

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL118		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Home from Home Creche		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Hampton lane, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	K32 N819		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Rachel Cawley, Danielle Cawley		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	02/05/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	59	PM 50
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin K67 Y5C6		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	AM Coyle & S Cully		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors		
<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

Home from Home is a privately owned early years' service conducted from a detached single storey barn conversion situated on the grounds of a private country residence and farm located towards the end of a cul de sac in a rural coastal setting located close to the village of Balrothery in north Co Dublin Home from Home creche provides full day, part time and sessional preschool care and education to children from 6 months until they commence attendance at primary school. The service also provides care to school aged children. There are 6 care rooms in the service namely the Baby room, the Wobbler room, the Toddler room, the preschool room 1, Preschool room 2 and the Afterschool room which is used by the children attending the Naionra from 9am to 12 midday daily. The service is registered to operate from 07:15am to 6:30 pm Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9am to 12 midday for 38 weeks of the year for eligible children.

### Staffing

The service employs 16 staff members, 12 of whom were present on the day of inspection. Ten staff worked directly with the Early Years children attending the service, one staff member works with the school aged children and a chef is employed for the preparation and cooking of food.

### 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations *9,11,19,20, 23,25,26 and 29*; These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of both registered providers, 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 registered provider was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection.

The files for five staff files were reviewed, four of whom worked directly with the pre-school children attending the service.

(2)(a) &(b) Two written and appropriately validated references were available for the five staff members whose files were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 5 staff members whose files were reviewed.

(d) International police vetting was available for 2 staff members who had lived outside the state as adults for more than 6 consecutive months.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that two of the five staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with children in the service held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(4) Documentary evidence was not available to demonstrate that 2 staff members whose files were reviewed held an appropriate childcare qualification at level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent.

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

#### Corrective Action

(4) A copy of letter from DCEDIY stating staff's qualification is adequate to level 5 and can work in the setting. Other staff member is still waiting on DCEDIY to revert with decision on qualification as further information was required, in the meantime this staff member has moved to afterschool age children until matter is resolved and qualification will be forwarded to inspectorate.

#### Preventive Action

Ensure all qualifications and equivalent from DCEDIY are in place prior to starting in setting.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of letter from the DCEDIY confirming one staff members eligibility to practice.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted evidence that one staff member was qualified and stated that the other staff member was working with school aged children until an appropriate childcare qualification was received. This assurance from the registered provider has satisfied the inspectorate and the non-compliance has been addressed. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

### 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) During the period of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school children with the exception of the periods of time in Preschool room 2 as detailed in the noncompliance section below.

(2) On the day of inspection, the following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity:

- In the Baby room there were 4 preschool children aged between 10 months and 1 year 6 months being cared for by 2 adults.
- In the Wobbler room there were 10 children aged between 1 years 5 months and 2 years 5 months being cared for by 2 adults.
- In the Toddler room there were 10 children aged between 2 years 3 months and 2 years 11 months being cared for by 2 adults.
- In the Afterschool room where the children attended the Naionra between 9am and 12 midday there were 9 children aged 3 years 9 months and 5 years attending on a sessional ECCE basis being cared for by 1 adult.
- In the Preschool room 1 there were 18 children aged between 2 years 11 months and 3 years 11 months being cared for by 2 adults.
- In the Preschool room 2 there were 8 children aged between 4 years 2 months and 4 years 8 months being cared for by 1 adult.

(8) (a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present in the service at all times. This was confirmed by the staff roster and sign in records.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2) There was an inadequate number of staff working with the children in the Preschool room 2 from 1pm to 1:45pm. There was 1 adult caring for 13 children aged 3 to 5 years when 2 adults were required to maintain the minimum adult to child ratios at this time.

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

#### Corrective Action

(2) Management staff have amended their lunch break to ensure adequate staff are covering between 1pm and 2pm in preschool room 2 whenever staff are absent/on annual leave.

#### Preventive Action

Management staff to cover lunch breaks when staff are absent to ensure ratios are met during lunches.

### Summary Comment

The inspector accepts the assurances of the registered provider who stated that adequate staff will be available to care for children when required to meet the ratios specified in this regulation. The non-compliance identified under this Regulation on inspection has been adequately addressed

### 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) The following observations are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service:

#### Basic needs:

- There was a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in the care rooms of the service. Children were observed to be comfortable in exploring their environments, familiar with routine and secure in their relationships with staff members. Staff members were responsive to children's needs and requests, demonstrated familiarity with children by recalling their preferences and upcoming significant events, and provided comfort and encouragement to children regularly throughout the day while also meeting their basic needs.

