

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DS177		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Rowlagh Women's Group Preschool		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Áras Rualach, Neilstown Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	D22 DX47		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Marie Daly		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	23/05/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	6	PM n/a
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Mulhern		
<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

Rowlagh Women’s Group Preschool is a not-for-profit early years service operated by Crann Support Group. The service offers sessional and part-time care and education to children aged 2-6 years from the local community. The service operates from 9am to 5pm. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme operates from 9am to 12pm. The service operates from Áras Rualach – a community centre in Rowlagh, North Clondalkin. The service was originally provided from one room within the centre. The service opened a second room in September 2022 for children aged 2-3 years attending from 1-5pm.

### Staffing

There are three staff employed to work in the service including the person in charge. The person in charge reports directly to the registered provider.

### 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 areas of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

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

Regulation 9 (2) & (4) Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1) & (2) Staffing Levels

Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health Welfare and Development of Child

Regulation 20 (3)(a) & (b) Facilities for Rest and Play

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

Regulation 25 (1) & (2) First Aid

Regulation 26 (1) & (4) Fire Safety Measures

Regulation 29 (b), (c), (d), (e) Premises

Regulation 30 (2) Minimum Space requirements

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 person in charge reported on the inspection that an additional room named 'Toddler Room' had been made available for children within the community centre since September 2022. This room was used to accommodate a maximum of seven children aged between two and three years. No change had been made to the age or overall number of children accommodated by the service. In respect of this change, the inspector assessed compliance with regulation 29 - Premises and regulation 30 – Minimum space requirements in relation to the Toddler room. Regulation 23 was assessed in the Pre-School room only. The findings are documented within the report.

### 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

*(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 inspection focused on the recruitment procedures for staff employed since the previous inspection dated 5 March 2021. The person in charge reported that no new staff had been employed since that date.

### 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 inspector observed that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was always maintained. There were two staff working directly with six children throughout the inspection. A maximum of fifteen children were documented as being present at any given time.

## 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

The inspector observed that the children's learning, development, and well-being was supported by the environment and the staff. There were clearly defined interest areas including a construction areas and home corners. There was a variety of equipment and materials including books, sand and puzzles visible and accessible to the children. Areas with soft seating and cushions were available for children to rest or take a break from activities. A low bed with linen was available if any child required a nap. Children's identity and belonging was promoted through art displays and family photograph walls.

The inspector observed the children engaged in free play. The children participated in collaborative and turn-taking play and discussed their play and ideas with staff. Staff demonstrated an awareness of the children's dispositions and supported all children to participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. A daily routine was in place which included breaks for food and drinks which were provided by the service. The inspector observed meal/snack times to be a social occasion; the children and adults sat together and engaged in conversation.

Children were supported to be independent with their personal care. Low level hooks were provided for children's coats. The children used the toilet as they needed with staff reminding and assisting them to wash their hands afterwards. The inspector observed the staff interacting warmly with the children, engaging positively, and supporting them in their work and play. They communicated verbally with parents/guardians at drop off/collection, sharing information to provide for continuation of care.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(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, or*

*(b) Where no such space is provided, the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis to a suitable outdoor space.*

### Non-Compliance Information

(3)(a) The outdoor area on the premises was not suitable. The area was not adequately secured. Unauthorised access was possible via the low unsecured gates. Staff reported the children can climb over the low wall and gates which lead directly onto the carpark. The space measured approximately 13 square metres and consisted entirely of a concrete surface. The space had no natural elements, interesting features, or materials to provide the children with the benefits of being outdoors. Although balance bikes were provided, there was not adequate space for the children to use them.

This was non-compliant on the previous inspections dated 27 September 2018 and 5 March 2021. The corrective actions submitted by the registered provider at those times stated that meetings were ongoing regarding gaining permission to expand and renovate. In anticipation of permission being granted, the registered provider stated a fence was being bought to block off either side of the building. The inspector did not observe any changes made to the outdoor area on inspection.

(b) Staff reported that the children do not have access to an alternative outdoor space.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The board has decided that fencing is bought as a temporary measure. Ongoing negotiations between stakeholders about doing the outside area up. The manager is arranging to meet with the local community centre to seek permission to use the hall once or twice a week. The fence will be put out prior to the children going out and will be brought back in at the end of the day.

The children can then be brought outside where it will be safer and they can get the benefits of the outdoors. Equipment has been bought to enhance the children's play, learning and development. Although this will not be an outdoor space it will be a change of environment which is good for the children. It will provide a bigger space for the children to play and develop.

### Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate acknowledges that negotiations are ongoing in relation to the outdoor space. However, the use of the centre hall does not negate the need for an outdoor space to be available to the children. The non-compliance remains outstanding.

## 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

The inspection under this regulation focused on the Pre-School room. Measures had been taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children as outlined in the examples below.

#### General Safety:

- Emergency doors were kept clear to allow for timely evacuation in the event of an emergency.
- Cleaning products and medicines were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Cables and blind cords were secured out of reach of children.
- Children's attendance was recorded accurately for reference in the event of an emergency evacuation.

