

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY295
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	St. Clare's Pre-School Limited
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	St. Clare's Pre School, Harolds Cross Road, Harolds Cross, Dublin 6W, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	D6W YR04
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Maria Spring for The Board Of Directors.
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	23/01/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	11	PM	N/a
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	1st floor Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Sarah Quigley
<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
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### Description of service

St Clare's Preschool is a not-for-profit early years service which was first established in 1997. The service operates from a purpose-built prefabricated building on the ground of St Clare's primary school in Harolds Cross, South Co. Dublin. Sessional care and education are provided by the service to early years children aged from two to six years on a school calendar basis. The premises consists of one open plan care room and sanitary accommodation.

### Staffing

The service currently employs four staff members, including a designated person in charge. Each of the four staff members were present on the day of inspection. The registered provider was not present during the inspection and does not work directly in 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 area of governance/ information and records/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15.

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 to the registered provider on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 in respect of Regulation 25 First Aid. There was no adult available to the children on the day of inspection with first aid responder (FAR) training or paediatric first aid training.

The designated person in charge provided a response to the immediate action notice on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 which adequately addressed the risk identified.

### 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.*

*(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

Documentation was reviewed in full in respect of Regulation 9(2)(3)(4) for two adults who had commenced employment in the service since the last date of inspection on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021. Regulation 9(2)(c) was reviewed for all four adults employed. The following documents were available:

- (2)
- (a) (b)  
References were available from two sources for both of the adults.
  - (c) A Garda vetting disclosure from The National Vetting Bureau was available for the four adults employed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) Not applicable, the two adults did not require international police vetting.
- (3) The assessment of regulation 9(3) was limited to two adults who had commenced employment in the service since the last date of inspection on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021. Documentation reviewed evidenced the

procedures specified under Regulation 9(2) had been completed prior to the two adults commencing employment in the service.

- (4) There was evidence that the two adults had attained at least a major award at level five in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework for Qualifications.

## 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)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

### Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were eleven pre-school children attending the service being supervised by four adults during the inspection.
- (8) (c) Not applicable, the service is not operated single handedly.

## 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)-(i)

A sample of documentation was reviewed for 12 children currently enrolled to attend the service by the inspector. The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to points (a) to (g), and (i) of the above regulation for each of the records reviewed.

### Non-Compliance Information

(h) One of the documents reviewed did not contain record of immunisations received by the child.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

(h) The necessary details were acquired from the parents directly after the inspection. The Partnership with Parents policy and Settling-In Policy have been reviewed and amended to ensure that all regulatory requirements will be met before a child starts in the service. The Partnership with Parents Policy addresses the issue that was experienced through lack of support for parents with ESL. The Settling-In Policy now requires all regulatory information to be received and signed off on by the manager before a child starts in the Preschool.

## Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

## Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

## 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;*
- (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)
- (h) A record was available in the care room detailing the attendance of each preschool child on the day of inspection. A review of documentation evidenced that attendance records had been maintained daily in the service.
  - (i) An accurate record was available in the service detailing hours of work for each staff member on the day of inspection.
  - (j) There were no written records of administration of medication available in the service. The person in charge stated medication had not been administered to a child in recent years and is not typically administered in the service. However, the necessary documentation was available to record the administration of medications if required.
  - (k) One record of an accident/incident which had occurred in the service was available on the day of inspection. The person in charge stated no other accidents/incidents had occurred in the service in recent years. The record reviewed contained the required information, including record that a parent/guardian had been appropriately informed.

## 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-

(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 inspector observed appropriate care practices in place during the inspection.

The children moved freely around the care room, independently selecting which activities they would like to engage in both alone and with staff members as desired. The play-based programme of care was observed to be child led and children were visibly content and engaged in play-based activities throughout the inspection. Staff members used prompts during play to extend activities and conversation, creating a language rich environment. The children all spent time outdoors during the morning and were dressed appropriate to the weather. Children accessed the toilet independently and staff provided support to younger children where required. Staff availed of opportunities throughout the inspection for personal one to one conversation with the children and demonstrated a good awareness of each child's individual needs. Staff interacted warmly and respectfully with the children and used gentle tones, addressing children by name and making eye contact.

Staff and children sat together chatting during lunch time creating a relaxed, homely atmosphere. A rest area was provided within the room where children could relax or take a break from activities. Staff managed behaviours using positive strategies and encouraged conflict resolution. Staff prepared children for transitions using stories and timers which ensured a seamless transition from one stage of the morning to the next.

## 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 inspector found by observation of practice, review of documentation, discussion with the registered provider, and inspection of the premises that the following steps to safeguard children attending:

#### General Safety:

The entrance door into the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons gaining access or children exiting unsupervised. The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Measures had been taken to ensure the indoor play environment was safe and free from hazards. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

#### Infection Control:

An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. Pedal-operated, lidded bins were in place throughout the service to appropriately manage waste. Staff supported children to wash their hands at regular intervals including after using the toilet, after outdoor play, and before lunch. Schedules were in place and maintained to ensure the service, equipment and materials are regularly cleaned. The person in charge outlined appropriate exclusion periods for adults and children with infectious illnesses were implemented in the service as per the policy.

#### Administration of Medication:

There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of temperature reducing medications, and there were procedures in place to safely administer and document such medication if required, including in the case of an emergency. Staff members detailed the procedures for administering medication when required during discussions with the inspector and had appropriate documentation available to record such administration if required.

#### Fire Safety:

The designated fire escape routes were clearly indicated and free from obstruction on the day of inspection. Staff members adequately outlined the evacuation procedures in place in the event of a fire and stated that fire drills are practiced regularly on a monthly basis.

### 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)  
A suitably equipped first aid box was observed to be immediately accessible to the children within the service and was stored in a conspicuous location on the day of inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1)  
There was no adult available to the children on the day of inspection with first aid responder (FAR) training or paediatric first aid training, and no adult had undergone first aid training since 2020. An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025.

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

##### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

A member of staff was enrolled on the first available FAR course. The course ran from Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January until Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January inclusive. The adult has completed the course and is awaiting official certification. While the staff member was awaiting completion of the course, the service arranged for a FAR trained and certified colleague from the primary school in which the service are based to be available during opening hours. The policy on staff training and qualifications has been reviewed and updated to include specific and regular check-ins regarding staff qualifications. These will be done at the staff meetings which take place at the end of each academic year. This will allow for training to take place during the summer months. There will also be a check in during the month of January to allow for looming deadlines.

##### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Supporting documentation was submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

## Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met.

## 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 written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the last fire drill had taken place in January 2025.
- (b) There was a record to show that the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system had been serviced in September and December of 2024.

(2)

The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

## Compliance Information

Documentation reviewed evidenced that the service was adequately insured for the number of children registered to attend the service and the type of service provided.