

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2016CE003 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Lissycasey Laugh and Learn |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Ennis Road, Lissycasey, Ennis, Co. Clare |
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| <b>Eircode:</b> | V95 PT86 |
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| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Ger Kelly |
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| <b>Service type:</b> | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional |
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| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 08/04/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 47 | PM | 47 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

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| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate<br>Tusla Child and Family Agency<br>Primary Care Centre<br>Station Road<br>Ennis<br>County Clare. |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | A. McCarthy & J. Hayes                                                                                                     |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | 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).

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### Description of service

Lissycasey Laugh and Learn is a community based childcare facility that was established in 2016. The service accommodates children ranging in age from six months to six years attending on a full day, part-time or sessional basis. A programme of care and education is facilitated Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 18:00.

On the 08 April 2026 four of the six care rooms were in operation. These rooms included the Tiny Dinos room (age range: one year), the Bouncing Bunnies room (age range: one to two years), the Busy Bees room (age range: two to three years) and the Barnyard room (age range: three to four years).

There are four care rooms on the ground floor and one care room on the first floor in the purpose-built childcare facility. A sixth care room is located in a separate building to the rear of the premises. The care room on the first floor is used to facilitate care for pre-school children in the morning. A kitchen and dining room are located on the ground floor. Four outdoor play areas are located to the front, rear and side of the building. A separate school aged childcare facility is located to the side of the main building.

### Staffing

Thirty-two adults are employed by the service. The registered provider is part of the board of management and does not work in the service. On the 08 April 2026, fourteen adults worked directly with forty-seven children in attendance. The person in charge provided an administrative role and provided relief cover in the care rooms. An auxiliary person was employed to prepare and cook the food.

### 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

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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 focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

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

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service (1)(i)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25- First aid (1)

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 inspectors wish 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)**

The acting manager was available, and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

**(b)**

The acting manager was available during the inspection.

**(2)**

Thirty-three files were available in respect of the registered provider and the adults employed by the service. The findings included the following:

**(a)**

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Fifty-five written and validated references from past employers in respect of adults working in the service were available.

(b)

Eleven written and validated references were available in respect of adults working in the service from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the thirty-three adults employed by the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was available in respect of three adults working in the service who had not lived in another state for a period longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

The adults working directly with the preschool children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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,*

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### Compliance Information

- (1)  
During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.
- (2)  
On the 08 April 2026 the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Fourteen adults cared for the forty-seven children in attendance during the inspection.
- (8)(a)  
The staff roster indicated that more than two adults were available in the service at all times.

### 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:*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

### Compliance Information

- (1)(i)  
A staff roster was available and accurately recorded all the adults currently employed by the service and their rostered hours.

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### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

##### **Supporting Relationships Around Children:**

Positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions observed between the adults and children. The adults working directly with the children demonstrated a knowledge of the children's preferences and capabilities. The transitions from play based activities, to sleep and to mealtime were completed with ease. The adults worked effectively together to meet the care needs of the children in each room. The children were observed to seek the support of the adults when needed and were responded to promptly. The adults were observed to cuddle, comfort and soothe the children. The adults engaged with the children in individual and group-based activities. The children were encouraged to be independent with caring for their belongings, feeding, using the toilet and during play based activities and this was praised by the adults. An open-door policy was observed in place in the service; parents were openly invited into the service at drop off and collection times. Parents were communicated with in an informal manner during the children's arrival and departure to the service. Learning journals captured the children's activities and artwork, and parents are communicated with through the service's application system.

##### **Physical and Material Environment:**

The care rooms were bright and spacious and were laid out to enable the children to freely move and play. The children engaged in open ended play-based activities. The children transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor environment. The outdoor areas accessible to the children to the front of the building was adequately resourced for the age and developmental level of the children. This area was resourced with a sensory play unit, activity units, playhouses and ride on vehicles. Learning aids and creative work were displayed on the walls in the care rooms.

