

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY100
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Name of Service:	Clonmel Childcare
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Address of Service:	Love Lane, Cashel Court, Cashel Road, Clonmel, Co Tipperary
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Eircode:	E91 A279
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sean O'Mahoney
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	31/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	70	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary E91RF38
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Inspection undertaken by:	A. McNamara & L. McGeeney
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Title:	Early Years Inspectors
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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	N/A
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Description of service

This full day care service was established in 2005 to provide care and education to children aged between 0 and 6 years old. A registered school age care service is also provided.

The service is operated from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday for 52 weeks of the year. This includes a daily 3-hour session, funded under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) for eligible children, that runs from 9am to 12pm, Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year.

The service is located in a residential area in the town of Clonmel in south Tipperary. The premises was purpose built. It is a two-storey, detached building with outdoor play facilities at the back. A single, storey, detached modular building was installed in the outdoor play area to provide additional space for ECCE and school age services. The main building has six activity rooms: three downstairs and three upstairs, four sleep rooms, sanitary accommodation areas, kitchen, office and storage rooms.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work directly in the service. The service manager is the person in charge on a daily basis. There were 28 staff employed in the service, including relief staff, administration staff, cleaning and maintenance staff and childcare staff. On the day of inspection there were 15 staff working directly with the children as well as the person in charge and a transition year student on work experience. Additional staff arrived at 11am to provide relief for staff breaks.

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/ 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) Staffing levels,

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

Regulation 21 Equipment and materials

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of the child,

Regulation 25 First aid,

Regulation 28 Insurance.

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 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 designated person in charge who was able to deputise, as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present for the inspection.

(2) The staff files for 28 staff were reviewed on the day.

(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 other sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member working in the service. Garda vetting had been renewed, in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) All staff working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in early childhood care and education.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) Police vetting was not available for one staff member who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Police vetting has been applied for the relevant staff member.

Supporting documentation submitted

Email from service with confirmation of application for police vetting.

Summary Comment

Evidence of an application for one staff member for International Police Vetting was reviewed however, a copy of the completed International Police vetting has not been submitted for one staff member to the inspector to date. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt. The non-compliance in relation to regulation 9(2)(d) remains out outstanding.

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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care of the children.

(2) The adult child ratios during the day of inspection met the requirements of the regulations as follows:

- Baby room: 5 children being cared for by 2 staff.
- Wobbler room: 4 children being cared for by 1 staff.
- Toddler 1: 9 children being cared for by 2 staff.
- Toddler 2: 9 children being cared for by 2 staff.
- Toddler 3: 6 children being cared for by 1 staff.

- Butterfly room: 16 children being cared for by 3 staff.
- Bumble bee room: 14 children being cared for by 3 staff.
- Caterpillar room: 7 children being cared for by 1 staff.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(j) 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 15 accident and incident records were sampled and deemed satisfactory.

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 equipped with suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials in adequate quantities for the number of children attending and their ages and stages of development.

Furniture included child height tables for dining and table-top activities. There were a variety of chairs suitable for use by infants, toddlers, young children and adults. Child sized bench seats and sofas were available in relaxation areas in each activity room. Cots, floor beds and stackable beds were available for the children who slept during the day.

Open shelving units that were accessible to the children were available and used for toy display and storage in each room.

Specialised furniture designed for imaginative play, such as play kitchens and shops, was available.

The children had access to toys and materials such as arts and crafts materials, construction toys, puzzles, manipulative play materials, small world toys and books. The children had access to sensory toys and resources such as homemade play dough that was made by the children and staff each week.

Notice boards in the corridors were used to display the children's artwork and photos, including photos of the recent 'green day' when the children dressed in green for Saint Patrick's Day.

Outdoor resources included covered play cubes in two of the outdoor areas and a covered porch area in the third where children could play in all weathers, equipped with slides, playhouses, rockers and seating. Other outdoor resources included ride-on vehicles, balance bikes, balls, planter boxes, digging tools and toys, mud kitchens picnic tables and bench seats.

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 premises was adequately secured to prevent children leaving unsupervised and unauthorised persons gaining access. The main door to the service was locked and had to be opened by a staff member or with a fob. The outdoor play areas were also secure. Pinch guards covered the hinges on all doors to prevent injury to children. Cleaning agents and hazardous materials were stored inaccessible to children. All blind cords were securely mounted out of reach of children. Windows were fitted with a safety chain to prevent children from falling. The staircase used by children to enter and exit the building was adequately lit and had two handrails at two different heights. Impact absorbing material, such as artificial grass, was placed under slides in the outdoor areas.

Infection control:

The service was cleaned and well maintained.

Suitable handwashing and drying facilities were available in the children's and adult's sanitary facilities. This included warm running water, liquid soap and disposable paper towels. The children were observed to wash their hands when returning from outdoor play and before snack time.

Perishable food and infant formula were stored in fridges.

Staff wore gloves and aprons for nappy changing, in line with the nappy changing policy displayed on the walls in the nappy changing areas.

Cots in the sleep room were positioned at least 50cm apart as required to ensure adequate ventilation around each cot and to prevent cross infection.

Foot pedal operated bins were also in use.

Administration of medication:

Administration of medicines records were reviewed. These were correctly completed, dated, witnessed by staff and signed by parents in line with the service policy.

Safe sleep:

Children were monitored while they slept. Physical checks were carried out every 10 minutes on sleeping children and a record was kept of these checks.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

Two of the cots used by the children had some of the paint removed which exposed the timber making them difficult to clean effectively. This posed a risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection control:

The two cots in question have been repaired to allow them to function and be cleaned properly. More thorough inspection and reporting of any damage in the future. There is now a staff member who has the role of carrying out weekly checks for any damaged equipment/ toys that needs to be repaired or disposed of.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

Corrective actions have been accepted and will be assessed in practice on next inspection.

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 were several suitably equipped first aid boxes stored in easily accessible position's throughout the premises.

(b) The first aid boxes were available to the children attending the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An in-date certificate was in place to demonstrate that the service was insured to provide full day care for the number of children the service is registered to accommodate.