

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015FL259
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ros-Eo Community Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Rush Community Centre, Upper Main Street, Rush, Co. Dublin
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<b>Eircode:</b>	K56 WF22
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Brian Doherty
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	11/10/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	33	PM	0
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Taaffe and Y. Kelly
<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
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### Description of service

Ros-Eó Community Preschool is conducted under the auspices of a community council's voluntary Board of Management which provides not-for-profit early years services, classes in adult education and other community initiatives in a community centre in the coastal town of Rush in north Co. Dublin. The service is registered to accommodate pre-school children aged 2 - 6 years on a sessional basis with eligible children participating in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme each weekday morning from 9.00am to 12.00midday and from 9.15am to 12.15pm for 38 weeks each year. School-aged children are not accommodated in the service.

Ros-Eó Community Preschool is conducted from 2 care rooms, Room 1 and Room 2, which are provided in the single-storey community centre located on the main street in Rush. The early years service also has occasional access to an additional spacious room within the building for physical and active play. There are two separate fully enclosed outdoor play areas located on either side of the building.

### Staffing

The registered provider is a member of the community council's voluntary Board of Management who is not present in the service on a daily basis and does not work directly with the children.

The service manager who is employed to coordinate the day-to-day operations of the early years service holds an appropriate childcare qualification and is available to assist with caring for the children when required.

Six further core staff members are employed to work directly with the children in the service, of whom 3 are employed to reduce the adult to child ratio, and when necessary, to work with children with additional needs, in posts funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.

In addition, three additional adults working in the service are participating in a community employment (CE) scheme or community work placement scheme, of whom 1 adult holds a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Two transition year students from a local secondary school were also present in the service in a supernumerary capacity on the day of inspection as part of work experience placements.

### 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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28. 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 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

(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 manager was the designated person in charge of the service and two named staff members were appointed to deputise when required.

(b) The service manager was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived at 9.30am and was present for the duration of the inspection.

(c) The service had a clear management structure in the service with clear roles and responsibilities outlined.

A total of 13 staff files were reviewed, maintained in respect of the registered provider, the service manager, 6 core staff members who care for the children, 3 CE scheme or community work placement scheme participants, and 2 transition year students.

(2)(a)(b) In respect of the 13 files reviewed, there were 2 written references available for the registered provider and for the 2 transitions year students and there were 2 written, validated references available for the 10 remaining adults.

(a) Twelve written references were from past employers.

(b) Fourteen written references were from sources other than a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 12 adults. A Garda vetting disclosure was not applicable in one instance due to the person being under 18 years of age.

(d) International police vetting was available for 3 staff members from the relevant countries in which they had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) Evidence was available to show that the service manager, 5 of the 6 core staff members, and 1 adult who was participating in a CE scheme all held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at QQI Level 6 on the National Qualifications Framework, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(4) Evidence was not available to show that 1 core staff member who worked directly with the children held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the NQF, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. It is acknowledged that this staff member had been issued with a letter on 14/10/2024 from the college she attended, confirming that her completed early years course work and assessments had been forwarded for QQI accreditation, with certificates expected to be issued in mid-November 2024.

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

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been carried out:

#### Corrective Action

(4) The Level 5 certificate was received and this was forwarded to the Inspectorate on 12/11/2024.

#### Preventive Action

(4) Ensure new staff have proof of completed training prior to employment.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- Copy of the outstanding qualification for the relevant staff member.

### Summary Comment

The inspectors reviewed the corrective action and evidence submitted by the registered provider following the inspection. The registered provider demonstrated that the non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(4) has been adequately addressed.

### 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) On the day of the inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service. Six core staff members and a CE participant who held an appropriate early years qualification were working directly with 33 children on the morning of inspection.

(3) The registered provider ensured that the correct adult to child ratios were maintained in the service.