#### Infection Control:

- The Pre-school room and sanitary facilities were observed to be in a clean condition.
- Sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels for handwashing.

- Children's hands were washed at required times including before eating and after using the toilet to prevent the spread of infection.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal operated, lidded bins.

### Administration of Medication:

- The person in charge reported that none of the children had received medication while attending the service. The service had a policy which outlined the procedures for giving medicine safely if required. Staff demonstrated an awareness of these procedures including obtaining written parent/guardian consent and keeping a record.

### Outings:

- Staff reported that they bring the children to the local library a few times per year. A detailed policy was in place to guide safe practice before and during outings. Staff demonstrated an awareness of measures to take to safeguard the children including obtaining parental consent, carrying out a risk assessment and ensuring a person trained in first aid is always available.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

The entrance door to the Pre-school room was unsecured, posing a risk of a child leaving unsupervised or unauthorised entry from the foyer of the community centre.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

The entrance door is now being locked from the inside to stop the posing risk of a child leaving or an unauthorised person entering the service from the foyer. The manager has met with staff to keep all persons informed that this door should be kept locked at all times - after entering or when someone leaves.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

Photograph of latch on door.

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed the actions submitted to adequately address the non-compliances. The registered provider must ensure that any locking mechanisms placed on exits are in keeping with fire legislation and do not impede the safe evacuation of children in the event of a fire.

### 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) A suitably equipped first aid box was stored within reach of adults.

(b) The first aid box was always available for use.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1) A person trained in a recognised paediatric first aid course - First Aid Responder (FAR) was not always available to the children. From the arrival of the inspector into the service at 9:10 am until 9:30 am there was no staff member present who was trained in FAR. A staff member who held the appropriate first aid qualification arrived at the service at 9:30 am.

(2)(a) The first aid box was not stored in a conspicuous position. It was stored in a closed cupboard with no signage.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) A staff member trained in first aid was in attendance at all times. First aid training was completed by all staff members. One staff member is awaiting the practical training and then will receive their certificate. Training needs of staff will be monitored more closely especially at times when they are due to expire, and refreshers will be sought asap.

(2)(a) There is now signage where the first aid box is kept. When kitchen cupboards are painted the service will be sure to reapply signage where needed.

## Supporting documentation submitted

- (1) First aid certificate.
- (2)(a) Photograph of first aid sign on cupboard.

## Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed the actions submitted to adequately address the non-compliance.

## 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 were available of fire-drills carried out in the service. A record was made of the fire drill which was conducted during the inspection. The previous fire drill was dated 13 March 2023.
- (b) The service had a record outlining the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system in the service. The last recorded dates of maintenance were 5 September and 2 November 2022 consecutively.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous positions on the premises.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (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

The inspection under this regulation focused on the Toddler room.

(b) Measures had been taken to safeguard the children as outlined in the following examples:

- Emergency doors were kept clear to allow for timely evacuation in the event of an emergency.
- Cables and blind cords were secured out of reach of children.

(c) The room had an adequate source of natural lighting and could be supplemented with artificial lighting as needed. The room had windows which could be opened for natural ventilation.

(e) The service was equipped with appropriate sanitary facilities to accommodate a maximum of 11 toilet-trained children and 11 children in nappies. There was one toilet, one nappy changing unit and two wash-hand basins available for the children. The sanitary facilities appeared clean and well maintained. Warm water was available in the wash hand basins. Pedal operated bins were available for the safe disposal of waste.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(b) The Toddler room was not deemed to be adequately safe and secure as outlined below.

1. The entrance to the room from the community centre foyer was unsecured. This posed a risk of unauthorised entry or a child leaving unsupervised.
2. The kitchen adjacent to the Toddler room was unsecured, posing a risk if a child was to enter and access the hazards within.
3. A tall, heavy shelving unit was unsecured in the Toddler room, posing a risk of injury if it were to tip onto a child.

(c) The Toddler room could not be adequately heated to maintain a comfortable range between 18 and 22°C. The thermostats on the radiators could not be accessed as fixed radiator covers had been put in place over them. The window could not be closed fully to retain heat within the room as the closing mechanism was broken. The person in charge reported that the temperature of the room did not rise above 13°C some days in winter and the children had to be moved from the room.

(d) The room was not adequately cleaned or maintained. A section of the linoleum flooring was torn exposing the concrete beneath. A build-up of dust was visible on some shelving units. The fabric covering on the seating in the rest area was significantly stained. There were no daily or weekly cleaning schedules available. The person in charge reported that there was no system in place for laundering fabric items.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The Toddler room has been closed as there is no demand for it at this time. Work will be carried out during the summer months to ensure all issues are rectified in case there is a demand for it to be used again.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documents submitted.

### Summary Comment

The inspectorate acknowledges the room is no longer in use. The action has been deemed to address the non-compliance.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

*(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.*

#### Compliance Information

The minimum space requirements were assessed in the Toddler room. There was adequate free floor space available. The service accommodates seven children aged 2-3 years on a part-time basis within the room. A minimum of 2.35 square metres was required for each child. A total of 16.45 square metres was required for seven children. The room had 36 square metres of free floor space available.