

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY030
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	St. Brigid's Playgroup
-------------------------	------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	St Paul's Artane Football Club, Gracefield Avenue, Artane, Dublin 5
----------------------------	---

<b>Eircode:</b>	D05 KX07
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sandra Whelan, Stella O'Malley
-------------------------------------	--------------------------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	06/06/2024
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Finnegan Hayes
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
---------------------------------	-----------------

### Description of service

St. Brigid's Playgroup is a privately run service located on the first floor of a football club in a residential area in North Dublin. The service is registered to provide sessional care for children aged 2-6 years from 9:30am-12:30pm Monday to Friday in line with the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. A secure outdoor area is provided on the grounds of the service.

### Staffing

The registered providers both work directly with the children in the service on a daily basis and employ an additional staff member who works in the service to cover staff leave when necessary.

### 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, safety and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 registered providers 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*

*(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required. Both persons are rostered to work the entire opening hours of the service daily.
- (2) Discussion with the registered providers showed that there are three staff employed to work in the service including both registered providers and one relief staff member who works on an ad hoc basis. The files of all three staff were reviewed as part of the inspection.
- (a) Six written and verified references were available from a previous employer in relation to the three staff members.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for three staff members. 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 available for one staff member who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of more than 6 months.
- (3) Evidence showed that the checks required under (2) had been completed prior to the start date of the employees.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that three staff members held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications 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) (3) The registered providers ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children on the day of inspection and that ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day. For example, two staff members were working directly with 18 children attending 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;*
  - (f) the opening hours and fees;*
  - (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
  - (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
  - (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

*(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The registered providers ensured the following information was maintained in the service;

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of all staff and contractors was maintained in the staff files.
- (b)(c)(d)(e)(f) The information required under (b-f) was available in the statement of purpose and function.
- (g) Twenty policies, procedures, and statements which the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10 were available for review.
- (h) A daily attendance record book was available for review.
- (i) A set staff roster was available; staff hours do not change given the nature and duration of the service.
- (j) A sample of 36 medication administration records were reviewed and completed in full.
- (k) A sample of 2 accident and incident records were available for review and were completed in full.

## 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

The registered provider ensured that an adequate supply of suitable materials and equipment were available to the children in the service. The following was observed;

- The care room was organised into defined play areas and materials were grouped appropriately to encourage spontaneous play activities.
- A large selection of toys and equipment were available in each play area providing opportunities for a wide variety of play experiences.
- Equipment and materials were displayed on low level shelving ensuring materials were accessible and promoting choice, decision making and supporting children to play independently.
- The furniture and equipment in the care rooms were observed to be well maintained, durable, easy to clean, and suitable for the age and stage of development of the children present.

- The outdoor area provided opportunities for gross motor play which is not appropriate for the indoor environment.

### 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 entrance to the service was adequately secure which prevented unauthorised persons accessing the service while a thumb lock on the care room door prevented children leaving the service unsupervised.
- Toys and equipment were maintained in good condition free from hazards preventing risks to the children.
- Accessible windows were fitted with restrictor devices to prevent injury from falls to the children.
- Radiator covers were in place and adequately secured to prevent injury to the children.
- Flexes were adequately secured to prevent injury to the children.
- Cleaning records were available and completed to date throughout the service

##### Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, dispensed soap and handtowels were available in sanitary areas to support adequate hand hygiene.
- Children were observed to wash their hands frequently throughout the day after using the toilet and before mealtimes.
- Pedal operated bins were available in all sanitary accommodation for disposal of contaminated items.

##### Administration of Medication:

- The service ensured the safety of a child who required emergency medication. Staff were knowledgeable of the individual needs of the child and spoke about the ongoing daily communication with parents regarding the child.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were observed to be unobstructed.
- Staff were knowledgeable of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. Lunches which were brought from home and eaten by the children in the service were observed to contain potential choking hazards; one child had whole grapes while another child had popcorn. The service healthy eating policy does not reference potential choking hazards and these items posed a potential risk to the children.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

The healthy eating policy was reviewed and a copy has been sent to all parents to remind them that popcorn is not permitted in our playgroup and also grapes must be halved as they are a potential choking hazard . We also have agreed that one staff member will be responsible for checking lunchboxes each day to ensure the healthy eating policy is being observed.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

Updated healthy eating policy was reviewed.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions proposed by the registered provided are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

## 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) The registered provider ensured that a staff member trained in first aid response (FAR) was available to the children at all times during the opening hours of the service.
- (2) (a)(b) A fully equipped first aid box was available mounted to the wall in the kitchenette area of the care room, out of reach of the children but readily accessible when needed.

### 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) A record of monthly fire drills was available in the service. Records and conversation with staff showed that the last fire drill took place on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024.
  - (b) A record detailing the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was available on the premises. The record showed that the firefighting equipment was last serviced in on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire emergency were available in the care room.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1) (b) Evidence of maintenance was not available to show that the smoke alarm had been serviced in line with the requirements. It is acknowledged that the football club carry out the maintenance and the service were trying to obtain a copy following the inspection.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) (b) We contacted the club immediately asking for relevant smoke alarm maintenance certificate. They could not find the most up to date certificate. They organised for a company to do these service checks immediately and this was completed 19/06/24. We spoke with the fire company; they recommended that smoke alarm and fire system is checked every 6-12 months, and they usually contact the Football club when checks are due. We have asked them to contact us too so we can ensure that the football club is up to date with all the fire safety requirements.

### Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the up-to-date servicing certificate and correspondence with the fire company were reviewed.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions proposed by the registered provided are sufficient to address the non-compliance identified under Regulation 26.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was adequately insured for up to 22 children. The current insurance is in place until 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025.