

TUSLA REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015TY066

Name of service: St. Sheelan's Childcare Centre

Address of service: Templemore,
Tipperary.
E41NY60

Name Of registered provider: Noel Colleran

Type of service registered:	Sessional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Date of Inspection: 27/09/2022

Number of pre-school children present:	AM	43	PM	41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Civic Offices,
Limerick Road,
Nenagh,
Tipperary.

Inspection undertaken by: L McGeeney
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

Description of Service	<p>This full day care service was established in the town of Templemore in north Tipperary to provide care and education to children aged between 0 and 6 years old. The service operates Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm, for 50 weeks of the year. A sessional service, funded under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) for eligible children, operates Monday to Friday, 9am to 12pm, for 38 weeks of the year.</p> <p>The service is operated from a two-storey, detached premises, purpose built in 2006 and located in the grounds of Templemore College of Further Education. The children have access to five activity rooms, sleep rooms, sanitary accommodation areas and outdoor play areas.</p>
Staffing	<p>The registered provider is the chairman of the board which operates this community service. The service manager is the person in charge on a daily basis. On the day of inspection there were 10 staff working directly with the children as well as 4 ancillary staff engaged in support activities such as administration, catering, and cleaning.</p>
Methodology	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous inspection history • Any information received in relation to the service <p>Findings on inspection are based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained through examination of documentation • Direct observation • Discussion with relevant staff

	<p>This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of Governance/ Health, Welfare and Development of Child/ Safety/ Premises and Facilities. Inspections may also focus on other areas as required.</p> <p>A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9, 11, 20, 21, 22, 29 and 30. As a result, the scope of the inspection included Butterflies room, Cocoon room, Honey Pot room, Caterpillars room and the upstairs outdoor play area.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.</p>
<p>Acknowledgments</p>	<p>The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.</p>

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

The staff files of four members of staff, who had commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 12 October 2021, were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

- (2)(a) Written, validated, past employer references were available in respect of all four members of staff.
 - (b) Not applicable as all available references were from past employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting had been carried out in respect of each member of staff. Relevant records were held on file.
 - (d) Police vetting had been carried out in respect of the member of staff who had lived outside the State.
- (4) Staff who worked directly with the children held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5, 6 or 8 on the national framework of qualifications.

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.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-

- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and
- (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both,

the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).

(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) On the day of the inspection there were ten staff working directly with 43 children aged between 6 months and 5 years. Two of the staff were available to assist in rooms, with one staff member working upstairs and the other downstairs, providing assistance where required.

The table below details the adult/child ratio in the service on the morning of the inspection:

Room name	Age range	No. of children	Adult/child ratio	Staff required	Staff available
Baby room	0 – 1 year	3	1:3	1	1
Wobbler room	1 – 2 years	8	1:5	2	2
Toddler room	2 – 3 years	11	1:6	2	2
Cocoon room	2 years 9 months – 4 years	8	1:11 (AM) 1:8 (PM)	1	1
Butterflies room	3 – 5 years	13	1:11 (AM) 1:8 (PM)	2	2
TOTAL		43		8	8 + 2 Relief staff = 10

There were four other staff on the premises who were not involved in working directly with the children and therefore not counted in the adult to child ratios. These included administration staff, catering staff and cleaning staff.

- (4) The adult to child ratios were maintained with the recommendations throughout the day in each room.
- (8)(a) There were at least two staff present in the service at all times while it was in operation.

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.

Compliance information

- (1)(a) The children had access to one of the five activity rooms:
- Downstairs:
- Honey Pots room (0 – 1 year), Bumblebees room (1 – 2 years), Caterpillars room (2 – 3 years)
- Upstairs: Cocoon Room (2 years and 9 months – 4 years), Butterflies room (3 – 5 years). The lobby between these rooms and the stairwell was used as a third activity area for the children upstairs.
- Each room was bright, spacious, well-resourced and well laid out to support the children’s freedom of movement, choices and self-directed learning through play and exploration. The staff planned the room layouts and the resources available based on the time of year, the children’s interests and their abilities.
- The children also had daily access to the outdoor play areas.
- (b) There were cosy relaxation areas in each room with a combination of vinyl covered seating or cushions, floor mats, sofas and blankets. The children could rest and relax in these areas when they wanted to during the day. There were two sleep rooms: one off Honey Pots room and the other off Bumblebees room, equipped with four and eight cots respectively.

One of the cots was an evacuation cot for use during fire drills or in an emergency. The children aged under 2 years old had their own cot which could be used for sleep during the day in accordance with each child's individual needs and sleep routine. Camp beds were available for the children aged over 2 years and placed in Bumblebees room after dinner for the children who needed a sleep at that time. The room was made conducive to restful sleep by using black out curtains on the windows and by dimming the light. Staff stayed in the room to supervise the children while they slept.

(3)(a) The children had daily access to either the upstairs or downstairs outdoor play areas. Each space had a sheltered area with a perspex roof which enabled the children to access the outdoor areas in all weathers. The ground surfaces included grass in the downstairs area, with sections of soft fall matting in both outdoor play areas.

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

Each room was furnished with staff and child seating and tables to support the children's engagement in tabletop activities, floor play, dining, sensory play, reading and relaxation. Highchairs were used by the children in Honey Pot room for mealtimes. Staff sat in front of the children, at their eye level, when spoon feeding.

