

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015TY125
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Treasures Creche & Playschool Ltd
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Boytonrath, New Inn, Cashel, Co. Tipperary
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<b>Eircode:</b>	E25 CT92
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Anita O'Dwyer
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	20/02/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	44	PM	25
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Tipperary.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Cullen
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Little Treasures Creche and Playschool is a privately owned early years service which was first established in 2002. The service is located on the grounds of the registered provider's home in the rural area of New Inn, south Tipperary. The service is registered to cater for children from 6 months to 6 years of age on a full day care basis. On the day of inspection, the service was catering for children from 2 to 6 years old. A detached two-storey premises contains three early years rooms, a toddler room, junior and senior playschool rooms. Adjoining this premises there are two early years rooms attached to the private residence, which were closed on the day of inspection. Several outdoor play areas are available for use to the rear of both buildings.

### Staffing

The service currently employs seven staff members who work directly with children. The registered provider also works directly with children in the service. Staff members held qualifications at Level 5 and 6 in Early Childhood Education and Care on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 (2)(4)(8)(a) – Management and Recruitment, 11 (1)(2) – Staffing levels, 16 (1)(h,i,j,k)- Record in relation to pre-school service, 19 (1)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child, 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, 25 - First Aid, 26 – Fire safety measures and 28 – Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 (h,i,j,k)- Record in relation to pre-school service. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the junior and senior playschool and toddler rooms.

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.

### Additional Information

#### Regulatory compliance meeting (RCM)

An RCM was held with the registered provider 15 April 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss repeat non-compliances identified on this inspection and on inspection in August 2023.

#### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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

(2) Documentation was reviewed for seven staff members employed by the service, the registered provider and a work placement student.

(a)(b) Two validated references were available for each adult from either a past employer, or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for three adults who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that four staff members and the registered provider held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### Non-Compliance Information

(4) On review of documentation and discussion with the registered provider, it was established that three staff members did not hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at minimum Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

This non-compliance was previously identified on inspection 04 August 2023. Corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider stating that *'all future staff members awards will be held on file prior to commencement'* did not prevent a reoccurrence. Two of the staff members in question commenced employment since the last inspection.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

02 April 2024: One staff member has received an email to confirm she has passed her level 5 with an overall distinction. The email states that she will receive her cert on the week commencing 27th May.

The second staff member will be continuing her studies and aims to have it done as soon as possible. The third staff member is looking into courses to do her level 5. The registered provider will put an add up for childcare staff in the meantime to try and fill the positions needed.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Email from a training institution confirming completion of studies and certification date of May 2024 for one staff member.

Letter from a training institution confirming a second staff member is working towards completion of a relevant course.

No evidence was submitted for the third staff member.

### Summary Comment

A Corrective and Preventive action response submitted by the registered provider on 27 March 2024 was deemed inadequate to meet the requirements of the Early Years Regulations. The registered provider was afforded a second opportunity to submit a response which was received on 2 April 2024 and did not address the non-compliance. An RCM was convened with the registered provider.

Evidence submitted for one staff member meets the requirements Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. Implementation of actions submitted for two staff members will be reviewed on next inspection.

### 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 were working directly with the children at all times. There were 44 children with 8 staff members directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection.

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

- In the toddler room, there were 9 children aged 2 to 3 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the junior playschool room, there were 19 children aged 2 years 9 months to 4 years old being cared for by 3 staff.
- The senior preschool room, there were 16 children aged 3 to 6 years old being cared for by 3 staff.

During the afternoon there were no changes to the toddler room staff to child ratios. Both playschool rooms combined to have 16 children aged 3 to 6 years olds being cared for by 3 staff.

(8)(a) From examination of the staff roster and discussion with staff members it was established that two staff members were onsite during the hours of operation of the service.

## 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(h)(i)(j)(k)

The registered provider ensured that all relevant information was accessible and available for inspection by authorised persons. Staff rosters were available on the office door. Records of attendance, administration of medication and any accident or incident records were maintained by staff members and the registered provider.

## 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

(1)(b)

All food and drinks were supplied by parents and guardians. All children attending on a full day care basis were served a hot meal at lunch time. Drinks were freely accessible to the children in each classroom throughout the day, drinks stations were on low level shelves. Mealtimes observed were unhurried social experiences in all rooms, staff sat with children and engaged in conversation. The children were encouraged to feed themselves appropriate to their stage of development and were assisted as required.

