

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY288
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	The Anchorage Preschool
-------------------------	-------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	10A York Road, Ringsend, Dublin 4, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	---

<b>Eircode:</b>	D04 E7K8
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sharon Donnelly
-------------------------------------	-----------------

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

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	07/11/2024
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	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 D08 X01F
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R. Duff and E. Griffin
<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.
---------------------------------	-----------------

### Description of service

The Anchorage Preschool is a sessional service located in a residential area of Dublin City. The service is located on the grounds of a converted church. There are two care rooms, Room 1 to the front and Room 2 to the rear and there are two outdoor plays areas in the service. The service operates a morning session from 9am to 12pm Monday to Friday for children aged 2-6 years old. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE).

### Staffing

The registered provider employs three staff to work directly with the children in the service. On the day of the inspection the registered provider and three staff were present. The registered provider works both directly with the children and oversees the day-to-day operation of the service.

### 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The following regulations were reviewed:

Regulation 9 (1)(2) and (4)-Management and Recruitment.

Regulation 11(1)(3) and (8)-Staffing Levels.

Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-School Child.

Regulation 16 Record in Relation to Pre-School Service.

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

Regulation 23 Safeguarding the Health, Safety, and Welfare of child.

Regulation 25 First Aid.

Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures.

Regulation 28 Insurance.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the two care rooms: Room 1 and Room 2. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under: Regulation 15, Regulation 16, Regulation 19 and Regulation 23.

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

An Immediate Action notice was issued under Regulation 23 to the registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to a safety concern identified.

A response was received on 8 November 2024 from the registered provider which mitigated the risk identified.

Please see details in the body of the report.

### 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
- (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,
- (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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service.
- (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.
- (2) The files of the registered provider and three staff who work in the service were reviewed.
- (a) Four written and verified references were available from past employers.
- (b) Four written and verified references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered provider and 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) International Police vetting was not required as there was evidence to show that the registered provider and three staff had not lived outside of the state for six months or more as an adult.

(4) The registered provider and three staff members held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

### 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.*

*(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) The registered provider ensured there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(3) During the Morning of the Inspection. There were two adults caring for eleven children aged 2 ½-5 years old in Room 1. There was one adult caring for eight children aged 2 ½-5 years old in Room 2. In addition, there was one adult whose role was to act as a floater and to provide support between the two care rooms.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured there were always two adults on the premises. Evidenced by the staff sign in sheet.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*  
*(c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of ten children's registration records were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured that the information required under (a)-(i) was maintained for each child.

(3) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspection team were available for review.

## 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:*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child 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.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(h) Details of attendance by each pre-school child were available in both care rooms.

(J) The registered provider confirmed that no child had received medication in the service. An administration of medication record book which is required if a child were to be prescribed or given medication at any stage was reviewed, and all the required details were included.

(k) A book which details any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service was inspected on the day. Nine accident/incident records were reviewed in total and all the required details were included.

## 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*

### Compliance Information

#### (1)(a) Basic Needs:

- Children brought snacks from home. Alternative snacks and drinks such as water and milk were available if required. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment. Children's own drinks were available within their reach throughout the session.
- Identity and belonging were promoted in the service. For example, there was a 'Family Wall' display and the children's artwork was displayed throughout the care room. In addition, each child had their own labelled coat hook.
- There was a cosy area observed in each care room for the children to relax in as required. The cosy areas were equipped with soft seating, soft cushions and a selection of books for reading and relaxation. There was also a telephone box which had been transformed into a cosy area for individual use by children in Playschool Room 1. In addition, the outdoor play area had tables and chairs present for the children to sit and rest during outdoor play time.

#### Supporting Relationships:

- Transitions were observed to be well managed; children were given five-minute verbal cues to support them with the transitions. The children engaged well with tidying up, putting items away independently and preparing to go into preschool 1 room for snack.
- The children were observed to be partners in the programme of activities. Children were observed to engage in artwork, interactive story time with puppets and turn taking activities for example sharing puppets and sticker sheets. Children had the opportunity to play independently instead of joining the tabletop activities or story time.
- There was evidence that equipment and materials provided were based on the children's individual needs and emergent interests. In the outdoor play area to the front of the building staff showed the early years inspector a newly set up construction area. Staff discussed how there had been a lot of construction and building in the area and the children had been curious about building construction after observing high rise building cranes from the outdoor play area. Following this conversation staff had sourced equipment such as toolboxes, wheelbarrows and natural building materials such as cardboard. Staff discussed how this equipment has supported conversations around new buildings and construction in the area within the service and at home.