The rooms were laid out in a number of well-defined interest areas which included: construction area, home corner, imaginative play area, sensory area, art and craft area, book/reading area and small world areas. Most toys and equipment were stored on low level, open shelving units which were easily accessible by the children. Some materials, such as infant standing activity centres and push toys were free standing. Storage facilities were available for materials not currently in use.

Equipment, materials and furniture were well maintained and suitable for the age and stage of development of the children using them.

Large outdoor equipment such as the swings and tree house were securely fixed in place, checked regularly for any faults and repaired as required. Smaller items were stored in outdoor storage sheds or under shelters in both the upstairs and downstairs outdoor play areas. Outdoor equipment included: planting areas, ride-on toys, sand and water tables, wall mounted blackboards, large construction toys, playhouses, wheelbarrows and other push toys.

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 service had a healthy eating policy and a three-week rolling menu plan. The current weeks menu was displayed on the notice board in the entrance hall. All food and drink, except infant formula, consumed by the children while attending the service was supplied by the service. There were two staff dedicated to catering who prepared, cooked and served the food on site from the services kitchen.

Dinner on the day of inspection was shepherds pie. Water was available in each room and accessible to the children throughout the day. Some of the children also brought their own drink bottles/sippy cups which were refilled with water when they were empty.

Alternative foods were available if a child didn't want what was on the menu, though staff said that the children generally ate well and liked the meals provided by the service. Two of the children who were fussy eaters were given only foods that they were known to like to eat.

There were four meal or snack times during the day: Breakfast at 9.50am, dinner at 12pm, fruit break at 2pm and tea at 3pm.

Infant formula was made up at home, brought to the service in cool bags and refrigerated in Honey Pot room until required.

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.

Compliance information

(a) The premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure, with the exception of an on-going issue with a section of the flat roof. The premises was constructed in 2006, of concrete blocks and plaster. Remedial works had been carried out in the past to stop the entry of water into the premises from a fault in the flat roof, which had been successful. This area was cordoned off so that the children could not play there until further works were done to install a surface that could take the weight of staff and children playing on it.

(b) The service was accessed through the front door, which opened into the entrance lobby. The front door was monitored by a camera so that staff could see who was seeking admission even if they weren't beside the door or in the office. The front door was controlled by an electronic, magnetic locking system to prevent any unauthorised entry to or exit from the premises. Staff opened the door for parents or visitors. There was a sign in book for visitors in the entrance lobby. The outdoor play area upstairs was enclosed by a high wall with metal vision panels built into it. The outdoor area downstairs was enclosed by fencing and gates to prevent a child from exiting the premises through the outdoor play area and to prevent any unauthorised access to the premises.

The service was located in a third level educational facility with car parks to the front and side of the premises. There was a metal barrier outside the front door to reduce the risk of children running out of the door and onto the roadway at drop off and collection times.

There were handrails on the stairs used by the staff and children to access the upstairs rooms. The steps had a non-slip marmoleum floor covering.

The stairwell was well lit with natural and artificial light. There were doors at the top and bottom of the stairwell to prevent children entering this space unsupervised.

(c) The service was heated by an oil-fired underfloor heating system with thermostats in each room to ensure that the rooms occupied by the children were maintained within the recommended temperature range. The rooms were well lit by natural light through windows and glass panelled doors in all outdoor walls. Blackout blinds were fitted to windows of the sleep room and other rooms used for sleep or rest. Blind cords were secured to the window frames with safety devices. The activity rooms and sleep rooms had openable windows and doors that opened to the outdoor play areas. Doors and windows were opened to provide natural ventilation. One of the sanitary accommodation areas had an openable window and natural ventilation while the others were internal rooms with mechanical ventilation.

(d) The service was repainted during the summer which created a clean, fresh look in each of the rooms. The equipment, materials and furniture were maintained in good repair and cleaned regularly, in line with the cleaning schedule of the service. The staff practiced 'clean as you go' of the toys and surfaces, for example, wiping the tables after messy activities and meals. There was a member of staff employed to carry out deep cleaning of the service, including all floors, communal areas and sanitary accommodation areas.

(e) The service had four sanitary accommodation areas downstairs, including a wheelchair accessible toilet, food workers toilet, children's toilets and nappy changing areas. There were two sanitary accommodation areas upstairs including a staff toilet, children's toilets and a nappy changing area. In total there were three staff toilets and wash hand basins, six children's toilets with five wash hand basins and three nappy changing areas. This was sufficient accommodation for up to 18 staff, 55 toilet trained children and 33 children who were not yet toilet trained.

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.
- (4) Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and
 - (b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both,
- the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).

Compliance information

(1) There was sufficient space available to the children present on the day of inspection, taking into consideration their ages and the length of time they spent in the service:

Room name	Age range	No. of children	Space ratio	Space required	Space available
Honey Pot room	0 – 1 year	3	3.5m ²	10.5m ²	44.19m ²
Bumblebees room	1 – 2 years	8	2.8m ²	22.4m ²	41m ²
Caterpillars room	2 – 3 years	11	2.35m ²	25.85m ²	44.51m ²
Cocoon room	2 years 9 months –	21	1.818m ² (AM during ECCE session) 2.3m ² (PM)	38.178m ²	38.9m ²
Butterflies room	5 years				38.18m ²
TOTAL		43		96.928m²	206.78m²

(2) The children had access to greater than the minimum recommended clear floor space in each room.

In addition to the space available in the activity rooms, the children upstairs also used the lobby between the stairwell and the activity rooms for small group activities.

(4) The space requirements were maintained throughout the day in each room.