

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK069
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Name of Service:	Family Tree Creche
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Address of Service:	Limerick Enterprise Development Partnership, Roxboro Road, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 VK19
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Name of Registered Provider:	Niall O Callaghan
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	30/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	41	PM	41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, 2nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry St. Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan
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).

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Description of service

The Family Tree Creche operates as a community childcare service, located on the outskirts of Limerick City. The facility opens Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm and currently maintains a registration of 53 preschool children. The purpose-built, single-story building contains dedicated rooms for babies, wobblers/toddlers, junior pre-schoolers, and senior pre-schoolers. The premises also features a manager's office, kitchen, staff room, sanitary facilities, nappy changing areas, and sleep rooms. Outdoor play areas were positioned at the side and rear of the property. The service accommodated children within the age range of 0 to 6 years.

Staffing

The registered provider has appointed a manager to oversee the operation of the service. An assistant manager is also available. There are an additional 17 staff employed to work with pre-school children at the facility. All staff hold the required qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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.

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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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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,*
- (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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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,*

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- (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) The registered provider does not work directly with the children in the facility. A designated manager to oversee the day-to-day running of the service was appointed. An assistant manager was also available.
- (b) During the period of the inspection, the service manager was present, and the staff roster indicated that the manager or their deputy were always available on the premises.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place that identified the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each member of staff.
- (2)(a) The staff files of 5 new staff members who had taken up employment in the service since it was last inspected were reviewed. There were two written and validated references available for each new staff member.
- (b) References that were reviewed were from past employers or from other reputable sources such as previous schools and colleges attended.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all new staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was not required for any of the new staff member as none of them had resided outside of Ireland for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) All adults working at the service had the required qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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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.

(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

(1) The manager at the service ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at the pre-school service.

(2) On the day of the inspection, there were 41 pre-school children and 10 adults on the premises working directly with the children. The adult child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

There were 5 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Baby Room.

There were 5 pre-school children and 1 staff in the Wobbler/Toddler Room.

There were 10 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Junior Preschool Room.

There were 10 pre-school children and 3 staff in the Preschool Room 1.

There were 11 pre-school children and 2 staff in the Preschool Room 2.

There were relief staff available to replace staff while taking meal breaks. A designated person was available to prepare, cook and serve food to all children attending the service.

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

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Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS

The facility implemented a healthy eating policy that authorised the daily provision of freshly prepared meals and snacks. The weekly menu provided nutritious options for breakfast, dinner, and afternoon snacks and additional refreshments remained accessible to all children if needed throughout the day.

Highchairs were utilised for babies and wobblers, whereas older children sat at low tables when dining.

Sanitary facilities and nappy changing stations were positioned adjacent to each room. Staff adhered to infection control procedures, and children's toiletries were kept well organised. Spare clothes were available for each child if required, and tissues and wipes remained easily accessible in all rooms. Foot pedal operated, lidded bins were utilised for all waste disposals.

Separate sleep rooms equipped with cots were located next to the baby and wobbler/toddler rooms to ensure easy access for staff and children. Older children rested on low beds provided with pillows and blankets. Blackout blinds effectively dimmed the light during rest periods, and sleep monitoring was documented electronically. Parents received regular updates regarding their child's food intake, nappy changes, sleep times, and activities through an electronic application.

Children got to spend long periods of times each day in the outdoor areas of the service. Recent changes and upgrades to the outdoor areas ensured children got outside in all weather conditions.

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 was at all times a staff member working at the service that had the required first aid responder training completed. In service first aid training was scheduled for all staff in October 2026.

(2)(a) A first aid box stocked with all the necessary materials was stored in an easily accessible location in each preschool room.

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(b) The first aid box was at all times available to the children at the service when and if required.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) Records were available to show that fire drills were carried out monthly. The most recent fire drill took place on the 1st of April 2026.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment was available on the premises with the most recent service having been completed in June 2025. All smoke alarms were serviced on the 20th of July 2025.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The facility had a current insurance certificate which outlined that adequate insurance was available for preschool children to attend the service for a full day care preschool service. The commencement date of the insurance was the 1st of January 2026, and the expiry date of insurance was the 31st of December 2026.