

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015TY125 |
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| Name of Service: | Little Treasures Creche & Playschool Ltd |
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| Address of Service: | Boytonrath, New Inn, Cashel, Co Tipperary |
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| Eircode: | E25 CT92 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Anita O'Dwyer |
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| Service type: | Full Day |
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| Date of Inspection: | 10/02/2025 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 39 | PM | 39 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary E91RF38 |
| Inspection undertaken by: | Antoinette McNamara |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | N/A |
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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 New Inn, Co Tipperary. The service is registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years of age on a full day care basis. The detached two-storey premises contains three early years rooms, a toddler room, junior and senior playschool rooms. Several outdoor play areas are available for use to the rear of the buildings.

Staffing

There are currently eight staff members working in the service. The registered provider works directly with the children in the service. Staff members held qualifications at level 5 and above 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/ 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) Staffing levels,

Regulation 16 (1) (j, k) 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 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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) The person in charge confirmed that they or their deputy are present at all times while the service is open.

(b) The registered provider was present when the unannounced inspection commenced and facilitated the inspection process. Review of the staff roster indicated that either the registered provider, or one of the deputies were present throughout the operational hours.

(2)(a)(b) Two validated references were available for each staff member.

(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.

(d) Police vetting documentation was available for three 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 directly with children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Qualification Framework or qualification.

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)

(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 adequate staffing levels to respond to the children's needs on the day of 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 being cared for by 2 staff.
- In the junior preschool room, there were 17 children being cared for by 3 staff and a student.
- In the senior preschool room, there were 13 children being directly cared for by 2 staff ensuring that the staff to child ratios were maintained throughout the service.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times. This was demonstrated by the service roster.

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

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)

Basic needs:

The service had a healthy eating policy. The children brought their own food which was stored in a fridge. Staff sat with the children during snack times, this encouraged conversations and provided any assistance to the children if needed.

Drinking water was available to the children throughout the day, should they become thirsty at any stage.

The available space within the care rooms supported the children to explore their environment and to freely engage with materials.

Children who were able were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care. Regular hand washing was observed by the inspector.

Physical and material environment:

The environment in the service was comfortable and inviting. The walls were painted with bright colours and murals.

Children were given the opportunity for messy play. This was observed when the children were playing with slime.

There were different areas of interest provided in the pre-school rooms. In each of the classrooms, a variety of defined areas of interest were provided for the children to play with. These included a kitchen area, a library area, and craft area. Low-level shelving provided children with access to a wide selection of activities suitable for the children. Children in the preschool rooms were observed to engage in arts and crafts for Valentine's Day and a range of tabletop activities. Children in the toddler and room were observed participating in floor play with blocks and dolls.

Children's identity and belonging was fostered through the display of their arts and crafts and a birthday wall. The environment was inclusive and representative of the children attending the service. Languages other than English were used to promote diversity and the inclusion of multilingual children.

Supporting relationships:

The small group size supported the children to get to know each other well and to develop friendships within the group.

Children who were unsettled were supported by staff in a kind and caring manner.

Staff sat with the children and encouraged play. Children were given timely reminders of when to tidy up for a planned activity. Phrases such as "kind hands" and "gentle play" were used to support positive behaviour amongst the children.

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 entrance door was locked and needed to be opened by a staff member in order to gain access. Cleaning agents and hazardous materials were stored away from the children. There were also visual reminders for staff to ensure cleaning agents were locked away.

Infection control:

Children were observed washing their hands before snack and after toileting. There was warm running water, liquid soap, and hand dryers available for hand drying throughout the service. There were designated children's toilets available, which contained an adequate number of toilets and sinks for the children attending the service. Hand washing facilities were adequately stocked in the toilets.

Administration of medication:

Medication records reviewed indicated that staff were following the policy, records were correctly maintained, dated, signed and witnessed by staff and signed parents.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

Infection control risk was identified in toddler room.

1. The foam on the couches in the toddler room was exposed. This posed a risk of infection control.

Infection control risk identified within the sanitary areas:

2. The toilet rolls in the bathrooms were loose and not placed on a toilet roll dispenser. This is a risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The couches in the toddler room have been replaced with a new one. Awaiting covers to be made for the others.
2. The toilet roll dispensers have been taken down and replaced by new toilet roll holders in each toilet cubicle.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

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) The roster demonstrated that the manager planned for FAR trained staff to be present throughout the hours of opening.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

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.