

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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|--|--|----|--------|
| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>   | TU2015KK026  |    |        |
| <b>Name of Service:</b>  | First Impressions  |    |        |
| <b>Address of Service:</b>   | Willow Pond House, Tinvaun, Stoneyford, Kilkenny.  |    |        |
| <b>Eircode:</b>  | R95 HRSV   |    |        |
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>  | Anne-Marie O'Shea  |    |        |
| <b>Service type:</b>   | Sessional  |    |        |
| <b>Date of Inspection:</b>   | 25/05/2023   |    |        |
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b>  | AM   | 16 | PM N/A |
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>  | Tusla Child and Family Agency,<br>Early Years Inspectorate,<br>Ely Hospital,<br>Wexford. |    |        |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>   | E Mc Garry   |    |        |
| <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

This sessional service is located in a rural setting just outside the village of Stoneyford in county Kilkenny. A service is provided to children aged between 2 and 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Thursday between 9.00 am and 12.30 pm for 41 weeks of the year. The premises is a purpose-built single-storey facility built on the grounds of the registered providers home.

### Staffing

There were two staff present on the day of inspection including the registered provider who were working directly with the children. Both staff held the minimum of level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

### 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:

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations.

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment,

Regulation 11 Staffing levels,

Regulation 19 Health, Welfare, and Development of the Child

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child

Regulation 25 First Aid

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, 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

Following a discussion with the registered provider and on review of documentation in the service it was established that the service employed three staff including the registered provider. These three staff files were examined on the day of inspection.

(1)(a)(b)

The registered provider was the person in charge on the day of inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2) (a) (b)

There were three written and validated reference available on file from a previous employer. There was one written and validated reference available on file from a reputable source.

There were two written references on file from reputable sources for the registered provider that did not require to be validated.

(c)

There was a copy of Garda vetting on file for all three staff members.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as the no staff had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six months.

(4)

The new staff members held a minimum of level 5 and above in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

### 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)

There were at all times an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the early years service.

(2)(3)

During the morning session there were 16 children in the care of 2 staff including the registered provider was also works directly with the children.

The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of staff to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 was maintained at all times during the inspection.

### 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 registered provider ensured that each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were engaged in a variety of activities during the inspection including eating together and practicing songs for their graduation. Interactions between children were well managed by the staff who were caring for them. For example, during free play time in the outdoor area, children were well supervised by staff. The area was well laid out allowing children to play in hidden areas of interest that were in ear shot of the staff who were looking after them. This allowed the children to break into small groups and enjoy developing their imaginations. For example, a group of children were observed pretending to be dinosaurs under the jungle gym.

There was a curriculum in place and observations had been carried out on individual children. There was evidence of short, medium and long-term curriculum planning on display in the early years room.

Children were encouraged to be independent appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, children used the toilet independently and were given help if required. Children were encouraged to put on their own shoes and wellies.

During activities staff used opportunities to extend children's learning and development. For example, during circle time the children sang a song all about the planets. Many of the children showed a great interest in the subject of space and took great pride in naming many of the planets they had learned about for the inspector.

The early years room was well resourced with a range of toys and equipment for the children's learning and enjoyment. For example, there was a dolls house, a kitchen, dolls and buggies, and shelves containing a selection of jigsaws, books and plastic bricks. There was a display on the wall explaining all about the solar system. There was a cosy rest area with cushions beside a corner window area. Children were observed relaxing and picking various story books to read.

The outdoor area was well laid out and resourced with a range of interesting play equipment for the children. For example, staff had helped to make a lake of caterpillars on a raised tabletop that could hold water. The caterpillars consisted of soil, sand and grass seed put into ladies tights that had been knotted at intervals to resemble caterpillars.

There was a large poly tunnel beside the play area with seeds from pink lady apples the children had brought in growing in pots with the children's name on them.

There was a good supply of ride on toys for the children to enjoy. The outdoor area has views across the countryside. The children could see a block of stables with horses looking out from their stalls. There were farmers driving machinery past the early years service. Many of the children attending the service, were from farming backgrounds and were observed to enjoy running to the fence to wave at the passing farmer and identify the tractor that they were driving. Staff were observed to encourage the children's emerging interest in the different types of farm machinery in use on their own parents farms.

### 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 had a lock which could be secured when the children were in the early years room. The outdoor area to the side of the service was safe, suitable and secure. All cleaning agents were stored on shelves which were inaccessible to children.

##### Infection control:

The service had an infection control policy. The service appeared to be clean and well maintained. For example, cleaning schedules were maintained daily. There were no maintenance requirements observed on the day of inspection. There was warm thermostatically controlled warm water available in all wash hand basins in the service. There was liquid soap, disposable paper towels and foot pedal bins available throughout the service. Children were observed washing their hands before snacks, after using the toilet and after messy play.

## 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 immediately available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises and was available to the children attending the early years service.

## 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

There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place in the service on 23 May 2023.

(b)

There was a record stating the smoke alarm and firefighting equipment was last serviced in June 2023.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position at the main entrance hallway of the service.