- In classroom 1 there were 3 staff members caring for 14 children aged 2 years 10 months to 5 years. One of these staff members was employed to reduce the adult to child ratio, and if necessary to work directly with a child with additional needs in a post which was funded by the Minister for 3 hours each day as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme. In addition, a CE participant was also present in this room working under supervision in a supernumerary capacity and a transition year student was present as part of a work experience placement.
- In classroom 2 there were 3 staff members and an appropriately qualified CE participant caring for 19 children aged 2 years 11 months to 5 years. Two of these staff members were employed to reduce the adult to child ratio, and if necessary, to work directly with children with additional needs in posts which were funded by the Minister as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme. A transition year student was also present in this room in a supernumerary capacity as part of a work experience placement.

All of the children were present in the service on a sessional basis.

### 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 are examples of how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service:

#### Basic Needs of the Children:

- The staff members were observed engaging warmly and respectfully with the children throughout the inspection, responding to the children in an interested and engaged manner. The staff members ensured children's needs were promptly met and were observed regularly updating each other on the needs and preferences of the children in their care.
- The service promoted healthy eating and children brought their own healthy packed lunches and drinks to the service. The staff members fostered the children's independence by offering them support and encouragement as they opened their own containers and yogurts. Staff members chatted with the children and were on hand if a child needed assistance, providing praise for their efforts. The children's water bottles were stored on a low level trolley in each room, available to the children to take should they feel thirsty at any stage throughout the session. The service placed a focus on recycling and on composting appropriate waste food, with a wormery provided to enhance the children's interest in nature.
- The staff members were observed to be sensitive and responsive to the children's cues to use the toilet, with supervision and assistance provided when necessary. The small number of children in nappies were changed when required.
- During the inspection some children were observed to spontaneously sit and rest on the soft couches and cushions provided in the reading areas in both rooms.
- All children were afforded the opportunity for a change of environment to the outdoor play area during the inspection and were dressed appropriately prior to going outside. Children were given a choice as to

how long they wished to play outdoors. The children were also facilitated to engage in active play indoors in a separate spacious unoccupied room in the premises during the inspection.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members were observed engaging with the children using welcoming facial expressions and warm vocal tones and showing a keen interest in what each child was doing. The children were observed to engage comfortably with the staff members present and sought out staff members for assistance and support when necessary.
- The staff members demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's needs (both individual needs and, for some children, their additional needs) to support each child's inclusion and involvement in activities. The staff members were observed displaying anticipation and positive approaches when children experienced challenges within the environment and when children chose to change or opt out of activities. Child-led play was facilitated as evidenced by all the children playing in individual and small group activities and being involved in a broad range of table top and floor activities when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and during the inspection.
- Staff members communicated with parents and guardians on a daily basis, both informally during drop off and collection, and through an electronic application programme (an App) in relation to the curriculum, learning stories and their child's activities in the service. Parents were facilitated to remain with their child in the service until the child was settled in the environment. The inspectors were informed that parents were invited to come in and spend time reading the children's favourite stories in the service in the language used in the family home. This supported inclusion and nurtured a link between the service and home. Family photographs were on display in both care rooms which helped to bridge the gap between the service and home.
- Familiar routines had been established and children's transitions were supported as evidenced by the visual and verbal strategies implemented by staff members during the session. These included verbal signposting, timers, countdowns and tidy-up songs to signal and prepare children for up-coming activities and movement.

### Physical and material environment:

- Play materials and equipment were organised to be visible and easily accessible to the children on open-fronted low level shelving which facilitated choice and child-led play experiences.

- The two care rooms were laid out to be appealing to children with clearly defined interest areas established including a home corner, shop, arts and crafts area, construction area and library, all of which were equipped with a broad range of supportive play materials and equipment. Books and wooden play materials were particularly evident in the service.
- A range of specialist Montessori equipment was provided on open shelving in both care rooms.
- Sensory play was facilitated. For example, when the inspectors arrived to the service children were already engaged in play with bowls of pasta, paint and glitter and were also engaged in water play at the low level sinks provided in both care rooms.
- Wall space was used to display samples of the children’s curricular-themed art work, including autumn scenes and Halloween.
- Two separate outdoor play areas were provided on either side of the building, enclosed by the boundary walls of the premises and by perimeter fencing. Both spaces were well maintained and surfaced in impact-absorbents material which offered the children opportunities for physical activity and energetic play. Play equipment included a climbing wall, ride-on toys, slides, outdoor wooden kitchens, lidded sand tables and wall mounted guttering for pouring activities.

