

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KK101
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Green Acres
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Rathpatrick, Slieverue, Co. Kilkenny
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<b>Eircode:</b>	E91 EV74
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Gretta McGovern
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	18/02/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	27	PM	28
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford City.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. Bradshaw
<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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Green Acres is a full day care service also offering part-time and sessional care to children from 0 to 6 years of age.

This service is operational from 07:30 to 17:30, five days a week.

The service is purposely built adjacent to the registered provider's home in rural Co. Kilkenny. There are three care rooms: the main room, the junior Montessori room, and the Montessori room. There is also a dedicated sleep room off the main room.

There are two covered outdoor areas at the side of the building with a large garden to the rear of the property

The registered provider also operates a school-age service.

### Staffing

The registered provider works in the service in a management capacity and is available to offer support if required. There are nine staff including the registered provider employed in the service. On the day of the inspection, there were seven staff members including an auxiliary staff member and six care staff including the manager, a deputy manager.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9(1)(2)(4) – Management and Recruitment;  
Regulation 11(1)(2)(4) – Staffing Levels;  
Regulation 15(1) – Record of Preschool Child;  
Regulation 16(1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)(i) – Record in Relation to Pre-School Service;  
Regulation 25 – First Aid;  
Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures;  
Regulation 28 – Insurance.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation and regulation 16.

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 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)(b)(c)

The service had a designated person in charge and a deputy designated person in charge. Both were available on the day of the inspection. There was a clear management structure with staff members' roles displayed in the hallway of the service, for example, the Health and Safety officer and the Inclusion officer and the Fire Safety officer were displayed.

(2) The files of nine staff members were reviewed.

(a)(b) Validated references were available to the inspector.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) Eight staff members who work directly with the children had documentation available to demonstrate that they held 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.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) Police vetting from another jurisdiction was not available for one staff member.

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

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

The registered provider stated that police vetting has been sought for the staff member. They stated they will be more vigilant regarding recruitment process in the future ensuring all vetting is received prior to a new staff member joining the team

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Evidence that police vetting has been applied for was submitted to the inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The action submitted by the registered provider, has addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection and the implementation of these actions will be reviewed on 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) On the day of the inspection there were 28 children attending the service supervised by 6 staff members.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

### Compliance Information

A sample of the children's registration records was reviewed. All of the details required in (1) ( a-i) were completed in these records.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that records about the following were maintained as required:

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and every other employee was displayed in the hallway of the service.
- (b)(c)(d)(e) The following information was included in the statement of purpose document available in the parent handbook which was emailed to parents on enrolment: the type of service, the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services, details of the adult: child ratios in the service, the type of care or programme provided in the service and the facilities available.
- (f) The service fee policy was displayed in the hallway and the parental handbook, including the opening hours and fees charged by the service.
- (g) The service maintained the policies, procedures and statements required by Regulation 10.

(h) A copy of the attendance records was available and reviewed on inspection.

(i) A staff roster was available to the inspectors.

### Non-Compliance Information

(j) A sample of five medication records was reviewed and of these four were not fully completed. These records did not have parental initials indicating that parents had been informed of the administration of medication.

(k) A sample of six accident and incident records were reviewed and of these three were not fully completed. For example, children's surnames and date of birth were not completed and the required signatures were not in place.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that all staff have been re-trained in the importance of completing all areas of the accident and incident forms and the administration of medication forms. They have stated that more supervision has been put in place by management to oversee the completion of these documents correctly.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence was submitted.

### Summary Comment

The action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified on inspection and the implementation of these actions will be reviewed on the next inspection

## 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) The registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid was available to the children at all times. Three staff had first-aid responder training.

(2) The first aid box was conspicuously stored in the main room with an additional portable first aid kit.

### 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)(b)

The records reviewed demonstrated that the last fire drill was completed on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2025. The firefighting equipment was last serviced on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2024 and the smoke alarms were serviced on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2025. The service had a named Fire Safety Officer and a weekly log of the fire alarm tests.

(4)

The evacuation procedure was displayed in each room.

### 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 for up to 40 children at any one time from the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 to the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.