

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DL137			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	The Doorway Project 2 Community Childcare Centre			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	No 6 Meadowbank, Long Lane, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal			
<b>Eircode:</b>	F92 T9CX			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Ester MacElhinney			
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional			
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	22/09/2023			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	9	PM	n/a
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F95 XK94			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	N. McEndoo and L. Costello			
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors			

### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

The Doorway Project 2 Community Childcare Centre is a not-for-profit sessional preschool service offering a morning and afternoon session. The service runs from 09.00am -12.00pm and 12.30pm-15.30pm each weekday and cares for children aged 2-6 years. A school age service is also provided. The service participates on the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme.

### Staffing

The registered provider is not on the premises on a daily basis. The service has a named person in charge and a named designated deputy who are on the premises during the hours of operation. There are three adults employed to work with the children on a daily basis, three of these hold at a major award 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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 Management and recruitment, 11 Staffing levels, 16 Record in relation to a pre-school service, 19 Health, welfare, and development of child, 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of children, 25 First aid and 32 Complaints.

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

This unannounced inspection was carried out in response to a feedback and concern submitted to the early year's inspectorate on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

### 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.

## 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) (b).

There was a designated person in charge and a person to deputise in their absence.

2. (a) (b).

The records of four staff employed in the service were reviewed.

Two written and verified past employer references were available in respect of four adults employed in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for all four staff employed in the service.

(d)

Police vetting required for one adult who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months was available for one adult.

(3)

The procedures specified in paragraph 2 had been completed prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the preschool.

(4) Four adults employed and working directly with the children held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework.

### 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.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

1. There were nine children attending the preschool service being supported directly by two adults.
- (3). The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the following information in relation to the service,

- a) the name, position, qualifications, and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee within the service,
- b) details of the class of service and the age profile of the children,
- c) details of the adult to child ratio,
- d) the type of care programme offered by the service,
- e) The facilities available,
- h) a daily record of attendance for each child registered to the service,
- i) details of the daily staff roster.

### Non-Compliance Information

- j) The registered provider did not ensure that records relating to any accident injury and incident involving a pre-school child attending the service were completed in full. A sample of the previous 6 reports were taken, 5 of which were incomplete.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

A staff meeting was held after the pre-school session on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September, and we reviewed the Accident and Incident policy and Procedures. All staff were given a copy of the policy and a signature page for signing confirming that they had studied it, understood it, and would implement it.

All six reports were reviewed.

- One report was not signed on the day of the incident as the parent who collected the child did not have any English and the manager felt that the parent signing it should be able to understand it. The child was off for two weeks and on her return the form was signed.
- Two forms were for after-school children and these forms were in the pre-school book in error.
- One report was written in error about an incident when a child bit a member of staff-the staff member was the injured party and,
- Another report was in relation to the same bite incident.

The writing up of an incident/accident report form was reviewed so that each member of staff understands the information that needs to be on each part of the form, that all signatures need to be signed, that the parent must receive their copy of the form, a copy put in each child's file and the front copy retained in the accident & Incident Book.

There are separate Accident & Incident Report Books. One for Pre-school and one for School aged children. At the end of each session, these report books will be checked and signed off on, on a daily basis.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

None submitted.

### **Summary Comment**

The information submitted by the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider has been reviewed and the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 16 (j) has been addressed. This regulation is now compliant.

## **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*

*(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*

*(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

### **Compliance Information**

The children bring all snacks and drinks from home for their duration in service. Snacks provided from home are in line with the service healthy eating policy. On the day of inspection children were observed to have sandwiches, fruit and yoghurts and drinks of orange and water. All children's snacks were stored in the fridge on arrival to the service.

The care room in operation in the service, consists of various interest areas including home corners with kitchen and props, construction area with cars and trucks, tabletop activities including manipulatives, puzzles, and jigsaws. Resources and materials provided were suitable to the age and stage of development of the number of children attending the service. The care room was decorated with various paintings of cartoon figures such as 'sponge bob' and 'super mario' which created a warm childlike environment. On the inspector's arrival the children were having free play, moving from one area of the room to another, choosing various activities themselves, supporting independence. Five children sat around one table completing tabletop activities supported by one staff member, who assisted the children with any difficulty they were having. The other staff member sat at child's level on a floor mat and reading story books chosen by the children. Circle time consisted of various songs including action songs, teaching the children participating in the words for various parts of the body. It is important to note that all the children attending the service did not have English as their primary language, therefore staff made efforts to communicate to ensure all children attending the service were able to understand. There was evidence of short term and long-term planning within the service. There was evidence of curriculum planning, and the months focus was on identity and belonging focusing on the family, this work had begun with a large family tree displayed on the wall, where children could bring in pictures of their family. Further evidence of planning was in the form of a large floor tray full of dried leaves, giving the opportunity for a sensorial experience. One child was observed to be enjoying the touch and sounds of crunching the leaves in their hands and under their feet. Staff supported children in hygiene measures such as wiping of their noses and hand washing prior to snack. All children were encouraged to be independent when opening their lunch boxes and drinks. One child with an additional need was observed not to eat snack at the table, but wanted to eat sitting on the floor, the staff member, following the needs of the child, made sure the child was comfortable and provided cushions for them and sat and spoke with the child while they ate. The child came to the table themselves when they were ready. On the day of inspection, the children accessed the outdoor area towards the end of the sessional service. The Children were encouraged to put coats on independent of the adult, some children were observed to help each other with the task and staff were on hand to support children who needed assistance. Once outside, staff took time to ensure the seats of the cars were dried prior to children using them. All children appeared to enjoy being outdoors, children were observed running around the area, jumping in muddy puddles, and having fun. It was evident on the on the day of inspection that both staff had a very good working relationship with each other, enhancing the experience and the flow of session for the children.

