

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015KY081				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Maureen's Pre-school				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Milltown, Ballymacaquinn, Abbeydorney, Tralee, Co. Kerry				
<b>Eircode:</b>	V92 YK5X				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Maureen Spillane				
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional				
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	24/09/2024				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>18</td> <td>PM</td> <td>None</td> </tr> </table>	AM	18	PM	None
AM	18	PM	None		
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	N. Reidy				
<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

Maureen's Pre-school is a private early years service that is registered to provide care for children aged between 2 years and 6 years. Currently the service caters for children between the age of 2 years 9 months and 5 years. The service is registered as operating 1 session between the hours of 09:00 am and 12 mid-day. The service operates from 1 playroom on the ground floor of the community centre. The children have access to an outdoor play area located to the side of the building and to the spacious indoor hall at alternate times to other community groups that use it.

### Staffing

There are 3 adults currently employed in the service to work daily with the children, that includes the registered provider and 1 adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme

### 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 inspections 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

Since the last inspection, the service has worked with Better Start, the National Early Years Quality Development programme.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff member 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 is the designated person in charge and there is a named deputy.  
(b) At all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the registered provider and the named deputy is on the premise.
- (2)  
The registered provider confirmed that 3 adults were employed in the service.  
The recruitment records in respect of these 3 adults were the subject of the inspection.
- (a)  
Six written references and validations were on file from a past employer.
- (b)  
Not applicable as the six references required were from past employers.
- (c)  
The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in respect of one adult. The Garda vetting on file for each of the two adults recruited since the last inspection was completed on 02/09/'23 and 25/11/'23 respectively
- (d)  
Not applicable, the 3 adults did not reside outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 5 and above.

### 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.*

*(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*

*(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Throughout the period of inspection, the registered provider did ensure that there was an adequate number of adults caring for the children attending the service.

(3) There were 2 adults caring for 18 children aged between 2 years 9 months to 5 years attending the service on a sessional basis. The adult child ratio was correct and maintained.

(8)(c) Not applicable as the service does not operate single-handedly.

### 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:

- (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 did maintain the following records in writing: -

- (h) details of daily attendance by each pre-school child attending including the arrival and departure time.
- (i) details of the staff roster on a daily basis including the arrival and departure time.
- (j) Completed records were maintained of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service. The last recorded entry was for a child in receipt of medication on the day of the inspection.
- (k) Completed records were maintained of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school attending the service. The last recorded accident was 6/03/'18.

### 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

##### Basic Needs

- The staff caring for the children were kind, caring and respectful towards the children, they spoke to the children in low soft tones of voice.

- The staff interacted in a positive way with the children for example they sat at the children's level, maintained eye contact, sat with the children on the floor and at the tables supervising and assisting them during playtime.
- The children were observed playing and interacting happily singly, in pairs, in small groups and at the large group circle time.
- The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the playroom, they had unlimited access to the toys stored on the low-level open shelving and on the floor.
- Throughout the session the adults positively and calmly reminded children to "be careful" when moving about in the room.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets located within the playroom.
- The staff informed the inspector of the children's individual toiletry needs.
- The inspector observed the children present on the day were independently using the toilets and the staff reminded them to wash their hands afterwards.
- The children sat at the low-level tables and on the low-level chairs for the mealtime observed. The children had plenty of time to eat their food with the adult's supervising and assisting the children as was required.
- The parents of the children attending provided all food consumed by the children at the mealtime for example sandwiches, a variety of fruit, cheese and yogurts. The children had water to drink in their individual re-fillable water bottles. The inspector was informed that drinking water was supplied at the sink in the playroom and the registered provider supplied bottled water in the fridge.
- The children independently accessed their lunches from the fridge and when finished places any rubbish in the bin and returned the lunch bags to their individual cubbies.
- The staff were mindful of children's comfort and assisted in changing an item of clothing. The children's spare clothes are kept on the premises.
- The children availed of play time in the spacious hall during the inspection. They played ball, on the ride on toys and on the rocking horses.

### Supporting Relationships

- The staff were mindful and supportive of children transitioning within the service, they facilitated children to sit alongside the staff members at large circle time.

- The registered provider informed and demonstrated to the inspector the electronic records shared with the parents of the children attending that kept parents informed about their child's time spent in the service, the activities the child participated and photographs in line with same.
- The parents were spoken to at collection time in a friendly and welcoming manner.

### 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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access in.
- The fire exit door opening out to the main building with the low-level push bar openable handle was fitted with a working alarm.
- The fire exit doors in the hall with the low-level push bar openable handles were fitted with working alarms.
- The doors to the storeroom and the double doors leading to the main building entrance area were secured whilst children played there.
- The steps to the stage in the hall was cornered off with a secure gate that rendered the area inaccessible to the children when playing there.
- The gate in the outdoor play area was secured with a high-level closure device.
- Cleaning products observed on inspection were stored out of the reach of the children.

##### Infection Control:

- The children were observed washing their hands prior to the mealtime and after using the toilet.
- There was an instantaneous supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels at the low-level sinks in the sanitary accommodation to facilitate effective handwashing by the children. A pedal operated lidded bin was in use for the disposal of used paper hand towels.
- The low-level tables were cleaned down prior to the mealtime.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

1. Popcorn was observed at the mealtime posing a choking hazard to children.
2. There was a hole in one of the radiator covers in the playroom posing an injury risk to children.
3. There were sharp corners on a low-level table in the hall posing a risk of injury to the children should they collide with it.

### Infection Control:

4. There was a push button opening device on the lid of the bin in use by the adults and the children in the playroom posing a risk of cross infection.
5. On speaking with staff, plastic disposable aprons were not used for children who required a nappy change posing a risk of cross infection. It was observed a supply of plastic disposable aprons were provided in the service.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. Popcorn has been added to the list of items not permitted in the Healthy Eating policy, it will not be permitted in the pre-school at any time.
2. The radiator cover was replaced.
3. The hall is checked each day, the doors and alarms are checked and the hall is cleared, there will be no tables present that may be hurtful for any child.

### Infection Control:

4. The bin in the pre-school room has been replaced.
5. The plastic aprons are now in place in a holder located above the changing area. At all times the aprons are available for staff to wear when changing nappies.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

1, 2, & 3

The statements and photographs have been accepted as evidence.

##### Infection Control:

4. & 5.

The statements and photographs have been accepted as evidence.

#### Summary Comment

The requirement has been met.

## 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 did ensure that there were staff available at all times with appropriate first aid responder (FAR) training. The FAR certifications on file indicated that the 3 staff members held current up to date training.
- (2) (a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box available to the children attending. The box was wall mounted high up on the wall out of the reach of the children in the playroom.
- (b) The first aid equipment was available to the children at all times

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certification for the service was on file and displayed in the playroom.

The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- the contact details for the insurance provider
- the name and address of the service insured
- the categories of insurance cover for the service that is sessional care with afterschool.
- the number of children covered by the insurance was for 22 children.

The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27/03/'25.