

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

|  |   |    |       |
|--|---|----|-------|
| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>   | TU2015KY114   |    |       |
| <b>Name of Service:</b>  | Sneem Community Preschool & Crèche  |    |       |
| <b>Address of Service:</b>   | North Square, Sneem, Co. Kerry  |    |       |
| <b>Eircode:</b>  | V93 RW72  |    |       |
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>  | Catherina Jonas   |    |       |
| <b>Service type:</b>   | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional  |    |       |
| <b>Date of Inspection:</b>   | 02/04/2025  |    |       |
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b>  | AM  | 18 | PM 13 |
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>  | Early Years Department, Child & Family Agency, Hospital Grounds,<br>Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co Cork P81 PD78 |    |       |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>   | M. O Reilly   |    |       |
| <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>  | N/A   |    |       |

### Description of service

Sneem Community Preschool & Crèche is an established early years service that first opened in 2010. It is registered to accommodate a maximum of 30 children aged from 0 to 6 years. Daily opening hours are from 9am to 5:30pm Monday to Thursday and from 9am to 1:30pm on Friday. It is also registered to provide a school aged care service.

The service is situated within a purpose-built, two-storey building situated in the village of Sneem, Co Kerry. The service accommodates a creche room on the ground floor with a separate sleep room, toilet and nappy changing facilities. There is also an entrance hall, office, and laundry room. Situated on the first floor is a large preschool room, children's toilets and nappy changing facilities, storeroom and kitchen/staff room. The children have direct access to a secured outdoor play area.

### Staffing

The 8 staff included the person in charge and 1 relief staff member. The person in charge is office based and is not directly involved in the care of the children. There were 2 of the 8 staff employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. The registered provider is not office based. The 7 staff who work directly with the early years children all hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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 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) There was a named person in charge and a deputy available to deputise as required.  
 (b) The person in charge and the deputy were present on the premises on day of the inspection.  
 (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service.  
 (2) Documentation was assessed in relation to the requirements of Regulation 9 for the newly appointed registered provider and the 2 staff who had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection dated the 14th May 2024, the following records were available for the 3 adults:  
 (a) Of the required 6 references, 3 references were from previous employers with the required records of validation on file.  
 (b) Of the remaining references, 3 reference were from another source other than a previous employer with records of the required validation on file for 1 reference.  
 (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of the 3 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. There were 4 renewed Garda vetting from existing staff.  
 (4)  
 There was evidence that the new staff member that worked directly with the children had attained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework for Qualifications.

### Non Compliance Information

(2)  
 (b) There was no record of validation on file for two written references for 1 adult.

(d) A police vetting record was not on file for 2 adults who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

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

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) received from the person in charge the following was stated:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)

(b) Copies of the validation of two references for 1 adult were received and deemed satisfactory.

(d) A copy of the required police vetting record for 1 adult was received and deemed satisfactory.

Inspectorate received a copy of the receipt of application for a police vetting record as evidence that the application had been made. This will be reviewed on the next inspection

#### Supporting documentation submitted

(2)

(b) Evidence of the validation of the two references for 1 adult were forwarded to the early years inspector.

(d) A copy of the required police vetting record was forwarded to the early years inspector. The inspectorate received a copy of the receipt of application for police vetting record as evidence that the application had been made

### Summary Comment

Correspondence was received and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 9 (2) (b) of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

Reg 9(2)(d)

While a copy of one processed police vetting record was received. The processing of the second police vetting record was not completed at time of finalising this report. This issue remains outstanding.

This will be assessed at the next inspection to ensure regulatory compliance.

## 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)  
The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in each room on day of the inspection.

(2)  
During the period of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations.

#### Creche Room

There were 4 children present in the morning and 3 children in the afternoon. There was 1 child aged between 1 and 2 years and 3 children aged between 2 and 3 years with 2 adults in attendance.

#### Preschool Room

There were 14 children in attendance in the morning and 10 in the afternoon. The children were aged between 3 and 6 years with 4 adults in attendance in the morning and 4 in the afternoon until 2pm.

The adult child ratio was correct.

## 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

(1)(a) to (i)

A sample of 11 of the children's registration forms. were reviewed and all were found to contain all of the elements of information as required by Regulation 15(1) (a) to (i) inclusive.