- The staff members in the Wobbler room and the Toddler room were observed helping children prepare for mealtime, washing their hands and providing children with bibs. They created a relaxed atmosphere during mealtimes, talking to the children, praising their efforts to feed themselves and aiding when needed.
- Nappy changing took place regularly and in a timely manner when required. Older children were given prompts to use the toilet before transitions outdoors, with staff members also being responsive to children's cues to use the toilet at other times of the day.
- In both the Baby room and the Wobbler room children had access to their own individual cot for sleep. In the Baby room children were observed being placed to sleep when they exhibited signs of tiredness and the staff members in the Wobbler room stated that children could sleep earlier than scheduled if they appear to be tired.

### Supporting relationships

- Throughout the care rooms in the service staff members practice supported children's sense of belonging and connectedness. Individual care requirements and routines for younger children were on display in care rooms. Staff members demonstrated knowledge about children's preferences, likes and dislikes and incorporated this information into planning of activities. Two children were transitioning from the Baby room to the Wobbler room, and staff were observed to demonstrate awareness around their adaption to new routines. This practice supports children to feel safe and secure.
- Children's work and photographs were on display in care rooms, which support children's wellbeing by feeling valued and appreciated.
- Staff members in the care rooms were observed to work well together and supported each other in the care of the children, modelling positive ways of interacting with each other and the children. Staff members updated each other on the children's care throughout the day which ensured the children's care needs were met in a timely manner.
- The service used a software technology application (an App) to provide information to parents in relation to updates on eating, nappy changes, activities and sleep on a daily basis.

### Physical and material environment

- Defined areas of interest were available in Preschool room 1 and 2 which facilitated choice and child-led play.
- Preschool room 1 had a variety of materials and resources that would provide challenging, creative and enriching experiences for children.

- In all rooms, materials provided were accessible to children on low level shelves allowing children to easily choose toys and activities.
- Each room had age-appropriate low-level table and chairs. Highchairs were provided in the Baby room and Wobbler room. Adult sized seating was available in the Baby room and Wobbler room to accommodate adults to sit and comfortably hold children.
- All of the children attending the service enjoyed time in the services well-resourced outdoor play area on the day of inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Supporting relationships

1. Family walls that support children's sense of identity and belonging were displayed higher than children's eye level in all rooms, which prevents children from accessing or interacting with photographs of family.

#### Physical and material environment

2. There were limited sensory experiences for younger children in the baby room, wobbler room and toddler room. Materials available in these rooms were mostly plastic, some of which had no functionality as they were without batteries. These rooms did not have defined areas of interest to support a variety of play experiences. This noncompliance in relation to the Baby room was identified at the last inspection of the service and the registered provider stated in the corrective and preventative action plan submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate that new play materials had been added to the room however this has not been sustained.
3. The play kitchen in the Wobbler room was damaged, with no cabinet doors to open and close and the taps/faucet removed. There were no supporting play materials for the kitchen available to children on the day of inspection.

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

#### Corrective Action

#### Supporting relationships

1. Family wall pictures have been moved down so they are more accessible to children as some were out of reach.

## **Physical and material environment**

2. New equipment has been purchased for baby, wobbler and toddler room offering more sensory toys and different materials. Interest areas of play are now more defined in rooms.
3. Kitchen was removed and replaced with a new one with new kitchen equipment.

## **Preventive Action**

### **Supporting relationships**

1. Ensure all rooms continue to keep family wall at lower level for easier access for the children in the room and update as children move rooms.

### **Physical and material environment**

2. Reassess room equipment every 3-6 months to ensure replacements are made of those that are no longer working or in working order.
3. Continue to monitor kitchens in all rooms and replace if there are any breakages.

## **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence of family wall photographs repositioned.

Receipts for the purchase of new materials and photographs of new materials and play equipment.

Photograph of new play kitchen.

## **Summary Comment**

Based on the response received from the registered provider, the non-compliances identified under this Regulation on inspection have been adequately addressed.

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

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(2) A registered provider-

(a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016, or

(b) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016,

shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b) Throughout the care rooms in the service rest areas comprising of floor mats and cushions were provided for the children to take a break from activities during the day.

There were 2 separate sleep rooms in the service one located adjacent to the Baby room where 7 standard cots were available for the children attending the Baby room to use and a sleep room located off the main corridor where 10 standard cots were located at the service's where the children from the Wobbler room sleep at the designated sleep time after lunch.

(2) A large fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the rear of the service. The area is accessed from the rear of the main hallway in the service. The area is divided into 3 separate sections by fencing into defined areas which are allocated for use by the children accommodated in the individual care rooms. The area is predominantly surfaced with grass with safety surfacing in place underneath the large climbing frame. A range of age-appropriate play equipment were provided in each designated area including a large wooden climbing frame; a large, covered sandpit with plenty of sand, buckets, spades and diggers; playhouses; a range of ride-on toys and push along toys; slides and swings; rocking toys and balls. The area provided an abundance of space for free movement and running. All of the children attending the service enjoyed time in the outdoor area on the day of inspection.

