

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX084		
Name of Service:	Little Treasures Crèche		
Address of Service:	155 Bridgemeanows, Milehouse Road, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford		
Eircode:	Y21 WX86		
Name of Registered Provider:	Kent Ashmore		
Service type:	Full Day, Sessional		
Dates of Inspection:	29/11/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM 24
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford		
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry		
Title:	Early Years Inspectors		
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		

Description of service

Little Treasures Creche is a privately owned and operated service which is registered to provide a full day care service to children aged from 1 to 6 years of age. The service is one of two services owned by the registered provider situated in the housing development of Bridge Meadows in Enniscorthy. The service is operated from a two-story building, which consists of three preschool rooms, a sensory room, a kitchen, a hallway, toilets, nappy changing facilities and an outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The service employed a total of 11 staff. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. The service also employs a chef who cooks all the meals and snacks in the service. There were 9 staff who held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

The inspection focused on the following regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 15 Record of preschool child,

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,

Regulation 22 Food and Drink,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,

Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4).

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 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)(b)

The manager was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 11 staff employed in the service. All staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection. There were 22 required written references available on file for staff members.

(c)

There was evidence of Garda vetting available on file in the service for all staff members. The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for all staff.

(4)

There were 9 staff working directly with the preschool children who held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework

Non-Compliance Information

(d)

Police vetting was not available on file for one staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

The evidence available for one staff members qualification was not conclusive that they had achieved a level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(d)

An application for police vetting has been sent for the staff member who has lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

The service in conjunction with the staff member is still in the process of establishing the staff member is qualified to work directly with the preschool children. The manager of the service has linked in with several agencies to clarify the situation for the service and the staff member. The staff member is currently working in the kitchen in the service until the situation is clarified.

Supporting documentation submitted

(d)

A copy of the application for police vetting was received by the inspector.

(4)

Copies of the e mails sent to the governing agencies was received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The actions once completed will be satisfactory to meet the requirements of the 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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

Compliance Information

(1)

There was an adequate number of staff always working directly with the children for the duration of the inspection.

(3)

In the morning there were 33 children with 10 staff.

In the afternoon there were 24 children in the care of 7 staff.

The manager was available during the day of and was available to assist across the rooms as required.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

A sample of 10 children's enrolment forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

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

All rooms were resourced with materials and equipment for children to learn and play in the service. Play materials included a large range of developmentally appropriate Montessori equipment, arts and crafts materials and other open-ended materials which were well organised and easily accessible to children.

The explorer room was equipped with a home corner which was equipped with utensils for children to play with. The children were observed having fun dressing up in the imaginative outfits from the dress up area. For example,

there was a princess, a lady bird and a pumpkin. There was a kidney shaped table which helped staff to engage with all the children while they were sitting doing their tabletop activities.

In the adventure room there was a comfortable rest area consisting of low cosy couches in the corner of the room. Of note in all the rooms was the supply of library books available to the children. Staff who spoke to the children said the manager usually enquired re-emerging interests in the rooms and went to the local library on a regular basis to source the books for the children. There was original art work displayed in the room featuring photographs of the children in the room.

The pirate room situated upstairs in the service was developed with the ages and stages of the children in mind there was a supply of arts and crafts materials, small world play equipment, dinosaurs and cars and trucks for the children to play with.

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

The service promoted healthy eating and had a healthy eating policy. All snacks and meals were prepared in the service by a chef employed directly by the service. The dinner was served at mid-day and consisted of chicken stroganoff and rice. There was a plentiful supply and children who wanted extra servings were given extra portions. The children had freshly baked cinnamon muffins with crackers and cheese in the afternoon. The food provided was prepared and served to meet the stages of development of the children. For example, the food for younger children was a mashed/lumpy texture and the older children's dinner was served whole.

There was a 4-week rotating menu in the service. Staff in the adventure room had displayed a photograph on their notice board to show the children what was on for dinner that day. Children were served cups of milk with their dinner and many children were given more when they asked for extra.

Staff sat with the children chatting to them and gave them assistance if required. Children in the explorer room had washable bibs supplied to them and were helped to wash their hands and faces when they finished their meal.

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

Access to the service was gained through the front door which led to a hallway. There was a hatch where staff in the office could verify the person before allowing them access to the service. The openings of the windows were restricted with appropriate restrictive opening devices.

Infection Control

The service appeared to be clean with no maintenance required. Staff were observed to be vigilant helping children to wash their hands at various stages on the day of inspection. For example, before eating, after messy play and after toileting. Nappy changing procedures observed on the day were in line with the services nappy changing policy. There was liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand drying throughout the service. Staff were seen to attend to children's personal hygiene during the day. Mouthing toys and soothers were washed and sterilised daily. The nappy changing policy was on display in the nappy changing unit next to the toddler room.

Administration of medication

There was an administration of medication policy. Staff showed the inspector the procedure to follow when a child required medication. Administration of medicine was recorded on the service's tablet.

Safe Sleep

The service had a designated sleep room located beside the explorer room. Children were observed sleeping in cots. There was one child placed to sleep on a sleeping mat on the floor in the sleep room. A staff member stayed in the room to supervise the sleeping children in their care. Older children slept in the sensory room on the ground floor in the service. The room was illuminated with colourful lights and there was music playing which helped to establish a comforting environment for the children.

Staff were observed to be vigilant in observing and recording sleep observations on the sleeping children including colour, position and breathing rate and the optimum sleep room temperature.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control

1.
The nappy changing area attached to the explorer room needed to be organised to prevent cross contamination during the procedure. Gloves, aprons, disposable hand towels, and paper towels to clean the mat after the procedure were all stored in a haphazard manner which necessitated the staff handling them excessively during the procedure. This posed a risk of cross infection in the service.

2.
There was no warm water to support handwashing flowing from the tap in the nappy changing area attached to the explorer room.

Fire Safety

2.
Monthly fire drill practices were not in line with the Fire Safety in Pre-Schools 1999 guidance document. The document recommends that fire drills should include a monthly complete evacuation of the children from the premises to a place of safety in the open air. The service carries out evacuation drills for each room in the service when a complete evacuation is recommended as best practice.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

1.
The manager is currently sourcing a unit to store all nappy changing equipment to ensure the best practice in infection control is maintained in the service.

2.
A plumber was commissioned to replace the taps in the nappy changing area.

Fire Safety

3.
A fire drill which includes the evacuation of the entire service is now carried out in the service monthly.

Supporting documentation submitted

1.
No evidence received.

2.
A document from the plumber confirming the replacement of the taps was received by the inspector.

Fire Safety

3.

A template of the fire drill now including the entire service was received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response received is satisfactory to meet the requirements of the 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

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool service.

Non-Compliance Information

There was one person trained in a first aid responder course working in service. However, the inspector noted if this person was off duty or on leave there would be no person available to the children trained in a first aid responder course. Preschool services are required to have a person always trained in a first aid responder course available to the children when attending a preschool service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

There will be three staff qualified in a first aid responder course available to the children going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Confirmation that two further staff members have been booked to complete a first aid responder course was received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence received is satisfactory to meet the requirements of the 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 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)

There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill had taken place in the service in November 2024.

(b)

There was a record available on file stating the firefighting equipment was last serviced in August 2024 and smoke alarm was last serviced in June 2024.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was insurance in place to cover the children who were present on the day of inspection.