

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT



TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK064
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Name of Service:	Early Start Education Preschool
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Address of Service:	73 Dromroe Rhebogue Limerick
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Email Address:	earlystartededucation@eircom.net
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Name of Registered Service Provider:	Ms Tina Quinn
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Type of Service Registered:	Part-Time	☒
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Date(s) of Inspection:	2	2	0	3	2	0	2	2
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No of Pre-School Children present during Inspection:	AM	6	PM	3
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick
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Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Areas which were the subject of this Inspection		
Governance	Health Welfare and Development of Child	Safety

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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Conditions If Applicable

Not applicable

Description of Service	This privately owned service was established in 2015 to provide care and education to children aged 2-6 years. The service operates from 08:30 – 17:30 hours Monday – Friday, with children attending part time for the morning or evening sessions for up to 4 hrs for 38 weeks of the year. The Early Years' service caters for young children with autism spectrum disorder.
Premises	The service operates from a modified dwelling house located in a residential area of Limerick city. The premises consists of 2 playrooms downstairs, 1 playroom upstairs, bathroom facilities for children and adults, a sensory room, office and kitchen facilities. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area at the back of the facility.
Staffing	The registered providers are the service managers. There are 6 adults (including the registered providers) working directly with the children each day. Three of the adults working directly with the children hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 7 or 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed equivalent.
Methodology	Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate (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. 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 areas of Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Safety. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection process has been amended to minimise the amount of time that inspectors spend in the service. 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	Not Applicable
Acknowledgements	The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

GOVERNANCE

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.
- (6) Paragraph (4) shall not apply before 1 September 2021 to a person who—
- (a) has signed a declaration on or before 30 June 2016 to the effect that he or she intends to retire from employment in a pre-school service before 1 September 2021, and
 - (b) is in possession of a letter from the Minister confirming that paragraph (4) shall not apply to him or her before that date
- (6A is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of "paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)" for "paragraphs (5) and (6)", and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): "
- (6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

Compliance Information:

- (1)(a) The registered provider was the designated persons in charge. There was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present in the service throughout the period of the inspection.
- (2)(a) There were past employer references available in respect of the adults working in the service, with recorded validations where required.
- (b) Not applicable as all of the references were from past employers.

Part III - Management and Staff

Regulation 9 - Management and Recruitment

	(c) Completed vetting disclosures were available in respect of all adults working in the service. (d) Police vetting was provided for the adults who had lived outside the Jurisdiction for a period longer than six consecutive months. (4) There were 3 adults who worked directly with the children that held major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6, 8 or 9 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed equivalent. (6)(a) Not applicable to this service as none of the adults working with the children had applied for an exemption to the qualification requirements under the grandfathering clause. (b) Not applicable to this service as none of the adults working with the children had applied to the minister for an exemption to the qualification requirements. (6A) Not applicable to this service as none of the adults working with the children were funded under the Access and Inclusion Model.
Non-Compliance Information:	(4) 1. Evidence of a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent to a major award at Level 5 on the National Qualification Framework (equivalency Letter from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs) was not on file for 1 adult working in the service. 2. Two adults working directly with the children did not have childcare qualifications.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	<u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u> One of the adults working with the children is in the process of completing their early years level 6 qualification. The other adult has a level 6 in early years and is on year 3 of an early years degree, The service is waiting on confirmation from the college. When this year is completed, this will be the equivalent of a level 7 in early years. The other member of staff has a level 8 in social care and is currently looking for accreditation. <u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u> All our staff are required to have a level 8 qualification as required by the Department of Education and we work within the guidelines of this department. <u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED</u> No evidence submitted.
Summary Comment:	The requirements of this part of the regulation remains outstanding. Evidence to support the actions as outlined by the registered provider has not been submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

