

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015GY141		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Hands Pre-School		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Cahergal, Tuam, Co. Galway		
<b>Eircode:</b>	H54 WF60		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Helen Mannion		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	17/07/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM 7
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Meehan.		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector.		
<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

The service is in a rural area of Galway County called Cahergal. This pre-school service offers a full-time day care from 7.30 am to 06.30 pm, part time service from 9 am to 2 pm. An Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care programmes from 9.15 am to 12.15 pm, Monday to Friday, are also offered. The service caters for children aged between 2 to 6 years of age. There is one large playroom, kitchen and sanitary facilities. The main hot meal is supplied by an external company and is re heated in the service kitchen. There is a secure outdoor play area to the front door of the premises for children's play, exploration and fresh air.

### Staffing

There were 5 adults employed in the service directly working with children which included the registered provider.

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

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non -

compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered 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*

*(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 ensured that there was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise.
- (b) The registered provider was the person in charge and was on the premises and on site for the duration of the inspection.
- Staff rosters indicated that the designated person or deputy were available on the premises when the pre-school children were present.
- All 5 adult files were reviewed which included 4 adults directly working with children and the registered provider.
- (2)(a)(b) Ten of the validated references on file in respect of the 5 adults were from past employers or a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 5 adults. All garda vetting documentation was dated within the last 3 years as per the regulatory notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
- (d) Police vetting disclosures were required and available for 1 adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years.
- (4) Five adults who were working directly with children, held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), at a Level 5 to 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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.*

*(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 that an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children were maintained.

(2) On the morning of the inspection, there were 14 preschool children with 3 adults working directly caring and supervising them.

- 6 children were aged between 2 and 3 years,
- 8 children were aged between 3 and 4 years.

In the afternoon, there were 7 preschool children with 3 adults working directly caring and supervising them.

- 2 children were aged between 2 and 3 years,
- 5 children were aged between 3 and 4 years.

(8)(a) The service is a registered as a full day care service. Documentary evidence indicated that at least 2 adults were on the premises when the pre-school was operating.

## 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

(19)(1)(a)

#### BASIC NEEDS

- The healthy eating policy and a 3-week menu was available for parents and guardians to view on request. The menu was on display on the notice board on the entrance into the service. The food observed on the day of inspection was healthy and nutritious.
- At 11 am children had their snack consisting of cheese, cracker, sandwiches, yogurts, and fruit. The main hot meal of the day was supplied by an external caterer and reheated on site. The cottage pie was served at 12 pm.
- Drinks table with water beakers or bottles were available for children to self-serve in the playroom and in the outdoor play area, when required.
- Age-appropriate crockery and plates were offered to children at meal and snack times.
- Six children attending wore nappies and were changed on a regular individual basis and each child's dignity was preserved.
- Most of the children were toilet trained and either toileted independently or with some assistance by staff, when required.
- The service had stackable beds and clean linen for children to rest during the day and there was evidence of 10 minute physical sleep checks carried out on children.
- Children's behaviour was consistently managed in a positive manner by staff, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement.
- All children had the opportunity to go outside for fresh air and play activities.

#### SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS AROUND CHILDREN

- The adults were observed to be interested in the children, spoke in low tones, listened to them, and responded to their requests. The staff interacted in a positive way with the children e.g., they sat at

children's level, maintained good eye contact, showed empathy and a good understanding of each child, and were observed to be caring and supportive in their interactions with the children.

- A key worker system was in place for each child; to support their development and to inform curriculum planning. The role of the key worker was also to liaise with parents and guardians.
- Communication with parents and the child's information was provided at collection times, via text messages, by phone calls, by email and by a multimedia application for interactive communication with parents and guardians.
- Adults were observed to work effectively as a team carrying out their daily tasks and communicating effectively for each activity.
- Transitions between activities for children were calm and smooth during the day, which in turn lead to a calm environment and relaxed children.
- Children were observed playing in the outdoor area, at table top activities, playing in the clearly defined interest areas and engaging with other children and adults.

### 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) There was a person trained in first aid responder on the roster during the operation of the service. Three adults were trained in first aid responder.
- (2)(a) There was a first aid box with the content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position in the service office.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service's insurance specifying the address of the service, catering for a full day care service for 22 children at any one time, with an expiry date of 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2025, was available.