

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK186
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Name of Service:	TLC Childcare
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Address of Service:	116 Templegreen Station Road Newcastle West Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V42 P635
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Name of Registered Provider:	Joan Hester
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	17/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	48	PM	43
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate 2 nd floor Estuary House Henry Street Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	J Ryan and P Magner
Title:	Early Years Inspector and Inspection Registration Manager

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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

TLC Childcare is a registered early years service which opened in July 2012 and operates from a purpose-built building in an urban residential area. It is registered to provide sessional, part-time and full day education and care to preschool children aged 0 - 6 years of age. It operates from 8.00hrs to 17.30hrs and caters for a maximum of 56 pre-school children. The facility has four pre-school rooms, Bumblebee room (1-2 years), Ladybird room (2-3 years), Butterfly room (3 -5 years) and Caterpillar room (3-5 years). There is a dedicated sleep room with cots for children aged less than 2 years. The service has a large outdoor play area located at the rear of the premises where children have access to outdoor play equipment. Cooked food is delivered each day to the service from the registered providers second pre-school facility at Woodfield, Killeline, Newcastlewest, Co. Limerick.

Staffing

This service employs 18 staff, and all staff members have childcare qualifications. The registered provider works between both services.

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, safety, premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations;

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) – Management and recruitment.

Regulation 11(2) - Staffing levels.

Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, welfare and development of child.

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials.

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of the child.

Regulation 25 - First aid.

Regulation 29(d) Premises.

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

The inspection was triggered by information received to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.*

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy was available on the premises at all times.

(2)(a) Five staff files were reviewed on the day as the remaining staff files had been reviewed on the last inspection dated 26/05/2025.

(a) Eight written and validated references were available from past employers for staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) Two validated references were submitted by staff from sources other than past employers.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff documented on the staff roster. The re-vetting timeframes of every three years as outlined in the early years inspectorate regulatory notice was in place for all staff.
- (d) Police vetting was available for five staff members who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) All vetting procedures had been completed prior to any staff member being appointed or allowed access to or contact with a child who attended the service.
- (4) All staff working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in early childhood care and education or an equivalent such qualification.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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

(2) 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. On the day of the inspection, there were 11 staff working with and supervising 48 pre-school children in the morning, and there were 11 staff supervising 43 pre-school children in the afternoon.

- Bumble Bee Room - There were 10 pre-school children (1-2 years) and 2 staff present.
- Ladybird Room - There were 12 pre-school children (2-3 years) and 2 staff present.
- Butterfly Room - There were 15 pre-school children (3-5 years) and 3 staff present.
- Caterpillar Room - There were 11 pre-school children (3-5 years) and 2 staff present.

Additional staff were available to cover for staff breaks and office management.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

This full day care service was purpose built and comprised of four playrooms, sanitary accommodation areas, a sleep room, and a large outdoor play area. A variety of play equipment suited to the age and developmental stage of the child was available in each room and in the outdoor play area. Children had wellingtons and wet gear available for use in the outdoor play area during poor weather conditions. Defined interest areas included reading areas, construction areas, home corners, puzzles, buggies, manipulative play areas, and small world areas. Each room had low level tables to facilitate dining and tabletop activities.

Children were observed playing in the secure outdoor play area, which was equipped with outdoor play equipment such as playhouses, picnic benches, tyres, swings, climbing frames, a seesaw, basketball hoop, and adult seating. A large canopied/roofed area allowed for more outdoor play during adverse weather conditions. All age groups were observed playing outdoors on the day of the inspection.

There was sensorial and messy play such as sand and water play in each room and the outdoor play area.

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

Adequate and suitable furniture and play equipment were available on the premises.

Reading books that were available to the children had been replaced since the last inspection.

There were no broken toys in the outside play area.

Tables, chairs and shelving that were worn had been replaced.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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

Infection Control:

Since last inspection the following had been addressed.

1. Disposable paper towels were in use throughout the service as opposed to use of cloth towels.
2. A foot operated waste disposal bin and a foot operated bin for the disposal of nappies were in working order in the sanitary accommodation.
3. The toilet bowls in each sanitary area were observed to be clean.

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 five staff trained as first aid responders (FAR) with all certificates in date.
- (2) (a) The first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the hallway.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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)

The following had taken place since last inspection.

1. Ceiling tiles in the butterfly room, bumble bee room, and the nappy change area had been replaced since the last inspection.
2. Paint work on the rear wall in the outside play and each of the playrooms had been completed and areas surrounding the external windowsills had been cleaned.
3. The two sections of the perspex roof in the outside play area which were broken will be replaced when the service closes in July.
4. The bark mulch covering the outside play area was replaced.