

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WD076
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	St. Josephs Childcare Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	6 - 7 Lower Yellow Road, Waterford City, Co. Waterford
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<b>Eircode:</b>	X91 CK6N
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Con O Riordan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date.1 of Inspection:</b>	22/07/2024
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<b>Date 2 of Inspection:</b>	23/07/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children day1</b>	AM	53	PM	36
<b>No of pre-school children day 2</b>	AM	47	PM	n/a

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Ryan
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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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

St. Joseph's Childcare and Community Centre open in 1997 and is located in inner-city Waterford. The service operates full daycare under the auspices of the society of St. Vincent's de Paul. The service operates from refurbished terraced street houses with a large purpose-built extension nestled among inner city residential and commercial buildings. The service's extension has five childcare rooms, two sleep rooms, sensory room, a full catering kitchen, adult and children's toilet facilities and a nappy changing room. The two outdoor play areas are safely secured and situated adjacent to the childcare rooms. The older building presently accommodates office space, meeting rooms, staff kitchen facilities and further sanitary accommodation. There are ample storage rooms throughout the building for buggies, toys and equipment and a separate room for storage of chemicals and cleaning agents. The service participates in the Early Childhood care and Education scheme and the Community Childcares subvention scheme. Opening hours are from 08:45hrs to 17:30hrs Monday to Friday for children ages 5 months to 5 years of age. A school age programme is available for children from 5 to 12 years of age.

### Staffing

The service employs a manager, deputy manager and currently 27 childcare staff. The service also employs two part-time cleaners, one maintenance person, one administrator and one full-time chef.

### 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 inspected the following regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play.

Regulation 22 – Food and drink.

Regulation 25 - First aid.

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures.

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 manager, assistant manager, administrative and child care 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 manager was the designated person in charge. The service also had an assistant manager who was able to deputise as required.
  - (b) At all times during the inspection the manager and assistant manager were available and on the premises.
  - (c) St. Joseph's Childcare Centre was governed and managed by the management committee solely for the childcare service. There were clear details available indicating management structure and the lines of authority. The service was observed to be well managed, and this was reflected by the clarity of all staff in their roles and responsibilities and the managers extensive working knowledge of all aspects of the service.

- (2)
- The staff files for the 35 employees working in the service were reviewed on the day, of these 11 were new staff employed to work in the service since the last inspection on the 17 August 2021.
- (a)(b) There were validated references for all employees kept in each staff member's file.
- (c) There was evidence of completed Garda vetting disclosure certificates from An Garda Síochána on file for all staff working in the service and all had been re-vetted in the last 3 years.
- (d) Fourteen of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months. Police vetting had been completed from the police authorities in these states.
- (4)
- There was evidence that all staff employed to work directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5, 6 or 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. There was evidence of continuous professional development and qualification certificates on file.

### 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, the number of staff working directly with the children attending the service, which met the requirement for the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.
- (2)

On the morning of day one of the inspection the staff: child ratios were maintained as follows:

There were 41 pre-school children aged from 1 to 4 years of age being cared for by 13 childcare staff. There were 12 children aged from 4 to 10 years of age in the summer camp being cared for by 4 childcare staff.

On the afternoon of day one of the inspection 27 pre-school children aged from 1 to 4 years of age being cared for by 11 childcare staff. There were 10 children aged from 4 to 10 years of age in the summer camp being cared for by 4 childcare staff.

On the morning of day two of the inspection the staff: child ratios were maintained as follows:

There were 47 pre-school children aged from 1 to 4 years of age being cared for by 12 childcare staff.

There were 18 children aged from 4 to 10 years of age in the summer camp being cared for by 4 childcare staff.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*

*(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*

*(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-*

*(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(a) There were five rooms available in the service for the purpose of childcare provision on the day of the inspection.

The big room had a summer camp in operation and catered for children 4 years and upwards. A junior pre-school room also offered summer camp for the 3- to 4-year-olds. The junior toddler room accommodated children from

18 months to 2 years, the senior toddler room had children from 2 to 3 years of age, the baby room catered for children from 12 to 18 months.

All rooms were carefully planned and zoned to provide easy access to the well-resourced toy environments provided. Each room was set out to accommodate the needs of staff and the age range of children being cared for. The play equipment and furniture were of high quality and the attention to detail in the procurement process was evident by the age appropriateness, suitability and cultural diversity of these. The play resources supported different types of play and offered different levels of complexity to provide challenge and encourage skills development, for example in the 'big room' children were observed knitting while others enjoyed working with modeling clay.

Each room contained areas to support floor play and tabletop activities. All chairs, tables and furniture were graduated and age appropriate to the children in each room. Low level adult chairs for staff were available in all the childcare rooms. In the baby room a comfortable soft chair was available for staff to cradle and comfort children as observed on the day when one staff member was calming a child who was upset.

