

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023KY004
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Name of Service:	Tigh Na Leanai
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Address of Service:	Ballytrasna, Ventry, Co Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 E034
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Name of Registered Provider:	Vanessa Duffy
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Service type:	Child Minding
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Date of Inspection:	20/11/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Office, Social Work Dept. Hospital Grounds, Skibbereen, Coolnagarrane, West Cork, P81 PD78
Inspection undertaken by:	M Carney
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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	N/A
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Description of service

Tigh Na Leanai is registered to provide a childminding service for children aged from 0 to 6 years of age.

It operates from 08:00am to 18 :00pm daily.

The service is situated in the rural environs of Ventry in west Kerry. It operates from the registered providers large, modern, detached property. The children have free access to the kitchen and a designated playroom. There are toilet and nappy changing facilities; the sitting room has been adapted to accommodate a sleep amenity as required.

The children have access to a large, secured garden.

Families have access to the parking on the spacious front driveway for the safe arrival and departure of the children.

Staffing

The registered provider works single handedly with the children, however 2 adults have been appointed to act in an emergency capacity.

The registered provider had certification to evidence that Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training had been completed in March 2022 at Fetac Level 8.

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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider 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.

(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 registered provider worked single handedly with the children. Two adults had been appointed to act in an emergency capacity.

(2)(a) & (b)

Three files were reviewed at the time of the inspection, and the following information was obtained –

There were 4 written references from past employers on file.

(c)

There were 3 Garda vetting disclosures in file dated May 2023.

(d)
Police vetting was available for the 3 adults as they had lived outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for a period longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)
The registered provider had Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Fetac Level 8. Childcare qualifications were not required for the emergency staff.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) &(b)
1. Two validated references were not made available.
2. Records of validation were not available for 2 references on file.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

(2)(a) & (b)
1.&2. The registered provider obtained the necessary written references with the correct records of validation. Copies were submitted.

Summary Comment

Documentation in the form of written references and records of validation were forwarded to the early years office; they were reviewed and found to adequately meet the Requirements.

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

The following policies were reviewed and found to be satisfactory –
The healthy eating policy, the infection control policy, the behavior management policy and the administration of medication policy.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 12 - Childminders

(1) A childminder shall ensure that-

- (a) there are no more than 5 pre-school children in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children,*
- (b) subject to paragraph (2), there are no more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time, including his or her own pre-school children, and*
- (c) there is a working telephone on the premises.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) & (b)

At the time of the inspection there were no more than 5 children attending the service. There were no children under the age of 15 months present.

(c)

There was a working phone on the premises; the registered provider had a mobile phone with adequate coverage.

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

(1)(a) to (j)

The registered provider made available 7 enrolment forms. These were examined and found to have the required information as listed above in relation to Regulation 15 (a) to (i).

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:

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

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

Compliance Information

(1)

(j) The registered provider had a logbook for the recording of any medications that are to be administered to a child attending the service; the logbook had been developed by an agency affiliated to childcare settings and requested all the essential information. There were no entries.

(k) Likewise, the registered provider made available a logbook for the recording of any accidents or incidents which had occurred in the service. This logbook was also developed by an affiliated agency. There were no entries.

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 children's parents and guardians provided lunches and healthy snacks. However, the registered provider provided a hot meal for the children attending on a part time and full day care basis.
- The children were offered regular healthy snacks on an almost hourly basis and were observed sitting at the child sized table and chairs in a companionable manner enjoying their food.
- Drinks were readily available from their individual drink bottles and sippy cup, allowing the children to help themselves to drinks when thirsty.
- The hot meal was served at approximately 14:00pm when chicken, pasta and vegetables were served.
- The meal was eaten in an unhurried manner with the children sitting with their friends in a companionable and sociable manner.
- The registered provider sat with the children during snacks when possible or played nursery rhymes to amuse and entertain the children whilst they ate.
- Most of the children required nappy changing and this was conducted in a dignified manner on a 2 hourly basis or as required.
- A honey monster armchair was situated in a quiet area of the kitchen to allow the children to sit and browse the nearby books and avail of rest and relaxation.
- A sleep facility was available for the children also.