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

Compliance Information:	(1) At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. (2) On the day of the inspection there were 5 staff working across the 2 care rooms with 6 preschool children present. During the period of inspection, the minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained and an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children in each care room. 1.Downstairs playroom – there were 3 children and 2 staff 2.Upstairs playroom – there were 3 children and 2 staff The registered provider was available to cover for staff breaks, office management and to assist with the personal care needs as required. (8)(a) Staff rosters demonstrated there were always at least 2 staff on the premises.
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HEALTH WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

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:	BASIC NEEDS: - A healthy eating policy was documented and snacks and drinks were provided by the parents. No food was cooked on site. Drinking water was available to the children when needed in bottles in a basket in each room. - The adults sat with the children during snack times and supported the children to feed themselves independently. The atmosphere during snack times was relaxed with pleasant social interaction among the children and adults. - The privacy and dignity of the children was respected at all times during nappy changing and toileting.
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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, Welfare and Development of Child

- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their personal care appropriated to their own level of independence. Pictures and word reminders and instructions were displayed and used with the children to support personal care.
- The children were observed to interact positively and comfortably with the staff members present and sought out staff when necessary. Individual education plans were available for each child. Children completed their individual basket work with one adult and then proceeded to be involved in a group activity.
- The adults demonstrated sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for the children as evidenced in the positive use of language and soft tones. Staff were observed offering choices to children, using the child's name, making eye contact, speaking in warm tones.
- The children had individual assessment of basic language and learning plan in place and this was completed by the staff on a daily basis.
- Parents were consulted regularly on the assessment plan. Textbooks and IT software were used by the children, adults and parents to communicate. A picture exchange communication system (PECS) was also used by some children attending the service.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- There were 2 main playrooms available to the children and each room was designated according to each child's stage of development. The children had access to a sensory room upstairs each day where they could relax and chill out with music, coloured lights, sensory balls, a hammock, bean bags and a couch. The room could be darkened with the use of black out blinds which also helped children to relax.
- There was access to varied play materials and equipment which were rotated to suit the interest and skill levels of the children. The children were observed playing with the different sensory materials such as play dough, kinetic sand and rice.
- Materials and equipment were arranged so they were visible and easily accessible to the children
- The children had daily access to an enclosed outdoor play area, equipped with slides, tricycles, hoops, climbing frame and soft matting areas.
- Children had lots of movement breaks and spend time outdoors as much as possible.

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: - On arrival to the service, the entrance door leading into the pre-school facility was secured and a hand sanitising station had been set up. - Safe storage was available for cleaning agents and equipment. - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer was kept out of reach of young children and children were supervised while using it. INFECTION CONTROL: - A system was in place for staff to confirm to the person in charge that they were well and did not have any COVID-19 related sicknesses at the start of each shift. Staff have been advised in relation to the requirement to self-isolate where appropriate. - A written cleaning record was available where high contact areas were regularly cleaned throughout the day. A supply of cleaning agents and equipment was available in each room of the service. - Play rooms, communal areas and sanitary areas were adequately ventilated by both natural and mechanical forms of ventilation.
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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) There were staff present who had completed the current first aid response certification for children. (2)(a) First aid boxes were accessible and safely stored in the service. (b) The first aid boxes were available if required by a child.
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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 monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 15/03/2022. (b) The firefighting equipment was serviced on an annual basis, most recently in November 2021 and a record was maintained of the number, type, and maintenance of the firefighting equipment. The fire and smoke alarm system were tested and serviced March 2022. (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.
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Part VI - Safety

Additional Significant Risk(s) to Children

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

Non-Compliance Information:	(d) The premise was in need of repair and regular maintenance. 1. Paint work was chipped and in a poor state of repair on the walls, doors and skirting boards upstairs and downstairs.
Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider	<u>CORRECTIVE ACTION</u> We will have painters in over the summer holidays, we did try for the easter break but no one was available, all painting work internally will be included. <u>PREVENTIVE ACTION</u> No information was documented <u>EVIDENCE SUBMITTED:</u> No evidence submitted.
Summary Comment:	The regulatory requirements of regulation 29 remain outstanding as works have not been completed.