

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances



Tusla I.D: TU2015LK152

Name of Service Silver Apples Creche

Address of Service: University of Limerick, Castletroy, Limerick, V94 X920

Email Address: silverapplescreche@ul.ie

Name of Registered Provider: Oliver Moloney

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	☐	Part-Time	☐	Sessional	☐
	Drop-In	☐	Childminding	☐	Temporary	☐

Proposed change:	Increase in the number of preschool children from 45 to 51
Proposed Number of Children:	51
Recommended Change Following Inspection:	Increase in the number of preschool children from 45 to 51
Registered change:	Change in number of children from 45 to 51 children

Date of Inspection:

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Inspection undertaken by:	E Browne J Ryan
Title:	Early Years inspectors

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick

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Rationale for Inspection:

Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 51 Children
Date of Registration	30 April 2026

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	This full day service is located on the grounds of the University of Limerick. The opening hours are from 08:30 – 18:00 hours, Monday – Friday for 51 weeks of the year. It caters for children from zero to six years of age.
Premises	The premises is a single storey purpose built childcare facility. It has 4 playrooms in operation, a multipurpose room, two dedicated sleep rooms, a kitchen, nappy changing and sanitary facilities for children and adults, an office and outdoor play areas to the back of the premises.
Staffing	There were 17 staff members documented on the staff roster. On the day there were 14 staff members present including the registered provider and the supervisor and 13 of these staff members were working directly with the preschool children. The registered provider works in the service each day and is available to cover for breaks and office work.
Methodology	The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the

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	following themes: Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises. The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.
Acknowledgements	The Inspectors wishes 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.

Requirement met:

The following requirements have been met.

(1)(a) The registered provider is the designated person in charge of the service along with a named person to deputise if required.

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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.

Requirement met:

The following requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of staff members working with the preschool children on the day of the inspection.

The registered provider has proposed to add 2 additional staff members to work at the service.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises or

Requirement met:

(1)(a) Adequate and suitable facilities are provided for children to play indoors and outdoors. The preschool rooms are bright and spacious and laid out with adequate amount and variety of equipment and play materials on open, low level shelving units. There is a designated playroom called The Magic room for small group activities and time away from the bigger playgroup.

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	(b) The service has 2 sleep rooms in operation for the children under 2 years of age with the standard cots in place. There are low level beds available for the older children in the Junior preschool room to use for resting each day if tired. A designated quiet area with a couch and floor mats is available in each playroom to facilitate some time away from the general play area. (3)(a) The service has its own outdoor play areas to the rear and the side of the premises. The area is fully enclosed and is equipped with a wide range of play materials. The service has a variety of surfaces such as an all-weather rubber matting area covering the ground in areas beneath all climbing equipment, a cement yard for the ride on bikes and toys, and a grassy area for play opportunities exclusive to the outdoor area.
Requirement not met:	(1)(b) There were 3 cot mattresses that were not suitable and adequate in the Baby sleep room and posed a potential risk to the wellbeing of the sleeping children for the following reasons: ○ There was no recognised EU safety standard label on 3 of the 7 mattresses in the Baby sleep room and these 3 mattresses had no waterproof protectors to allow easy cleaning and reduce the risk of cross infection. This was identified in the last inspection dated the 16th of September 2025. The actions as stated by the registered provider to address the issue remains outstanding. The registered provider stated in their response that “the purchase of new mattresses with the recognised EU safety standard will take place during the month of November and will be finalised before 1st of December 2025.”
Response from Provider:	In the requirement form dated the 19th of March 2026 the registered provider stated that: (1)(b) Three new mattresses with the appropriate EU safety standard will be purchased in 2 weeks.

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Summary Comment:	Following discussion with the registered provider on the 24th of April the requirement has now been met. The registered provider stated that 3 new mattresses with the EU safety standards have been purchased and evidence of the purchase submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.
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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.

Requirement met:	The following requirement has been met. A healthy eating policy is in place. A kitchen is available in the service with facilities for storing perishable foods and for the preparation of hot meals /snacks. A full day menu plan is available with options listed for breakfast, dinner, lunch and snacks listed. The service will provide a breakfast to children who arrive early. The parents will provide a healthy snack for the mid-morning break. A hot meal is provided and served to the children who will attend for part time or full-time care.
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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.