### 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 following are examples of the measures undertaken by the staff members to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service:

#### General Safety:

- The premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and for the duration of the inspection. Digital keypad locks were used to restrict access to the early years service. Magnetic door locks were in place, out of the reach of children, on the care room doors and also the door leading from the corridor to the entrance hallway.
- The outdoor play areas were fully enclosed by the service walls and the boundary fencing.

- The water temperature in the sanitary accommodation and at the sinks in the care rooms did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children in attendance. The inspectors were informed that the warm water supply was thermostatically controlled.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The play materials and equipment available in the two care rooms were stored on stable-based low level shelving which reduced the risk of the furniture from toppling over and causing injury to a child.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children during the inspection. A safety gate was in place at the doorway which reduced the risk of children gaining access to items that would pose a risk to their safety, including the kettle, cutlery and sharp utensils.

### Infection Control:

- There was running warm water, liquid soap and paper hand towels provided for hand hygiene at the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation of the service and the sinks in the care rooms. The children in the service were encouraged by staff to wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet, and after outdoor and messy play.
- A refrigerator was available and used to store the children's snacks provided by the parents. This reduced the risk of bacteria growth in perishable food items.
- Documented up to date cleaning records were maintained on the premises.
- The outdoor sand tables were fitted with secure lids to prevent contamination by animals and birds.

### Administration of Medication:

- The computer application provided in the service's electronic tablet devices facilitated staff members to compile a record of the details of any medication administered to a child in attendance, should the need arise, and to share this information with parents or guardians.
- No children required medication to be administered on the day of inspection.

### Fire Safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

### Outings:

- The inspectors were informed that children were not taken on outings from the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The service maintained accurate details of all children in attendance during the inspection. The children were electronically entered as present on the mobile tablet devices used to record attendance, noting each child's arrival and departure times.

(3)(a)(b) A system was in place to ensure that no person other than the children and their parents or guardians, employees, approved students or authorised visitors could enter the service. A visitor's log was available and the inspectors recorded their attendance on the premises and the purpose of the visit.

### 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) Three core staff members held in-date First Aid Response (FAR) training and a further two staff members were due to complete FAR training on 17/10/2024, as evidenced in documentation provided for inspection. On review

of the service's staff roster and the staff files, it was evident that the registered provider ensured that a person with FAR training was at all times immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)(b) The first aid boxes available in the service were suitably equipped and stored in conspicuous locations on the premises and were available for the children in attendance, in the event of an emergency.

### 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 fire drills which had been completed in the service. Based on the records maintained and as reported by staff members, fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 07/10/2024.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers and the smoke detection system were both certified as having been serviced on 28/05/2024.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(4) The notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire in Room 2 was partially covered by clothing hanging in front of it which prevented the sign from being easily seen or read. Furthermore, the procedures notice was balanced on top of a fire extinguisher rather than being securely attached to the wall while the accompanying floor plan contained no information to guide staff members on suggested routes to take in order to evacuate the building in a safe manner.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following corrective actions and preventive actions have been carried out:

### Corrective Action

(4) This was discussed with staff to ensure notices are not covered for health and safety reasons. All new procedure notices were applied by a fire safety company and a new evacuation procedure notice fixed to wall.

### Preventive Action

(4) More staff awareness to ensure all notices are visible.

### Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographs of new fire safety notices in place in the service.

## Summary Comment

The inspectors reviewed the corrective action and evidence submitted by the registered provider following the inspection. The registered provider demonstrated that the non-compliance identified under Regulation 26(4) has been adequately addressed.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for 44 pre-school children attending the service on a sessional basis. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/07/2024 to 27/03/2025.