### 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 doors leading into the service were appropriately secured. Entry to the service was accessible through a call bell at the entrance to Preschool room 1 and a second call bell which led into the main hallway of the service both of which were operated by staff members.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- Emergency exits were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

- Warm water and liquid soap were available at the sinks in the sanitary accommodation in the service to support the children in hand washing. The children in the Toddler room were observed to be facilitated in washing their hands after they returned from outdoor play and before they had their dinner.
- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The windows in the preschool rooms were open to facilitate the circulation of air.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

##### Safe Sleep:

- All children aged less than 2 years had access to a standard cot in the service to sleep in.
- Ten-minute sleep checks including the children's colour, position and breathing were conducted on all sleeping children in the service.

##### Fire Safety:

- Staff members were familiar with the safe evacuation procedures with children in the event of an emergency occurring on the premises. Fire exits were not obstructed.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. A nail which was protruding from a piece of wood located to the rear of the sandpit in the outdoor play area could potentially cause an injury to a preschool child.

#### Infection Control:

2. The paper hand towels in the sanitary accommodation were not hygienically dispensed. The rolls of paper were stored loosely on worktops and were subjected to repeated handling; this was inadequate for infection control purposes.
3. There were no hand drying facilities available in the staff bathroom.
4. A staff member was observed wearing seamed polythene gloves to change a child's nappy which are inadequate for infection control purposes.
5. A staff member from the Baby room was observed not to wash their hands or the children's hands following nappy changing.
6. There were no mattress covers on any of the 10 mattresses in the sleep room located off the main hallway, additionally there were no mattress covers on 4 of the 7 cots in the sleep room adjacent to the Baby room. This provided insufficient protection in the event of the mattresses getting wet or soiled.
7. A bin in use for disposal of soiled nappies which was located at the nappy changing mat next to the children's toilets was inadequate as it was not pedal operated and had to be opened by hand therefore increasing the risk of the contamination of surfaces.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective Action

#### General Safety:

1. The piece of wood has been removed entirely as it was damaged therefore no further exposure of nails.

#### Infection Control:

2. Paper towel dispensers have been replaced and are now in use.
3. Hand towel dispenser in staff room refilled.
4. Inappropriate gloves were removed from the service as adequate gloves were available for staff use.
5. All staff reread nappy changing policy to ensure it is being followed correctly.
6. Mattress covers were on premises but were not replaced after washing. All mattresses are now covered and replacements bought for those who didn't have a cover.
7. A new pedal bin has been purchased and replaced old bin.

## **Preventive Action**

### **General Safety:**

1. Check all outdoor equipment regularly to ensure no exposure of nails.

### **Infection Control:**

2. Paper towel dispenses to be checked regularly and replenished as required.
3. Ensure staff hand towel dispenser is replenished when required.
4. Only purchase appropriate gloves to ensure staff are wearing correct ones for all changes.
5. Ensure staff reread nappy policy on a regular basis to ensure it being followed at all times.
6. Staff are aware a mattress protector must be on every cot mattress at all times. Regular checks by management to ensure this is being maintained.
7. Replace pedal bin when damaged.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Receipt for the purchase of new cot mattress covers.

Receipt for the purchase of new pedal bin.

## **Summary Comment**

Based on the response, evidence submitted and assurances of the registered provider, the inspector has deemed that the non-compliances identified under this regulation have 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 including first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service as evidenced in the in-date FAR certifications provided for inspection in respect of staff members.

(2)(a) and (b) The first aid box was suitably equipped and safely stored in readily accessible positions on the premises, out of the reach of children.

### 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 was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. The records indicated that the most recent fire drill was conducted on 23/04/2023.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers were certified as having been serviced on 22/03/2023 and smoke alarms were serviced on the 28/04/2023.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

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

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (d) 1. The paint on the walls in the Baby room adjacent to the rest area was chipped in places with plaster exposed underneath which prevented the walls from being cleaned effectively.
- 2. A hole was present in the wall of the Afterschool/ Naionra room.

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

##### Corrective Action

- (d) 1. Chipped paint on walls was repainted.
- 2. Hole in wall was patched up and repainted.

##### Preventive Action

- (d) 1. Don't use double sided tape where possible to avoid this happening, check painted walls regularly to ensure there is no chipping of paint and if this occurs repaint as required.
- 2. New stronger doorstep was put in place to ensure this doesn't happen again.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of both walls repaired.

#### Summary Comment

The non-compliances identified under this Regulation on inspection have been adequately addressed.