

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY149
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Name of Service:	Súgradh Creche
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Address of Service:	Greenhills, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary
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Eircode:	E32 HE48
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Name of Registered Provider:	Denise Frisby
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/01/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	53	PM	51
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Tipperary.
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Inspection undertaken by:	E Cullen
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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

Súgradh Creche is a privately owned early years service which opened in 2007. The service operates a full day, part time and sessional care programmes for children aged between 0 to 6 years old. The service operates Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 6:00pm. The premises is a purpose-built childcare facility in a housing estate on the outskirts of Carrick on Suir, Co. Tipperary. This facility is a dormer style building with seven childcare rooms on the premises. On the ground floor there are five childcare rooms, a full catering kitchen, two sleep rooms, nappy changing, toilet facilities and an office. On the first floor there are two childcare rooms for children aged three to six, a staff room, toilet facilities, sensory room, and laundry. There is outdoor play space at the front and side of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs twenty-three staff members who work directly with children and a kitchen assistant. The registered provider works directly in the service and is available for cover as required. Staff members held qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5, 6, 7 and 8 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 and 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) – Management and Recruitment, 11 (1)(2) – Staffing levels, 19 - Health, welfare and development of child, 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, 26 - Fire safety measures, 28 - Insurance and 30 - Minimum space requirements; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service and 25 - First Aid. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child and 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included wobbler one and two rooms, toddler one and preschool 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

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on 05 January 2024 arising from the findings on inspection: A mandatory Garda vetting disclosure was not available for one staff member who was employed in the service contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

The registered provider submitted a response on 05 January 2024 which outlined the actions they were taking to address the risks identified.

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 the twenty-four staff members employed in the service and the registered provider.

(a)(b) Forty-seven of the required fifty validated references were available for each staff member from either a past employer, or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for twenty-four staff. However, 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 was available for one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that twenty-two staff members and the registered provider who worked directly with children held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) Two written references were not available one staff member from either a past employer, or from a reputable source. One reference for second staff member was not validated by the registered provider.

(c) A mandatory Garda vetting disclosure was not available for one staff member who was employed in the service contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012. An immediate action notice was issued to the service on 05 January 2024.

(d) International police vetting was not available for two staff members who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) Component certificates were available on file for one staff member. The record did not confirm that the staff member held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at minimum Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Corrective Action

(2)(a)(b) Two references were obtained and validated. The third reference was validated.

(c) Garda vetting was immediately applied for on the day of inspection.

(d) International police vetting has been applied for. Processing times vary for each state from thirty to sixty days.

(4) The certificate of qualification was reapplied for to Quality and Qualifications Ireland and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) for recognition.

Preventive Action

A form will be placed with all new staff members with items required to commence employment. Items will be ticked off by two members of management and double checked. Copies will also be taken so nothing gets misplaced.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b) Vetting records.

(c) Garda Vetting dated 09 January 2024 was received.

(d) Confirmation of application for international police vetting for two staff members.

(4) A record of awards detailing the component certificates was provided to the inspectorate and confirmation that an application has been made to DCEDIY.

Summary Comment

Evidence submitted for (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) above meets the requirements Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. However, evidence submitted for (4) does not meet requirements and will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The following policies were reviewed on this inspection: Policy on safe sleep and policy on nappy changing. The policy on safe sleep was appropriate and contained all of the requirements.

Non-Compliance Information

The service nappy changing policy did not state the requirement to change disposable aprons between each child's intimate care; increasing the potential risk for cross infection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The nappy changing policy has been updated and is in each changing room. All staff members have been retrained on the policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

Updated policy on nappy changing.

Summary Comment

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

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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff were working directly with the children at all times. There were 53 children with 11 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 wobbler room one, there were 7 children aged 1 to 2 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In wobbler room two, there were 5 children aged 1 to 3 years old being cared for by 1 staff.
- In toddler room one, there were 8 children aged 2 to 3 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In toddler room two, there were 5 children aged 2 to 3 years old being cared for by 1 staff.
- In the preschool room, there were 14 children aged 3 to 4 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- In Montessori room one, there were 14 children aged 3 to 5 years old being cared for by 3 staff.

Montessori room two was closed of the day of inspection, due to Christmas midterm for children availing of the ECCE scheme.

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

(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)(a)

Each of the early years rooms were bright, warm and well laid out to meet the needs of the age range of children in each room. Consideration was given to the selection of appropriate play and learning materials to meet the interests and developmental learning needs of children attending the service. Children could freely access material and resources on low-level shelving or storage containers, promoting independence and choice making.

Outdoors, children had access to dedicated play spaces and some of the rooms on the ground floor opened directly to the outdoor area. Children had access to opportunities to climb, slide, engage in role play and use of wheeled toys.

(1)(b)

A three-week menu detailed the variety of snacks and meals provided by the service. Consideration was given to the individual food preferences of children and adequate quantities of food were available. Extra servings were available if children required them. 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 supported to use the toilet independently and

handwashing was promoted after toileting. Attention was given to children's appearance with staff observed to clean children's faces and hands.

Children were placed to sleep when signs of tiredness were recognised by staff and scheduled sleep times were observed after the lunchtime meal in all rooms. Rooms used for sleeping were 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.

Children had free movement and choice of activities in all rooms observed on the day. Children were placed in highchairs when meals were ready to be served and removed promptly when they were finished. There were assigned outdoor areas each room and children were observed in the outdoor area throughout the day. Appropriate clothing was available for all children to access the outdoor area in all weathers. Buggies were available for younger children who were not yet mobile.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) Children attending toddler one, toddler two and preschool rooms were not provided with age and developmentally appropriate drinking cups. Several children were observed to use baby bottles as their sole drink container.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Age-appropriate cups were purchased and all bottles were returned to parents.