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### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The children's learning and development was not adequately supported within the service due to the following:

#### Physical and Material Environment:

1. The four care room environments required further development, additional resources and supporting materials and equipment. Wooden pretend play kitchen units were worn, with chipped paint and in need of replacement. Supporting play equipment was not available with the kitchen units. The care rooms were predominantly resourced with battery operated toys and play equipment. A number of battery-operated toys were not functioning. Play based materials and equipment in shelving units were inaccessible to the children. Materials and equipment were not arranged to be visible and readily accessible to children to promote independent access. Reading areas adjacent to rest areas for children had books that were torn and limited reading materials for use by the children. Equipment and materials of similar use were grouped together in interest areas.
2. Low level seating and a table were not available for play based and feeding activities for the children aged eleven to eighteen months who attended the Tiny Dinos room. Children had to wait to be fed as only three highchairs were available for use.
3. The outdoor play area that was accessed by the Tiny Dinos and Bouncing Bunnies rooms was not sufficiently resourced with equipment and materials for the age and stage of development of the pre-school children.

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

(1)(a)

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The service acknowledges that some equipment within the rooms shows signs of wear and tear, and this is currently being addressed, with replacements underway as a priority. Plans for further room development were already in place prior to the inspection, as we recently celebrated 10 years in operation and recognise the importance of refreshing and updating our environment.  
  
Over the past 12 months, the service's focus has been on a significant upgrade of the outdoor areas. This work has now been completed, and our attention has shifted to the interior of the building.  
  
Improvements are currently in progress, including repainting rooms, purchasing new storage units, and enhancing the environment with soft furnishings such as rugs. Additionally, children's couches and cosy areas are being introduced to create more comfortable and engaging spaces.

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A full stocktake of resources is also underway, and additional equipment will be purchased, with a particular focus on enriching sensory experiences for the children.

2. A small table and four chairs have been added to the baby room, creating a dedicated space where children can comfortably engage in play-based activities as well as feeding. The service has purchased the table and chairs and will ensure their use in the future.
3. The area does include a variety of bikes, trikes, balls, and two tuff trays, all of which were stored in the shed at the time of the visit. Due to poor weather conditions prior to the inspection, these resources had been moved and had not yet been returned to the outdoor play area.

The service acknowledges that additional equipment is beneficial for the children and have since purchased two water activity walls, scoops for the sand area, and flower chalkboards to be mounted on the fence. This marks the beginning of further resource development, and the service will continue to enhance this area over time.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Points 1-3

Photographic and documentary evidence of equipment purchased, and equipment purchased and pending delivery.

### Summary Comment

Based on the service's response and supporting evidence the non-compliances are addressed under Regulation 19 (1)(a) Physical and Material Environment. The implemented actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

## 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:

- A bell operated system, with a high-level exit switch were in place at the entrance door. The adults working in the service monitored the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the service.
- The outdoor area was secured and enclosed with surrounding perimeter fencing and a gate to protect the children within.

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- The children were signed in and out on arrival to and departure from the service on the childcare electronic application system.
- Storage facilities were secured and inaccessible to the children.
- Medication was stored out of reach of the children.

### Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean condition.
- The children's and adult's sanitary facilities were appropriately equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined and pedal operated bins.
- The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, after using the toilet and before mealtime.
- The infant's powdered formula was reconstituted in accordance with best practice guidance and stored in the refrigerator in the care room.
- The children's bedlinen and personal care items were labelled and stored individually.

### Safe Sleep:

- The sleep room adjacent to the Tiny Dinos room accommodated standard sized cots with wipeable mattresses for the children to sleep. Low level beds and individual blankets were available for the children who required sleep in the Bouncing Bunnies and Busy Bees rooms.
- The adults demonstrated an awareness of the service's safe sleep policy. The children's sleep observations were recorded by the adults every ten minutes. These observations included the children's colour, position and breathing.
- A wall mounted electronic thermometer was available for the adults to measure and monitor the sleep room and care room temperatures. The temperatures recorded ranged from 19 to 22 ° Celsius.
- Individual blankets and bed linen were used by the children during sleep periods.

### Fire Safety:

- The fire exits and routes were clear from obstruction throughout the service.
- Written records of completed monthly fire drills were available.
- The fire assembly point was readily identifiable and identified by the adults working in the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

### Infection Control:

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1. The children's soothers in three care rooms were not stored in individually labelled containers. The soothers were not labelled and were stored collectively on a windowsill and in containers touching off each other. This posed a potential risk of cross contamination.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Infection Control:

1. Individual containers have been purchased, clearly labelled, and are now in place in all three care rooms.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Infection Control:

1. Photographic evidence.

### Summary Comment

Based on the service's response and supporting evidence the non-compliance is addressed under Regulation 23 Infection Control. The implemented actions will be reviewed 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- Five adults held records of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training. The staff roster demonstrated that the adults trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) training were available at all times during the operation of the service.