessed when required. Additional supplies were stored in a cupboard in the room.

(b) The first aid box was available if required by a child 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) There was a written record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service, most recently on 5 March 2024.

(b) There was a record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. Extinguishers were serviced on an annual basis, most recently on 4 August 2023. The wired smoke alarm system was serviced on an annual basis by an electrician.

(4) There was a notice of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire displayed on a wall in each room of the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was insured as a part time daycare that could accommodate up to 25 children at any one time, valid until 27 March 2025.