Requirement met:	The following requirements have been met. The main entrance to the premises appeared adequately secure to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
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	An infection control policy is in place to inform practice. The policy and the associated procedures detailed all measures to reduce the likelihood of infection spreading in the facility. Cleaning programmes are in place to ensure a good standard of operational hygiene is in place. Foot pedal operated lidded bins are provided in all areas of the service to ensure the safe disposal of all waste.
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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.*

Requirement met:

The following requirement has been met.

(1) Certifications were available to evidence that 2 staff members were trained in first aid response for children and rostered for duty in the service.

(2)

(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored in a conspicuous and easily accessible location in the premises.

(b) The first aid boxes were available to the preschool children attending the service.

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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.

Requirement met:

The following requirement has been met.

- (1)(a) Fire drills take place once a month. Written documentation was available to support this practice.
- (b) There was a record available to indicate the number, type and maintenance of the fire extinguishers in the service. Firefighting equipment were serviced last in May 2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

Evidence that the service is adequately insured for the increase in the number of children proposed to attend was submitted to the registration office.

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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Requirement met:

(a) The preschool building appeared to be a sound and stable structure.

(b) The entrance and emergency doors to the service will be closed and a bell entry system is in place at the main entrance. All persons entering and leaving the building must be escorted by a staff member. The physical environment is safe and secure for purpose of a preschool service.

(c) There are sufficient windows that provided enough light and comfort for activities. There is a balance between natural and artificial lighting. Underfloor heating is available in each playroom and radiators in the sleep rooms. Temperatures in the premises were maintained within the appropriate limits.

(e) The facility has 4 single toilets cubicles, 2 nappy changing areas and 6 wash hand basins. This will facilitate a maximum of 44 toilet trained preschool school and to a maximum of 22 children requiring nappy changing.

The hot water was thermostatically controlled at the recommended temperature of no more than 43⁰ C.

Paper towels and liquid soap dispenser are available to facilitate effective washing and drying of hands.

There are 2 separate adult toilet facilities available for the staff.

Pedal operated bins are available for disposing of general waste. Bins for the nappy disposal are lidded, sealed and pedal operated.

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Requirement not met:	(d) The following was not maintained adequately 1. There were evidence of brown staining and a leak in an area of the ceiling and wall in the Toddler playroom. 2. The boundary fence had peeling paint and required maintenance. In the outdoor area work remains outstanding since the last inspection dated the 16th of September 2025 and actions as stated by the registered provider to address them have not taken place. Not maintaining the childcare facility may impact on the health and wellbeing of the children.
Response from Provider:	In the requirement form dated the 19th of March the registered provider stated that: (d) 1 The department in University of Limerick has sourced a contractor to repair the roof externally. The leak in the roof has caused the brown staining which is visible internally. The service awaits confirmation of the start day to complete the works, approximately 4 months' timeframe 2 The repainting of the fence will commence as soon as the weather improves, approximately 3 months' timeframe.
Summary Comment:	Following discussion with the registered provider on the 24th of April the following work has commenced in the service: (d) 1 The section of the roof where the leak had occurred has been replaced. The contractor is due to return to replace and complete the required work on internal ceiling of the Toddlers playroom. The registered provider stated that this work should be completed in approximately 4 weeks. 2 The painting of the outdoor fencing is due to commence in approximately 2 weeks May 2026.

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The completed works will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.

Requirement met:

(1) The requirement has been met.

The playrooms measured as follows:

- Baby playroom measured 30.21 m²
- Toddler playroom measured 40.67 m²
- Junior preschool room measured 25.53 m²
- Preschool playroom measured 51.41 m²

Overall, there is adequate clear floor space available in the premises for the work, play and movement of the children for the proposed number of 51 preschool children to attend the preschool service.

(2)

- A minimum of 1.818 m² of clear floor space is available for each child (3-6years) proposing to attend for sessional care in the Preschool and Junior preschool rooms.
- A minimum of 2.3 m² for the children(3-6yrs) is available for each child attending for part time care/ full day care in the Preschool and Junior preschool rooms.

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- A minimum of 2.8 m² is available for the children(1-2yrs) attending for part time care/ full day care in the Toddler playroom.
- A minimum of 3.5 m² is available for the babies(0-1yrs) attending for part time care/ full day care in the Baby playroom.