Physical and Material Environment –

- Tigh na Leanaí operated from the registered providers home, which was spacious, clean, airy and bright and well maintained. It had been adapted and laid out to provide an interesting and engaging childminding setting.
- The children had access to a large kitchen where they could safely ride their bikes around the central table.

- In the kitchen, child sized tables and chairs accommodated the many fine motor skill activities offered such as small construction, arts and crafts and jigsaws.
- An interlinked playroom was generously laid out with a wide range of activities such as the play kitchen with utensils, dolls and buggies to entice imaginative play.
- There was a farm table with many items to encourage curiosity, pretend and sociable play.
- A large dolls house was furnished in a considered manner to occupy the children.
- An anchored low level wooden shelving unit displayed the many fine motor skill play materials and equipment, such as small construction, arts and crafts, finger puppets, puzzles and matching board games.
- Dress up items were displayed and were clean and in a good state of repair; thematic costumes such as superheroes allowed the children to perform and enjoy role play.
- This playroom also provided a low slide and see saw for gross motor skill play in poor weather.
- There were skittles for the children to participate in competitive games.
- The children had access to a designated secured area of the registered providers garden for outdoor play and gross motor skill fun and games. It was laid to lawn and provided many activities such as ride on toys balls and seating.
- The registered provider stated that the shed stored an additional supply of gross motor skill apparatus.
- The children had access to toilet and nappy changing facilities.
- A sleep room was available to the children.

Supporting Relations Around the Children

- The registered provider was observed to be calm, kind and gentle with each child. Children's cues were readily acknowledged for toileting, nappy changing and for provision of snacks.
- More importantly the children were happy, relaxed, familiar with their environment and seen to engage industriously in the available activities and toys.
- It was evident that the registered provider had a close relationship with the children's families; it was observed at collection time that a comprehensive synopsis of the child's attendance was relayed to parents.
- The registered provider maintained a daily journal for children under the age of 18 months so that parents would have knowledge of their child's eating, toileting, rest and activity during the day.

- Photographs of the children engaged in activities were taken frequently and at the end of the week the registered provider posted a montage of the children’s videos and photographs via a digital media platform for the parent’s information.
- On the day of the inspection the children were seen participating in the many activities provided but they were especially absorbed by the sensory sand activity which was enjoyed as table-top where each child had their own individual trays with small diggers, spades and small receptacles for digging and building sand constructions.

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 children were offered sufficient snacks and meals whilst attending the service the parents provided lunches and some snacks and the registered provider provided a home-made meal freshly on a daily basis for the children attending on a part time and full day care basis.
- Drinks were readily available to the children.

Non-Compliance Information

Although the Tigh na Leanaí had a healthy eating policy in place, it was observed that some practices were at variance with the policy.

1. The perishable items of the children’s lunches which had been provided by the parents and guardians were not stored in a fridge.
2. Children were observed drinking orange squashes.
3. Cutlery or plates were not offered to the children and they were observed eating crackers and dry cereal off the table.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

The registered provider stated the following –

1. The children’s lunches are now stored in a fridge and a photograph of this was submitted.

2. The parents have been issued with the healthy eating policy again which states that only milk or water is permitted in the service.

A copy of note issued to parents was submitted.

3. Cutlery and plates are now available to the children for use during both snacks and meals.

Summary Comment

The Requirement has been suitably met.

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:

- Internal doors were suitable secured so that the children could not access rooms such as the utility room or ground floor bedrooms.
- The emergency exit was unobstructed.
- Cables and flexes were not accessible to the children.
- Openable windows were out of reach of the children.
- Heavy furniture had been suitably anchored to prevent falling on a child.
- Safety gates were in place to prevent a child from accessing the stairwell.
- Hazardous kitchen equipment such as knives had been removed from accessible storage drawers and child safety latches had been applied to cupboard doors.

Infection Control:

- The service was clean and well maintained.
- The children had access to a modern, clean and well-maintained toilet facility which comprised of an adult sized toilet and 1 vanity wash hand basin. There were step ups and toilet seats for the children's comfort and safety.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water was available which registered at 41 degrees Celsius. There was ample liquid soap and paper towels for hand washing purposes.
- The designated adult toilet was situated in the utility area.
- A nappy changing unit was situated in the bathroom with a clean nappy changing mat.
- The nappy bin was non-contact for the correct disposal of soiled nappies.
- Tissues were available for nose hygiene.

