

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CE027		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Clarecastle Community Playgroup		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Old National School, Clarecastle, Co. Clare		
<b>Eircode:</b>	V95 T253		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Cynthia McEnery		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	19/05/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	44	PM 14
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla, Ennis Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Ní Nialláin		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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).			
<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable		

### Description of service

This service opened in 2002. The part-time service is operated by a community group in Clarecastle old National School. The service is located in an urban setting in Clarecastle Village. This school building is a single storey structure and the service is accessed through a side door dedicated exclusively for use by the pre-school. The service is provided in three playrooms and the outdoor space to the rear of the school is used for outdoor play for the children. It caters for up to a maximum number of 55 pre-school children, between the ages of 3-6 years. The service is open Monday-Fridays 09.30hrs - 13.00hrs and 13.00hrs- 15.00hrs.

### Staffing

The registered provider operated the sessional service assisted by nine adults. On the day of inspection, the deputy manager and 8 adults were present supervising 44 pre-school children in the morning and 14 pre-school children in the afternoon.

### 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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26, and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. 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.

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 registered provider who attended the closing meeting, the deputy manager, 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*

*(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

(1)(a) On the day of the inspection the deputy manager was the designated persons in charge and there was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the designated persons in charge were present on the premises. The staff roster indicated that the registered provider or the deputy manager were always available on site.

(2)(a) Two validated references from past employers were available for some of the adults.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, references from a source other than a past employer were provided.

(c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available for ten adults employed at the service.

(d) Not applicable as no adult who had lived outside the state for a period greater than six months.

(4) Ten adults employed to work directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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) On the day of Inspection there were nine adults including the deputy manager working with forty-four pre-school children in the morning and fourteen pre-school children in the afternoon. The adult/child ratio in the service was correct.

(2) The staff roster showed that the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

(8) (a) The service was not operated single-handedly, and more than two adults were available in the service at all times.

### 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

##### (1)(a) BASIC NEEDS:

The parents provided the snack food and drink for their child. The service encouraged parents to choose healthy options. On the day, children's snacks observed consisted of filled sandwiches and rolls with yogurts, raw vegetables and fresh fruits. Drinking water was available to the children at all times. Children could access the toilet at any time during the session. Staff supervised children's hand washing and provided assistance when needed.

Good personal hygiene practices were observed. Children washed their hands before snack break and after toileting and outdoor play.

Children had opportunities to move about freely in the playrooms and in the outdoors play areas.

The adults were positive and consistent in their approach to managing children's behaviour.

##### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

There were three indoor playrooms in use in the service.

The playrooms were laid out with uncluttered, clear floor spaces for the children to play safely.

All rooms were well resourced and had a large range and supply of developmentally appropriate activities and toys that were accessible and available at children's eye level. The playrooms had child sized tables and chairs. Interest areas were clearly defined, and children had opportunity for different types of play and learning.

The outdoor play area was part of the adjacent primary school yard and was located to the rear of the premises. The ground surface cover was tarmacadam and an enclosed section used by the younger children had an all weather surface which allowed for play in all weathers. The area contained an outdoor sand table, mud kitchen, wooden blocks, bench seating and storage shed of outdoor play equipment which included ride on toys, balls and games. A large wooden playhouse was also available.

## 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:

- The person in charge ensured that complete and accurate daily records of attendance were kept for all children and adults. The entrance to the service was secured.
- The external outdoor play areas were secured and fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

- Playrooms, communal, and sanitary areas were adequately ventilated by natural forms of ventilation.
- There was liquid soap at the wash hand basins to facilitate hygienic hand washing for children and adults. Paper towels were provided in the dispensers in all the sanitary areas used by the children and adults to facilitate hygienic hand drying.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Appropriate documentation was available in the event that medication was required by a child attending the service. Medication was not administered in the service on the day of inspection.

##### Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were carried out in the service.

## 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) Two adults present in the service had updated First Aid Responder training and the certificates were valid to December 2024. Another five adults had Paediatric First Aid certification which was valid to October 2024.

(2)(a) There were suitably equipped first aid boxes stored in designated areas in each playroom.

(b) The first aid boxes were available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

## 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) Records are available to show that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms were available on the premises with the most recent services having been completed in September 2022.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous positions on the premises.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The insurance certificate for the service was available and in date on inspection. The required cover was available for a maximum of 55 pre-school children who could attend at any one time.