## 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 main entrance into the service was found to be secure upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons from entering the service without authorisation.
- Internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent unauthorised access or the children exiting unsupervised.
- Cleaning products in use in the playroom were stored out of the reach of children.
- The presses beneath the sink in the playroom were secured and not accessible to the children.
- Play materials in the care room appeared clean and in good condition.

##### Infection Control:

- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to and after mealtimes.
- The premises were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Children's hands were washed upon arrival to the service.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were unobstructed on the day of inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. The outdoor area of the preschool had several hazards which posed a risk to the health and safety of the children as outlined below.:
  - a) The perimeter was not secure as there was loose panels in fencing that could be moved easily to gain entry.
  - b) The side gate was rusty.
  - c) The grass area was waterlogged and unplayable as a result.
  - d) The swing set was not secured to the ground and posed a risk of falling. This was identified as a non-compliance on the previous inspection.
  - e) The slide was not secure to the ground.
  - f) There were two raised brackets bolted on the ground posing a trip hazard.

- g) A broken table was in use in the garden. The table had been exposed to the elements and as a result had sodden wood exposed, posing a risk of splinter injury to children.
  - h) A second gate leading to the outdoor area was rusty making it difficult for staff to open and close.
  - i) The lock on the patio door was faulty which made it difficult for staff to open and lock, therefore if not locked the children were able to exit unsupervised.
  - j) There were no visibility stripes present on the patio doors.
  - k) An area of the outdoor area was cordoned off by cones as a boiler had been removed and the groundwork has not been completed.
2. The shed in the outdoor area was not secured and children had access to cans of paint which may prevent as a safety hazard for children.

### **Infection Control:**

- 3. There was no warm running water in the sanitary area, therefore children could not complete their hand hygiene effectively after toileting. This was identified as a non-compliance on the previous inspection.
- 4. The nappy bin in the sanitary area is not a foot operated pedal bin, therefore is a hazard for infection control.
- 5. The foot operated pedal bin in the sanitary area was broken.

### **Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

#### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

#### **General Safety:**

- a. The fencing panels have been secured firmly to the fence.
- b. The lock on the side gate has been cleaned and oiled.
- c. Doing drainage work on the grass area is a very costly project for which we do not have the funds at the moment. Parents have been asked and have provided wellies for their children and we have provided full waterproof outdoor gear for each child so that the children can have access to this area.
- d. The swing has been moved and firmly secured to the ground.
- e. The slide has been secured to the ground.
- f. The two raised brackets have been removed.
- g. The broken table has been removed completely from the garden.
- h. The second gate leading to the outdoor area has been modified to enable it to be opened and closed with ease by staff.
- i. The lock on the patio door is now functioning properly.

- j. Visibility strips have been put on the patio door.
- k. The groundwork on the area where the old boiler was removed from has been completed and safety matting laid.
- 2. The lock on the shed in the outdoor area has been re-positioned and has a padlock attached to prevent access without the key.

**Infection Control:**

- 3. The meter in the sanitary area has been adjusted and water is now at the correct temperature.
- 4. The nappy bin in the sanitary area has been removed and replaced with a foot operated pedal bin.
- 5. The broken foot operated pedal bin in the sanitary area has been replaced with a new foot operated pedal bin.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**General Safety:**

- 1.
  - a) Photographic evidence submitted.
  - b) Photographic evidence submitted.
  - c) None submitted.
  - d) Photographic evidence submitted.
  - e) Photographic evidence submitted.
  - f) Photographic evidence submitted.
  - g) Photographic evidence submitted.
  - h) Photographic evidence submitted.
  - i) None submitted.
  - j) None submitted.
  - k) Photographic evidence submitted.
- 2. Photographic evidence submitted

As a preventative measure risk assessments will be carried out on a regular basis.

**Infection Control:**

- 3. None submitted.
- 4. None submitted.
- 5. None submitted.

### Summary Comment

The information submitted by the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider has been reviewed and the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 23 has been addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

### 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

(2) (a) (b).

The first aid equipment was readily available and safely stored in a conspicuous position in the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1).

On the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service at 09.00am till 09.25am there was no person trained in first aid responder immediately available to the children.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

First Aid Responder training has been organised for all staff. A first aid responder will be present at all times

##### Supporting documentation submitted

None submitted.

### Summary Comment

The information submitted by the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider has been reviewed and the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 25 has been addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured there was a complaints policy in place which specified,
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service
  - (b) the manner in which a complaint shall be dealt with, and
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.