### Physical and Material Environment:

- The care rooms in the service were designed with the age and stage of development having been taken into consideration. Children were observed to take part in free play and group work. The layout of the room facilitated these choices as the toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and were visible and accessible to the children to enable the children to explore and develop their play opportunities. For example, in preschool room there was sensory equipment, home areas including kitchens with supporting equipment. Art equipment including paper, paint, brushes, glue, recycled materials for junk art were available and accessible at children's level. In addition, there were interest areas with a range of props available to support and promote role play, imaginary play, storytelling and child led group work.
- The service has the use of two well planned outdoor play areas, both areas partially sheltered and equipped with a range of toys and materials to support a range of play experiences. Equipment and materials in the back outdoor play area included sensory and messy play experiences such as water and sand, recycled cable drums with small world toys provided opportunities for imaginary and pretend play at children's level. The front outdoor play area was divided into three sections with defined areas of interest for example there was a home area with outdoor kitchen and props available, a construction area and a planting and digging area. In addition, there were ride on/in equipment available such as scooters and cars. Children from both care rooms were observed to access the different outdoor areas. This supports their social, cognitive, and gross and fine motor development.

## 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:

- When the inspectors arrived unannounced at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. In addition, the outdoor play area was securely gated restricting unauthorised persons from gaining access to the area and prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.

- The registered provider and three staff members were aware of choking hazards, including grapes. The inspector observed each staff member check every container at lunchtime for uncut grapes and any potential choking hazards.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach to the children.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.

### Infection Control:

- The sanitary area was equipped with liquid soap, warm water and hand drying facilities. The children were facilitated to wash their hands before eating, after outdoor play and after using the toilet.
- Toilet rolls and hand paper towels were hygienically dispensed.
- Pedal operated bins were evident within the care rooms and sanitary area to allow hygienic disposal of contaminated materials.
- The window was open in the care rooms which allowed for circulation of air and reduced the risk of cross infection.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition and the daily cleaning records were filled out and up to date.

### Administration of Medication:

- The service had an individual care plan to identify the medication requirements and procedures in place for a child who had specific medical condition. Through discussion with staff, it was evident that staff were familiar and aware of the procedures to follow as per the care plan.
- Emergency medication was safely stored out of reach of the children. The medication was in the original box and was clearly labelled with the child's name.

### Fire Safety:

- On the day of inspection, it was observed that all emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This helped ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency evacuation.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The mechanical push button door lock system which was put in place to stop other building users accessing one of the care rooms was not working which allowed unrestricted access to the care room.

- It is acknowledged that there was a chain lock on the inside of the door in the care room however this was not observed to be in use during the inspection. An Immediate Action Notice was issued on 7 November 2024 and a response which mitigated the risk identified was received on 8 November 2024.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### General Safety:

#### Corrective Action

- Action was taken immediately to ensure that the door was and is locked correctly at all times with the lock chain properly secured.

#### Preventive Action

- All staff were present for the Inspection feedback and following this a policy to lock all doors correctly before the Preschool opens has been enforced. Clear signage has been put in place.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

- Photographic evidence of the chain securely locked on the door.
- Photographic evidence of signage to remind all staff to keep door locked at all times.
- Photographic evidence of do not enter signage placed on the outer door.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

## 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) A person trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) certification was available to the children on the day of inspection. There was evidence that all four adults had certification in First Aid Response.

(2)(a) and (b) A first aid box was suitably equipped, accessible and available to the adults caring for the children attending.

### 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.*
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation*
- (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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drill took place on 23 October 2024.
- (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced in February 2024 and the smoke detection system in December 2023.
- (2)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the records referred to in paragraph (2) were retained for a period of five years.
- (4) A procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was on display in prominent positions at the premises.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance for a maximum of 30 children attending the service on a sessional care basis with an expiry date of 27 March 2025.