

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015TY081
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Upperchurch Childcare Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Gortatooda, Upperchurch, Thurles, Co Tipperary
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<b>Eircode:</b>	E41 E034
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Michael Greene
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	04/11/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	42	PM	39
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary E91RF38
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Antoinette McNamara
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<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

This community service was established to provide care and education to children aged 0 – 6 years. A registered school age care service is also provided. The service operates 08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. The service is operated from a purpose built, single storey, detached premises in the village of Upperchurch in Co Tipperary. The service comprises of six activity rooms, office, kitchen, utility room, sleep rooms and sanitary accommodation areas. There are secure outdoor play areas at the front and rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider does not work directly in the service. There are 14 staff employed to work in the service. This includes administration and kitchen staff. The service manager was the person in charge on the day of inspection. There were seven staff working directly with the children on the day of 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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and recruitment,

Regulation 11(1)(2)(8)(a) Staffing levels,

Regulation 16 (1)(i, j, k)(3) Record in relation to pre-school service,

Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, welfare, and development of the child,  
Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of the child,  
Regulation 25 (1)(2)(a)(b) First aid

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

(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 and a named deputy who was able to deputise, as required.

(b) A person in charge was present on the day of inspection. A person in charge was present daily.

The staff files for 14 staff, the current registered provider and the proposed new registered provider were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for each staff member working at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 14 staff members, the current register provider and the proposed new registered provider. In the case of three staff member, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting documentation was available for one staff working in the service, who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

(4) Certificates of qualifications for the staff working with children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at level 5 and above 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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children.

(2) On the day of the inspection, the adult to child ratios were maintained as follows throughout the service:

- In the junior pre-school room, there were 9 children being cared for by 1 staff.
- In the senior pre-school room, there were 16 children being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the wobbler room there were 6 children being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the toddler room there were 11 children being cared for by 2 staff.

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

## 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:*

*(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.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(i) A detailed staff roster was available.

(j) Ten medication administration records were sampled and were found to meet the necessary requirements. Written parental consent for staff to administer medication had also been obtained.

(k) A total of 20 accident and incident records were sampled and deemed satisfactory.

(3) The written records were available on the premises for inspection by an authorised person.

### 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

(1)(a) The following observations and discussions with staff reflected the children's experience within the service:

##### Basic needs:

Children enjoyed freedom of movement within their rooms. The older rooms had timetabled outdoor play time. There was a separate secure outdoor area for younger children. The outdoor areas were directly accessible from the care rooms. The children had access to drinking water throughout the day. Each child had their own drinking cup or bottle that was refilled with water as required. Children who were attending a sessional service brought their own lunch. Meals and snacks were served at regular times each day. The service provided the children with a hot meal in the middle of the day that was prepared in the service. On the day of inspection, the main meal was chicken curry, vegetables and mashed potato. Snacks were also provided by the service for younger children. Toilets were accessible directly from the care rooms. The staff supported the children to become independent with self-care skills such as self-feeding and using the toilet suitable to their stage of development. Staff supervised these activities and assisted the children as required such as opening yogurts. Nappy changing was carried out at regular times during the day and as required. Sleep facilities were available for the children who required a sleep during the day. Cots were available in the sleep room for the children to sleep. Floor beds were placed in the Toddler room after dinner for the children to sleep.

##### Physical environment:

Low-level shelving provided children with access to a wide selection of activities. Children in the preschool rooms were observed to engage in singing and tabletop activities. Staff were engaged in the children's play and exploration and provided them with the resources they needed. The children's artwork was displayed on the walls of the service. Pictograms timetables were used in the room so that they could see what was happening next. Staff had helped the children create areas of familiarity in the classrooms to promote each child's identity and belonging such as family walls and birthday walls. The outdoor play area to the side and rear of the premise was divided into two designated play spaces for the children. These consisted of grass and concrete spaces which

housed a sandpit, swings, ride on toys and other outdoor materials. There was also a covered outdoor area available.

### Supporting relationships:

Adult seating was available in the care rooms. The staff sat with the children, at the tables or on the floor, observing their play and exploration, assisting the children as required, engaging them in conversation and being available to them. Staff met with the children's parents at arrival and departure times when they could share information about their child. Staff members were observed to treat the children with respect and a positive regard. They sat with children in groups or individually, engaged in conversation with and listened attentively to the children as they spoke. An example of this was observed during snack time in the pre-school room where staff engaged in conversation with a child about their poly tunnel and the fruit and vegetables that they grew at home.

## 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:

A call bell system was present on the front door which needed to be opened from the inside; therefore, children could not exit the service unsupervised and unsupervised visitors could not enter. The outdoor play areas were secured to prevent children leaving unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area. The service carpark could also be secured as needed. All blind cords were securely mounted out of reach of children. Pinch guards covered the hinges on all doors to prevent injury to children. All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to children.

#### Infection control:

There was warm water, soap and paper hand towels available for hand drying in the service. There were designated children's toilets available to the children. Designated staff toilets were also provided. Handwashing reminders and steps were present in the sanitary accommodation. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day such as before snack time. The nappy changing area was clean and well maintained. The nappy changing policy was displayed in the nappy changing area. Gloves and aprons were

available in the nappy changing area. There was mechanical ventilation in the nappy changing area. Children who slept in cots had a designated cot. Cots and low-level beds were spaced the required 50cm apart. Hand sanitizer and tissues were available in the entrance hall of the service. Staff wore gloves and aprons during mealtimes. Perishable foods were stored in a fridge.

### **Administration of medication:**

A medication record recorded the details of any medications that had been administered in the service in line with the service's administration of medication policy. Any medications supplied by parents were stored in a safe and secure place out of reach of children.

### **Safe sleep:**

There was a designated sleep room in the premises with designated cots for each child who required naps during their time spent in the service. Floor beds were available for the older children. The service had a safe sleep policy. Children were monitored while they slept, and physical checks were carried out at 10-minute intervals. These checks were recorded on individual sleep records for each child in electronic form.

## **Non-Compliance Information**

### **General safety:**

Garda vetting disclosures for three staff members were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

## **Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

#### **General safety:**

Garda vetting had been reapplied for two of the staff members prior to inspection but had not been received back by the service. Garda vetting for one staff member has been applied for following the inspection. A new filing system has been implemented to ensure that vetting is completed on time. Calander reminders have also been set for Garda vetting reapplication dates.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **General safety:**

New Garda vetting for the three staff member has been received. Photographs of the new Garda vetting and calendar reminders were sent to the Early Years Inspector.

## **Summary Comment**

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

### 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 staff trained in first aid responder (FAR) available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the service.