

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016LK013
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	TLC Childcare
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Woodfield Grove, Killeline, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V42 X934
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Joan Hester
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	18/09/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	75	PM	75
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Browne J Ryan
<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).	

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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## Description of service

This full day service was set up in 2016 and it offers full day care and part time care from 07.30hrs to 18:00hrs Monday to Friday. It also offers an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school programme and a sessional care programme from 09.00hrs to 12.00hrs. The premises are a purpose built two storey childcare facility located in the town of Newcastle West, Co Limerick close to shops, schools and residential settings. The service has 7 playrooms, 4 sleep rooms, a kitchen, nappy changing and sanitary facilities for children and adults and an outdoor play area to the back of the premises.

## Staffing

There are a total of 21 staff working in the service. On the day of inspection there were 17 childcare staff working with the children and this included the manager and relief staff who were available to cover breaks, and other duties in the playrooms.

The registered provider was present on the day of the inspection and will covers breaks and office duties as required.

There was 1 staff working in the kitchen and a staff available to work in the office and cover breaks if required. All staff working directly with the children have childcare qualifications which range from level 5 to level 8 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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 Child Development . As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms Baby room, Ducky room , Dolphin room and Octopus room.

Regulations: 9, 11, 19 , 21, 27 and 29 were assessed .

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

This inspection was triggered by information received into the office of Early Years Feedback and Concerns.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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
- (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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 registered provider and a named designated manager were present at the time of the inspection.
- (b) The person in charge and the registered provider were present throughout the day of the inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and roles and responsibilities of each employee. Team leaders were appointed in each room of the service.

- (2) The files of 6 new staff members were checked and the following documents were available for inspection:
- (a) References from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer were available for the staff.
  - (b) References from sources other than past employers in the case of a person who had no past employers were available where required.
  - (c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available in respect of all staff members working in the service . All vetting disclosures were dated within the last 3 years.
  - (d) Police vetting was in place for the staff members who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) All staff working directly with children attending the service had an award in Early childhood Care and Education ranging from Level 5 to 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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)  
At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider and the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(2)  
On inspection day there were 14 staff working across 7 playrooms with 75 children present in the morning and 75 children present in the afternoon.

- Bunny room - there were 7 (6mts- 1.5 years) children and 3 staff present.
- Ducky room - there were 5 (1.5- 2 years) children and 1 staff present.
- Dolphin room- there were 10 (1.5-2 years) children and 2 staff present.
- Octopus room- there were 10 (2-3years) children and 2 staff present.
- Elephant room - there were 14(2-3) children and 2 staff present.(ECCE)
- Giraffe room - there were 15 (3-4 years) children and 2 staff present.
- Zebra room - there were 14 (3-5 years) children and 2 staff present.

There were 3 additional staff members available to cover for staff breaks and the registered provider and the staff in the office were available on site on office management and other service duties.

## 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:*

*(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*

*(c) details of the adult: child ratios in the service;*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

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

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that there were written records maintained of the following information in relation to the service:

(a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor.

(c) Details of the adult: child ratios in the service.

(h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis.

(i) Details of staff rosters on a daily basis.

(k) Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service. When an accident /incident occurs involving a preschool child the details were recorded by the staff involved, signed by the staff and the parents.

### 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

##### BASIC NEEDS:

The healthy eating policy of the service detailed a well-balanced and nutritious menu. The full-time chef freshly prepares the meals each day. All the food and drinks were supplied by the service. On the day the children were offered dinner of mashed potatoes, vegetables and a beef stew. Snack consisted of a selection of fresh fruit. Drinking water was available throughout the day in each room if a child was thirsty and needed a drink. The children were given plenty of time to eat and enjoy their food and staff sat with the children which allowed for a quieter, calmer and unhurried atmosphere at mealtimes.

The children who were toilet trained toileted on their own with assistance given to those who needed it. Nappy changing facilities were provided close to the playrooms for ease of access for the staff and children. All toiletries for the children were safely stored and clearly labelled and were located within easy reach of all staff.

Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation with a supply of hot and cold running water, paper towels and liquid antibacterial soap.

Children under 2 years of age slept in traditional type cots and were observed to be checked by staff every 10 minutes in line with the safe sleep policy of the service. Children over the age of 2 years needing a sleep were provided with an individual sleep bed, sheet and blanket in a separate sleep room. A member of staff stays with these older children while sleeping.

The staff were observed listening to the children in a caring and gentle way when they expressed emotions. The staff responded to the children when upset, they picked them up and cuddled them using soft tones of voice. The staff used the keyperson system in each room and they had a good understanding of its benefits.

The children have the opportunities to outside as often as possible throughout the day.

On the day the children from the various playroom were observed to play outdoors for periods during the day.

## 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.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

1. The variety and quantity of play materials/equipment and age-appropriate books in the Dolphin and Octopus playrooms was insufficient. There was no supporting play equipment in the water and sand trays.
2. The outdoor area was poorly resourced with play equipment and materials for the children's play. There was no sand, no water, no chalk or other materials for the children to play, explore and extend their learning.
3. There were no seating in the outdoor areas for the children and staff to sit and relax together in these areas.

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

**Corrective and Preventive Action:** The registered provider has stated in the response that:

1. Play equipment and materials have been ordered for the playrooms.
2. The entire outdoor area has been completely renovated, work for the large outdoor site will commence as soon as the service receives approval from the county council. The outdoor environment has been resurfaced and all materials reintroduced. Additional ride on equipment has been sourced.
3. Equipment and materials was ordered before the inspection and is now in place in the outdoor area.

**Supporting documentation submit:**

Invoices for the equipment ordered and photos of the outdoor areas submitted with the CAPA document.

#### Summary Comment

The evidence submitted has been assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

A detailed supervision policy was in place at the service which outlined the responsibility of all staff to ensure children are supervised at all times. There was a sufficient number of qualified staff available on the premises to ensure adequate supervision on the day.

Supervision was primarily by sight and where children were using the toilet independently, they were able to do so with staff in earshot, available to support them if needed.

Direct supervision was observed when children were playing in the outdoor spaces. The layout of the premises both internally and externally allowed for ease of visual supervision while allowing children quiet time and space. At the end of the outdoors session all areas were checked to ensure no child was left outside unsupervised.

Management and staff appear to have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the required rest and sleep facilities, and the supervision of the sleeping children.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-  
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
1. The walls in many of the playrooms, bathrooms and corridors were marked, and unclean.
  2. The floor covering in the upstairs bathroom was lifting from the wall , making cleaning difficult.
  3. Many of the shelving units in the playroom appeared marked, worn, and in a poor state of repair.
  4. The outdoor area was unclean , the walls were dirty and the wooden furniture chipped and in a poor state of repair. The supply of bark in the outdoor area was inadequate and it appeared dirty and unclean.

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

**Corrective and Preventive Action:** The registered provider has stated in the response that:

1. A painting company was contracted to paint the entire interior of the building and this work has now commenced. The service will review how art work and other items of interest will be displayed in the service.

2. The capping has been replaced and a surplus is now in stock.
3. Some units have been replaced and others will be sanded and painted.
4. The entire outdoor area has been completely renovated.

**Supporting documentation submitted:**

Photos and invoices were submitted with the CAPA document.

**Summary Comment**

The evidence submitted was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 29

Premises, point (d)