

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020LK005
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Name of Service:	Hope Childcare
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Address of Service:	Rathwood, Murroe, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 Y6T8
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Name of Registered Provider:	Sherene Powell
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	13/08/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	15
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House , Henry St, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne and J Ryan
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
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Description of service

This is a registered private service established in 2020. There are two buildings on the premises, Wing A is the crèche facility and Wing B is a two-storey building providing sessional and full day care to preschool children.

The crèche facility is a single storey premises that has 2 playrooms in operation, the Toddlers and the Baby rooms, 2 sleep rooms, sanitary facilities for the children and adults, an office and a kitchen area.

The two-storey premises have 2 playrooms, playroom 1 located downstairs and playroom 2 upstairs to facilitate the older children attending for the sessional and full day care. Each playroom has its own sanitary facilities for the children.

The service has a number of outdoor spaces with a variety of surfaces such as grass, tarmac, and all-weather areas.

There is a school aged service available in the afternoon.

Staffing

On the day of the inspection there were 4 staff members working with the preschool children. An additional 2 staff members were available to cover relief and care for the school aged children.

The staff members working with the preschool children hold a qualification in childcare.

The registered provider does not work in this service.

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 announced 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.

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 furnished to the Office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

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*
- (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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;

(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and

(c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The registered provider had a designated person in charge and a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge and the deputy were present in the service on 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.

(2) All staff files were viewed on the day and the following information was in place:

(a) There were written, past employer's references available in respect of the adults working in the service, with recorded validations where required.

- (b) There were references available from sources other than past employers on file where required.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosure was available in respect of all the adults in the service.
- (d) Police vetting was available for the 4 adults that had lived outside the jurisdiction.
- (3) All vetting procedures were in place prior to any adult being appointed, assigned or allowed access to a child attending the preschool service.
- (4) The adults working directly with the children in the service all held an award in Early Childhood Care & Education ranging from Level 5 to 8
- (7)(a) Induction training records pertaining to policies and procedures of the service were available for all staff. Supervision records were available for all staff working in the service which demonstrated meetings held between the person in charge and individual staff.

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

All policies and procedures for the service were reviewed and updated by the management in 2023.

The following policies were reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements.

1. Supervision of Staff policy.
2. Supervision of children- indoors and outdoors policy.
3. Accident and Incident policy.
4. Recruitment policy

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 person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(2) On the day of the inspection there were 4 staff working across 3 rooms with 15 preschool children and 7 school aged children present in the morning and in the afternoon.

Additional childcare staff were available to cover for staff breaks from 11.30 am and to cover the care of the school aged children from 13.00 pm .

Staff rosters demonstrated there were at least 2 staff on the premises 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:

- (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;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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 had insured the following information in relation to the service was on file :
- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor.
 - (c) The details of the adult: child ratios in the service.
 - (g) The policies, procedures and statements the service required to be maintained in accordance with Regulation 10.
 - (h)The details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis.
 - (i) The details of staff rosters on a daily basis.
 - (k) The details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

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:

There was a healthy eating policy available at the service and a detailed menu plan was in place for each day.

Children's drinks were easily accessible in each room.

Nappy changing facilities were located next to the Baby and Toddler playrooms. Waist high changing units were provided. Children nappies and toiletries were stored in labelled baskets within easy reach of staff. Nappy changing policies were displayed for the staff in each of the changing units.

The older children have unrestricted access to the toilet and don't have to wait to use the toilet. Staff said that the children are supervised at all times while toileting. The staff encourage and support children to be independent in using the toilet if they are able to do so.

All children had access to a change of clothes if needed. Outdoor warm and waterproof clothing were available for all children.

Children under 2 years had access to a separate sleep room next to their playroom. Standard cots were in use.

Each cot was positioned a safe distance from each other. Children were physically checked every 10 minutes and all checks were documented. Low level beds were used for children over 2 years.

A large outdoor play area surrounded the perimeters of the facility. Children in the Baby, Toddler and Preschool rooms were observed to play outdoors on the day of inspection.

Staff were observed interacting well with the children, using soft tones of voice, using the child's name and getting down to their level and making eye contact. This supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with staff.

Staff were observed to be actively involved in children's play in each of the rooms of the service where they

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

Since the previous inspection in 2023 additional play and work materials were purchased for all the playrooms including the outdoor areas.

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:

The service ensured that the safety of the children was paramount, and the facility was regularly checked to ensure proper safety standards were maintained both internally and externally. On arrival to the service, the gate to the main pre-school outdoor play area was secured and access to the preschool rooms was controlled by a key pad system. This prevented any unauthorised entry and any unsupervised exit of children from the service. All outdoor play areas were safely secured and were surrounded by fencing and walls. The gates to all outdoor areas remained closed at all times. Children were supervised at all times while outside. A risk assessment of all areas was carried out on a regular basis. A list of each item checked and the person responsible for carrying out the checks was documented. These lists were signed and dated

Infection Control:

A written cleaning record was available showing that all areas internally and externally were cleaned on a regular basis. The main outdoor area was clean and the areas identified that required maintenance since the previous inspection had been addressed. All toys, play materials and equipment available to the children were cleaned at the end of each day. No broken toys or equipment were noted on the premises.

The staff had a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities on management of infection in a childcare setting in particular the nappy changing and hand washing policies.

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.

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

Compliance Information

(d)

1. The sheltered outdoor area appeared clean and maintenance was ongoing. The fencing was repaired and painted. The ground surface was clean.

2. The floor covering in the office area was replaced and there was ongoing maintenance in the other areas identified in the previous inspection.