

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KE147
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Memory Lane Playschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Room 3, The Mill, Celbridge, Co. Kildare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	W23 P6P5
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Caroline Pierce
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	30/11/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	17	PM	11
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co. Kildare, W91X38W.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	T. Duignan
<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>	n/a
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### Description of service

Memory Lane Playschool opened in 1999. The childcare service provides sessional education and care to pre-school children aged 2 to 6 years of age.

The service provides morning and afternoon sessional childcare and education to children from Monday to Friday. The service is located in a spacious room on the first floor of a multi-use community-based building located in Celbridge. The service can access the use of an outdoor play area and the large indoor hall when the weather does not allow outdoor play. Parking and set down facilities are available.

### Staffing

There were three adults present on the day of inspection and they were all working directly with the children. The registered provider was not present.

### 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 and safety. 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.

### Additional Information

1. A written immediate action notice under Regulation 25(1) – First Aid was issued to the registered provider by the Early Years Inspector on 30 November 2023.
2. A written response was received by the Early Years Inspector on 30 November 2023 from the registered provider in relation to the immediate action notice. The response was accepted by the Early Years Inspectorate.

### 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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
  - (b) The named person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- The records of the four staff members were reviewed.

(2)

- (c) Garda Vetting disclosure was available for four adults.
- (4) Four adults employed and working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(2)

- (a)(b) Seven of the eight references from a past employer and reputable source other than a past employer reviewed that were inspected were not verified.

One adult did not have a second verified reference from a past employer or reputable source other than a past employer on file.

(d) Police vetting was not available for one adult who had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

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

The registered provider stated in the written response submitted that:

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

- (2)
- (a)(b) All references have been verified by the registered provider and this is evident on the reference with a date and signature.
- (d) Police vetting is now on file.

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

- (2)
- (a)(b) Eight validated references
- (d) Police vetting document.

### Summary Comment

The written response and the documentary evidence has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 9.

### 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) There were thirteen children attending the service being supervised directly by three adults.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the morning.

### 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-
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The pre-school was well resourced with a wide variety of age-appropriate play and learning equipment and materials that provided a stimulating and curious learning environment for the children. All equipment and materials were accessible to the children and grouped to encourage children to use them independently. The tables and chairs provided were child sized which enabled all children to sit comfortably for snack and tabletop activities. All equipment and furniture were observed in a clean and well-maintained condition.

The large indoor hall and outdoor area were shared spaces. They were large spaces that enabled the children to run freely, and the staff members organised playground games for the children.

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

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy in place. Some of the children brought in their snack and the service provided food for children also. The snack served included buttered crackers, slices of cheese, bread sticks, cucumbers slices and orange segments.

Fresh drinking water was readily available in the pre-school throughout the morning. The staff sat with the children and encouraged social interaction and conversation. The children were provided with plenty of time to enjoy their food.

### 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 door to the service was secured and controlled by staff members to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access. The toys and equipment observed were in good condition and working order. Cleaning agents and equipment was stored out of reach of the children. The staff were familiar with the foods that were a potential choking hazard such as grapes and popcorn. It was observed that grapes, when served to the children for snack, were cut in half to mitigate the risk of a child potentially choking.

The staff completed indoor environmental risk assessments daily and there was a system in place to manage maintenance issues when they arose.

##### Infection Control:

There was an infection control policy in place. Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the

disposal of used tissues. Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environment which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

**Administration of Medication:**

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The staff members were familiar with required safe practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored.

**Safe Sleep:**

A comfortable rest area beside the reading area in the care room was available to any child who wished to take a break from activities or rest. The rest area included two child sized arm chairs and a rug.

**Fire Safety:**

The staff members were familiar with the fire evacuation procedures from the service. Fire exits were not obstructed.

**Outing:**

The service does not conduct outings.

**Non-Compliance Information**

**Fire Safety:**

1. Fire drills were not carried out in the service on a monthly basis. The last fire drill completed for the morning service was 23 October 2023 and 20 September 2023 for the afternoon service. This creates a potential safety risk for the children attending the service.

**Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

The registered provider stated in the written response submitted that:

**Corrective & Preventive Action**

**Fire Safety:**

1. Fire drills were completed have now been documented and on file

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**Fire Safety:**

Fire drill records for morning and afternoon sessions.

**Summary Comment**

The written response and the documentary evidence has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 23.

### 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.*
- (2) *Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.*
- (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.*
- (4) *A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a), (b) The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.
- (4) The registered provider confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

### 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) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the care room.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available to the children attending the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1) Persons were trained in in First Aid Response (FAR) for children and were not immediately available to the children attending the service.

A written immediate action notice under Regulation 25(1) – First Aid was issued to the registered provider by the Early Years Inspector on 30 November 2023.

A written response was received by the Early Years Inspector on 30 November 2023 from the registered provider in relation to the immediate action notice. The response was accepted by the Early Years Inspectorate.

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

The registered provider stated in the written response submitted that:

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

(1) First Aid has been completed with all staff members in the service on the 9 December 2023. The certificates are on file. FAR training is arranged for one staff member commencing 15, 16, 17 January 2024

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

Three first aid certificates for staff members.

Booking email for FAR training commencing 11 January

#### Summary Comment

The written response and the documentary evidence has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 25.

### 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 firefighting 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)(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment in the premises. Firefighting equipment was last serviced in August 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the care room.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service; however, it was not up to date. The last recorded fire drill took place on 23 October 2023.
  - (b) There was not an up-to-date record available detailing the maintenance of the smoke/fire detection system in the service.

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

The registered provider stated in the written response submitted that:

##### Corrective Action

- (1)
- (a) Fire drills for the morning and afternoon sessions have been completed and the records are on file.
  - (b) The maintenance record of the fire detection system in the building is on file. The smoke alarm was last serviced on 2 November 2023.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

- (1)
- (a) Fire drill records.
  - (b) Smoke alarm maintenance record.

#### Summary Comment

The written response and the documentary evidence has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 9.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2024. The insurance provided cover for 22 children.