

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK079
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Name of Service:	Grins n Giggles
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Address of Service:	Danganbeg, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V42 WP28
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Name of Registered Provider:	Agatha Corbett-O'Sullivan
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Service type:	Childminder
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Date of Inspection:	12/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	2	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

The childminding service is operated from the providers own dwelling house and is located in the countryside a short distance from the town of Newcastle West, Co Limerick. The family home is adapted to accommodate the care of young children. Children have access to a large kitchen/dining area and a playroom for play indoors. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area located at the side of the premises. A large garden area is also accessible to the rear of the premises.

The service operates from 8.30am to 17.30pm, Monday to Friday. The service has the capacity to accommodate a maximum of 5 pre-school children at any one time.

Staffing

The childminder operates the service single handed. There is a second person available to assist at all times in the event of an emergency.

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 and safety. 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.

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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 wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the childminder 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.*

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(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 was the person in charge who owns and operates the service from her home.
- (b) The childminder was present in the service at the time of the inspection.
- (2)(a) There were written references available for the childminder and for the second person available to assist in the event of an emergency if needed.
- (b) All references available were from a previous employer or from other reputable sources.
- (c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available in respect of the childminder and the person she may call on in the event of an emergency. Vetting disclosures were also available for all adults residing in the provider's home.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as the childminder had not previously lived outside the jurisdiction.
- (4) The childminder holds the required qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(8)(b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and

Compliance Information

- (8)(b) The childminder has ensured that at all times there was a second person located close to the service that they can call on in the event of an emergency. This person was familiar with the operation of the service and can offer assistance if needed.

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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.*

(2) A childminder may have more than 2 children under the age of 15 months in his or her care at any given time where all such children are siblings of each other.

Compliance Information

(1) There were 2 preschool children present in the morning and 3 preschool children from a local sessional service arrived at 12.15 pm. An additional preschool child arrived unexpectedly for a short period at 12.30pm.

(b) There was no child present under the age of 15 months.

c) There was a working telephone on the premises.

(2) There was 1 child registered with the childminding service under the age of 15 months.

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:

A healthy eating policy was promoted within the setting and most of the foods/ snacks and drinks were provided by the childminder. Dinner was being prepared by the childminder. The older children sat at a low table and the younger children were placed in highchairs for their meals and snacks.

Toilet training was based on the child's development age and their own readiness to start, rather than their age.

The children have unrestricted access to the toilet. A nappy changing unit was positioned in the bathroom facility.

A separate room with cots and low beds were available for the children who required a sleep.

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Standard cots were provided, and the childminder had a safe sleep policy which highlighted how all sleeping children were kept under close supervision and closely monitored while sleeping. The childminder was observed going to the sleep room to ensure a child over 2 years of age who was asleep in a cot was safe and sleeping well. Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their level of independence.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The children have access to the kitchen/ dining area/playroom, sleep room and sanitary accommodation areas in the house.

The main area for play was the playroom just off the kitchen/dining area. This space was equipped with child sized tables, chairs, low and opens shelving units which were child accessible so that the children could access the play equipment and materials independently. The children had access to a selection of books, puzzles, jigsaws, cars trucks and large bouncy balls.

The outdoor areas were safe and secured with fencing and gates. The older children were observed to move about freely both indoors and in the outdoor space just off the kitchen. There was a selection of ride

on toys, soft balls, small seesaws and a plastic playhouse available for children's play.

Additional play equipment and materials were stored in a shed. Children got to spend as much time outdoors as possible each day. All areas were risk assessed and safety measures were in place to ensure children's safety at all times while playing outside.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for 1 staff member. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'

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Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The updated Garda vetting renewal was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate for the 1 staff member.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

A copy of the Garda vetting was submitted by email.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of Regulation 23 General Safety.

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 childminder has first aid responder training completed, and her certificate was in date.

(2)(a) There was a first aid box located in the service.

(b) The first aid box was readily available and accessible if required

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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 fire fighting 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) The fire drills were practiced on a monthly basis. The last recorded fire drill took place in September 2024.
- (b) The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system were serviced on an annual basis, and the date of the last service was October 2023. A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms in the premises.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the room