Supporting documentation submitted

Receipt for new cups.

Summary Comment

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

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 keypad and buzzer entry and exit system in place on the main entrance door of the building to prevent unauthorised persons gaining entry or children exiting unsupervised. The main external gates were appropriately secured during the hours of operation. The kitchen and staff areas were inaccessible to children. All cleaning agents were stored safely and out of reach of children.

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 outdoor play and toileting. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand washing throughout the service. Each room had designated children's toilets and/or a nappy changing area. Hand washing facilities were adequately stocked with paper hand towels and liquid soap.

A system was in place for the appropriate storage and sterilisation of children's soothers. In the younger rooms, cleaning systems were in place for mouthed toys. Tables and equipment were cleaned prior to food being served to children and appropriate safe food storage and preparation was observed.

Cots and low-level beds were spaced the required 50cm apart in each room used for sleep. Appropriate systems were in place for the laundering of bed linen, and cleaning of cots shared by children. Waterproof mattress protectors were observed on all cots in the service.

Safe Sleep:

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

within the required temperature range of 18°C to 22°C for children over the age of one. No children under one year of age were present on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for twelve staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years as required by the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Infection Control:

2. Nappy changing procedures as detailed in the service nappy changing policy were not implemented consistently by staff members on the day of inspection, posing a potential risk of cross infection. Details as follows:
 - Child and staff hands were not washed after each nappy change.
 - The nappy changing units were not cleaned between each use.
3. The nappy changing mat in toddler one was torn and foam exposed. Effective cleaning procedures could not be completed which posed a risk of cross infection. This also posed a risk of choking should a child ingest the exposed foam.
4. A single bin was used in the preschool room sanitary accommodation for the disposal of used nappies and paper hand towels used by children. Children therefore had access to used nappies which posed a risk of cross infection.

Safe Sleep:

5. The service safe sleep policy was not effectively implemented as two children were observed placed to sleep with a bottle of milk. This posed a risk of choking as children lay on their backs while drinking.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Vetting was re applied, for all staff over three years. One staff member has since ceased employment in the service. All vetting will be checked by two members of management and copies will be taken to ensure none are mislaid.

Infection Control:

2. Children's hands are being washed after each nappy change. Nappy changing units are cleaned after each use. Staff were retrained immediately. All staff were retrained in washing the children's hands after changing and cleaning the changing mat after each child is changed.
3. The nappy changing mat in toddler 1 was replaced.
4. A single bin was put back in the preschool changing room.

Safe Sleep:

5. No children are allowed to sleep with bottles. Staff were retrained and the dangers of choking were explained in depth. All staff were retrained and explained not to allow children to go to sleep with bottles under any circumstances.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Updated Garda Vetting for eleven staff members.

Infection Control:

2. Updated nappy changing policy.
3. Photographic evidence.
4. Photographic evidence.

Safe Sleep:

5. Minutes of team meeting.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

There was no suitably first aid trained staff member available to the children on the day of inspection. It is acknowledged that one staff member held the required First Aid Responder training however they were not rostered on during the inspection. Also, several staff members working on the day of inspection did hold current paediatric first aid certification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Two staff members updated their FAR training. We are awaiting their certs. A notification is on the office wall to remind us of the expiration date.

Supporting documentation submitted

FAR training certificates for two staff members.

Summary Comment

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

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.
- (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 record of fire drills which had taken place monthly in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 20 December 2023.
- (b) There was a record available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 03 October 2023 and the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 09 November 2023.
- (4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed beside each emergency exit door on 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 demonstrated insurance cover for a full day care for 75 children. The insurance policy commenced 28 March 2023 and will expire 27 March 2024.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

(3) A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.

(4) 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 clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).

Compliance Information

- (1) There was adequate clear floor space available on the day of inspection for the numbers and age ranges of children attending.
- (2) (2)(3)(4) The following clear floor space was available across the service, for children attending on a sessional, part time or sessional care basis.

Room	Minimum Space requirements per child	Age range of children	Space Available	Maximum Capacity	Sanitary Accommodation
Wobbler One	0-1 year, 3.5 m ² 1-2 years, 2.8 m ²	0 – 2 years	27.6 m ²	8 FDC	1 sanitary accommodation unit shared with wobbler two *
Wobbler Two	1-2 years, 2.8 m ²	1 – 2 years	25.4 m ²	5 FDC	As above *
Toddler One	2-3 years, 2.35 m ²	2 – 3 years	31.7 m ²	12 FDC	2 sanitary accommodation units
Toddler Two	2-3 years, 2.35 m ²	2 - 3 years	43.6 m ²	18 FDC	2 sanitary accommodation units
Preschool	3-6 years, sessional, 1.818 m ² 3-6 years, FDC, 2.3 m ²	3 – 4 years	58 m ²	22 Sessional and FDC	2 sanitary accommodation units
Montessori One	3-6 years, sessional, 1.818 m ² 3-6 years, FDC, 2.3 m ²	3 – 6 years	41.8 m ²	22 Sessional or 18 FDC	2 sanitary accommodation units
Montessori Two	3-6 years, sessional, 1.818 m ² 3-6 years, FDC, 2.3 m ²	3 – 6 years	25.5 m ²	14 Sessional or 11 FDC	2 sanitary accommodation units
Total				101 Children	11 sanitary accommodation units