Administration of Medication:

- The registered provider stated that there were no children attending the service that required either prescribed, emergency or over the counter medications.
- In conversation it was made clear that the provider was familiar with the safe storage of medications.

Fire Safety:

- The fire door was unobstructed.
- The fire cylinder was tethered to the wall in the utility room.
- In conversation with the registered provider it was established that that procedures that are required to be followed in the event of a fire were known.

Safe Sleep:

- The family sitting room had been suitably adapted to provide a sleep facility; there was 1 standard cot situated away from any climbing hazards. It had a well fitted mattress; bedding and line was available for individual use., items were laundered after each use.
- The ambient air temperature of the room registered at 17 degrees Celsius.
- Historical records indicated that the registered provider maintained 10-minute physical sleep checks to monitor a child's breathing, colour and position.
- There were 5 stackable beds available for children over the age of 2 years that required a sleep; individual linen was also available and cellular blankets for this facility.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The families and children used a sliding glazed door situated to the side of the building to enter the premises. At the time of the inspection, it was not suitably secured as parents were seen walking in to collect children and there was a risk that a child could leave the premises unsupervised.
2. The children had access to plastic carrier bags and protective gloves which stored nappies and supplies in the bathroom, which posed a risk of suffocation.

Infection Control:

The following issues posed a risk of cross infection -

3. It was observed during the nappy changing procedures that the registered provider did not wash hands after the task and the children's hands were not washed either. This was at variance to the infection control policy.
4. The nappy changing mat was cleaned with wipes and not an antibacterial spray as stated in the infection control policy.
5. It was observed that the children were not facilitated to wash hands prior to sitting at the table and eating their snacks.

This issue was also at variance to the service policy.

6. Each child had a face flannel for wiping of hands and mouths after eating but they were not stored in a hygienic manner.
7. In discussion with the registered provider in relation to the storage of dummies/soothers, it was reported that the dummies were put into the children's bags. This issue was at variance with the infection control policy which stated that dummies would be sterilized between usage and stored in clean individual containers.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

The registered provider stated the following –

1. A bell has been installed by the sliding patio door so as to restrict access by adults and to prevent the children from leaving the service unsupervised.

A photograph of the bell was submitted.

2. The nappy changing station has been decluttered and there are no plastic bags or gloves accessible to the children.

A photograph of this was issued to evidence this action.

3. & 5.

Handwashing is now practised prior to the children eating their snacks and meals and after toileting and hand washing as per the service policy.

A photograph of hands being washed was submitted.

4. The nappy changing mat is now cleaned with antibacterial spray and dried with paper towels after each use.

A photograph of the products used was submitted.

6. The children's individual flannels for cleaning faces are now stored in labelled containers and laundered daily.

A photograph of the labelled containers was issued.

7. Dummies and soothers are now stored in individual labelled plastic containers.

A photograph of the containers was forwarded.

Summary Comment

Documentation in the form of photographs were submitted to the early years office; they were examined and found to adequately meet the non-compliant aspects of this Regulation.

The Requirement has been met.

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)

The registered provider had certification of first aid responder (FAR) training. The expiry date was 10 February 2024.

(2)(a) & (b)

The first box was stored in the utility room on a high shelf, out of reach of the children but accessible to the registered provider. On inspection it was found to be adequately stocked with the recommended medical supplies.

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 premise.
- (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

- (b)
- A record was in place which detailed the number, type, and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms. The most recent service had been conducted in January 2023.
- (4)
- A fire evacuation plan was displayed in the utility room to indicate the route that is to be taken in the event of a fire occurring in the service. The fire assembly point was clearly signposted in the back yard.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)(a)
- Although the service displayed a fire drill template in the utility room unfortunately, the recommended monthly fire drills had not been conducted.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

- (1)(a)
- The registered provider stated that fire drills are now conducted monthly.
- A scanned copy of the fire drill recording template was submitted; it was recorded that the most recent drill took place in November and that there were 5 children present and 1 adult.

Summary Comment

The Requirement has been met.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Tigh na Leanaí had an insurance certificate on file which stated that up to 6 children were adequately insured to attend the service on a child-minding basis.

The expiry date was 27 03 2024.