All rooms had special areas of interest and imaginative and pretend play and were well catered for with the selection of dressing up outfits with relevant accessories. There was an ample supply of these outfits as noted in the junior pre-school room where three boys were dressed up as 'spiderman' and the staff member noted that she would source more of these in the storage room as other children were requesting to be 'spiderman' too. Each room included a home corner, construction stations and had ample supplies of blocks, plastic animals and manipulative play materials. Numerous decorative features, displays and murals were observed throughout the building these included seascape painting on the glass that partitioned the senior toddler room. Storerooms held a wide range of additional play materials to ensure variety during the year and support curricular themes.

Staff were observed seated around the tables with the children at mealtimes in all the rooms. In the baby room the babies sat in hook on chairs that were attached to a circular table enabling all the children to see each other with a sense of togetherness as they had their food. Staff were observed to be vigilant in their observations of the children while eating, encouraging them to swallow before the next spoonful.

Since the last inspection, a generous sensory room was developed for all the children in the service. The manager informed the inspector that the addition of this sensory room was particularly helpful for gently settling small groups of children if required. An additional benefit was to give some children the opportunity for one-to-one time with staff when necessary. The room was well resourced and laid out with the provision of appropriate specialised sensorial experiences with lights such as, bubble tubes, light tails and rainbow light tabs. There was a large selection of sensorial toys, music and an aromatherapy lamp. Soft wall and floor matting throughout the room added to a secure cocooning atmosphere.

(b) There were two dedicated sleep rooms, one adjacent to the baby room with six cots and the second off the junior toddler room with seven cots. There were supplies of stackable beds and labelled individualised storage units for blankets /sheets. Linen was laundered on the premises. All rooms had generously defined rest areas with soft fall matting and rubber foam couches sized in each room in accordance with the age of children being catered for. Large bean bags were also used in this area.

(3)

(a) The main outdoor area was enclosed by urban buildings. Since the last inspection, the entire surface was replaced with new soft sponge matting throughout. A new open plan playhouse and springer seat was also acquired. There was a sheltered canopy off the premises that provided shelter from rain and on the day of inspection from direct sunlight. There was ample seating for staff and children at picnic tables arranged around this space. Climbing walls were also a new addition to this area.

The staff of each care group set up the outdoor play area to meet the needs of the children in their group, for example the toddlers were observed to play with age-appropriate slides, rockers and large plastic blocks. Under the canopy there were two large well filled sand boxes that were accessible throughout the day to the children.

There was a large well organised storage room adjacent to the outdoor play space, staff were observed inviting children to choose their preferred ride on item from this room. Two other small outdoor spaces were adjacent to the 'big room' and the junior room which had age-appropriate opportunities for messy play.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

All food and meals were prepared and cooked from an onsite kitchen on the premises that had been inspected by the Health Service Executive (HSE) Environmental Health Services on 30 October 2023. The service employed a full-time and a part time kitchen support staff person. There was a new weekly menu plan devised for the spring and summer of 2024. All special dietary and cultural food requirements were catered for as far as possible. The service had a healthy eating policy, which was also available to parents.

Breakfast was available for all children between 09:00hrs and 09:30hrs offering a selection of cereals and toast with milk or water drinks. The first snack was offered at 11:30hrs on the day, this comprised of cheese and ham sandwiches and fresh fruit platters, a further snack was given at 13:00hrs consisting of cheese chunks /carrot sticks and hummus.

The main meal on the 22 July 2024 was beef or tomato spaghetti bolognaise and, on the 23 July 2024, the main meal consisted of chicken or vegetable curry. A further light snack was served again at around 16:00hrs for children remaining on in the service after this time. There were no children on baby milk formula on the day of the inspection, the policy for the service was for parents to supply prepared baby milk formula for storage in a fridge in line with safe food practice. Drinking water was available for the children to freely access throughout the day in all the rooms.

## 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)

Twenty-three staff employed to work in the service were currently First Aid Responder trained. This training was provided on site and paid for by the society of Vincent de Paul.

(2)

(a) There were first aid bags in all the childcare rooms.

(b) These first aid bags were suitably equipped, well stocked and available at all times.

## 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 firefighting 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) A recording system was provided to ensure a monthly record was maintained of fire drills as conducted and it was noted that the last fire drill took place on the premises on the 17 July 2024.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was maintained. It was recorded that fire equipment was last serviced on the 31 March 2024 and smoke alarms were last serviced on 22 May 2024.

(4) The fire evacuation procedure was displayed on the notice board in the main hall and outside every room on the premises.