Regular nappy changing took place throughout the day and staff were observed to engage attentively with children during the process. Children who were toilet trained, were encouraged to use the toilet independently and handwashing was promoted after both nappy changing and toileting. Attention was given to children's appearance with staff observed to clean children's faces and hands.

Staff members recognised and supported children's need for rest and sleep. Children in the older rooms were encouraged to rest as needed, with a large beanbag and soft furnishings available to promote rest. The sleep room was sufficiently dark and quiet to promote a restful sleep. Low-level floor beds were available to meet the sleep needs of children over 2 years of age in the service.

### 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:

There was a secure entry and exit system in place on the two entrance doors of the building to prevent unauthorised persons gaining entry or children exiting unsupervised. The entrance gates to each door were observed to be closed and each had a sign to remind users to close gates after use. The kitchen and staff areas were inaccessible to children. All cleaning agents were stored safely and out of reach of children.

Accident and incident books maintained a record of any incidents, these were completed in detail and signatures confirmed that relevant parents, staff and a manager were informed. Hinge guard protectors were in place on all doors which posed a risk of injury to children. Warm water used by children for handwashing was thermostatically controlled and maintained below 43°C. The temperature was recorded at 32.1°C in the toilet block on the ground floor.

Tables and chairs used by children were in good condition and suitable for use by the age range of children using them. Equipment and materials used in each of the rooms were appropriate for use by the age range of children using them. The outdoor play area was maintained to a good standard and free from hazards.

### **Infection Control:**

The service was clean and well maintained with cleaning schedules maintained daily by staff. Children were observed washing their hands before eating, after toileting and nappy changing. There was warm running water, liquid soap and electric hand dryers or paper hand towels available for hand washing throughout the service. Each room had designated children's toilets or a nappy changing area.

A system was in place for the appropriate storage and sterilisation of children's soothers. Tables and equipment were cleaned prior to food being served to children and appropriate safe food storage and preparation was observed.

### **Administration of Medication:**

Medication record books were available to document the details of any medications to be administered in the service in line with the service policy on administration of medication. No medication had been administered since the last inspection.

### **Safe Sleep:**

Staff were familiar with best practices in safe sleep and carried out physical checks on individual sleeping children, every 10 minutes, recording individual children's sleep positions, colour and breathing. A staff member remained in the sleep room while children were sleeping on low level beds. The sleep room temperatures were continually monitored by staff, with a digital thermometer located in the room.

## **Non-Compliance Information**

### **General Safety:**

1. A blind cord in the junior playschool room was not safely secured and posed a risk of injury to children.

### **Infection Control:**

2. Nappy changing processes observed during inspection were not consistently in line with the service's nappy changing policy: A staff member was observed to change the nappies of three children in succession and the disposable gloves and apron they were wearing were not changed between each individual nappy change. Children's faces and hands were washed while a staff member continued to wear the gloves used to change the children's nappies. On another occasion a child's hands were not washed after a nappy change. This posed a potential risk of cross contamination in the service.

The non-compliance of staff members not changing aprons between nappy changes was previously identified on inspection 04 August 2023. Corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider did not prevent a reoccurrence.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. The registered provider has secured the blind cord and it is now up and out of reach of children. All blinds and cords in the building have been checked to ensure they are secured correctly. Daily checks will be completed to make sure all blind cords are still safely secured.

##### Infection Control:

2. An online course on infection and control has been completed. All staff were reminded of our nappy changing policy and also told again that gloves and aprons are to be changed after every use. Gloves are to be removed before washing the child's hands. Regular reminders will be communicated on the service nappy changing policy and all staff going forward will complete a 'prevention of infection and control' course.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence.

##### Infection Control:

2. Certificate of completion for infection control training.

### Summary Comment

All evidence submitted meets the requirements Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

## 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 was a person trained in First Aid Response available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b)

There were suitably equipped first aid boxes in each classroom available for the use of the children attending the early years 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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a) There was a record of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 11 January 2024.

(b) There was a record available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 02 October 2023 and the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 20 February 2024.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service demonstrated insurance cover for full day care for 66 children. The insurance policy commenced 28 March 2023 and will expire 27 March 2024.