## 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.*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) The attendance of each child on a daily basis was recorded.
- (i) A weekly staff roster was maintained in the service. The staff roster indicated the names of the staff, the arrival and departure and lunch time staff break each day.
- (k) The service had records detailing any accidents or incidents that had occurred in the service. A sample of the accident and incident records reviewed, each had been counter signed by the child's parent to evidence that the information had been relayed.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(a) There were no Curriculum vitae on file for 1 adult and there was only a partial Curriculum Vitae on file for another adult in the service.

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

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) received from the person in charge the following was stated:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)

(a) The required Curriculum Vitae for the two staff members were received and deemed satisfactory.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

(1)

(a) A copy of each of the two Curriculum Vitae were forwarded to the early years' inspector.

### Summary Comment

Correspondence was received and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 16 (1) (a) of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

## 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 service promoted healthy eating and the food provided by the parents and guardians for the mid-morning snack and lunch was observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Independent use of the toilet was encouraged. A staff member was observed supervising and assisting where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying, and the children were supported and encouraged prior to eating, after toileting, messy play and outdoor play.

- Shortly after eating lunch, the children in the creche room were facilitated to sleep as needed in the designated sleep room. The children who did not wish to sleep were accommodated to participate in activities in the creche playroom.
- There was adequate space in the care rooms to accommodate a variety of play activities.
- Children had sufficient space to move about freely indoors and outdoors. Transitions were made as smooth as possible when children moved from their room to the outdoor play area. The children from both rooms were observed playing in the outdoor play area on day of inspection.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members were observed calm and relaxed whilst facilitating play opportunities and carrying out caring duties. Only low tones were used, and good eye contact was maintained with the children during one-to-one engagement.
- Minor behavioural issues were dealt with promptly by staff.
- The staff members were observed to work well together and the children were familiar with the routine.
- Staff were observed to interact in a caring manner with the children building their confidence and communication skills within the setting. The mid-morning meal was observed to be a social occasion, as the children chatted freely in a relaxed environment with their peers and with the staff and were offered appropriate assistance by the staff for example, the opening of lunch boxes, cartons and peeling of fruits.
- During observed tabletop activities, the children were supported and encouraged by the staff, who acknowledged their efforts and achievements for example during the completion of paintings during art and craft and items completed during block building time.

### Physical and Material Environment

- Both rooms in operation were child friendly, bright, and laid out with special interest areas with materials largely accessible to the children.
- The creche room had adequate space for children to crawl and walk. Colourful, sensory, and sound making age-appropriate play equipment was available. Other play equipment included books, blocks, handheld toys, balls, dolls and a wall mirror.
- The spacious preschool room had a variety of play-based materials and equipment that offered stimulation, exploration, and imagination. They were positioned at an accessible level with well-defined interest areas and open shelving which nurtured independence, facilitated choice, and encouraged curiosity, spontaneous play and movement.

- The preschool room afforded children the ability to move freely, as they participated in various activities, such as art and crafts, imaginary play and tabletop activities.
- The layout of the room promoted the independent access to all the materials to foster children’s autonomy and freedom of choice.
- Since the last inspection in May 2024 a corner of the pre- room had been sectioned off to develop a separate designated sensory area/space. This area had its own entrance door and was well ventilated with two openable windows. The area had soft padded mats were on the floor with soft seating. This area will be further developed as an area for one child or a small group of children that require a quiet calm area to unwind or require 1:1 with a staff member. The service plan to further develop this sensory area with the assistance of Kerry County Childcare
- There was a designated outdoor play area provided beside the premise. The outdoor play area had an all-weather surface. A number of resources providing opportunities for practicing gross motor skills such as cycling, kicking, throwing sliding were available in the outdoor play area. Equipment such as see saws a selection of push and ride on toys and play balls were available to 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

- All food and snacks consumed on the premise is provided by the parents/guardians.
- It was observed that the children attending full day care service had a hot meal served at lunch time.
- The children in the creche and preschool room had access to their own water bottles outside of mealtimes.
- Healthy, nutritious lunches were observed being eaten at the mid-morning snack in both rooms. The mid-morning snack was served on a rolling basis according to the wishes of each child in attendance in the preschool room. It was observed to be comprised of filled sandwiches, crackers, fruit, cheese, and yoghurts. The preferred drink was water.
- Perishable food items in the children’s lunches were stored in the service fridge.

## 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:

- On the inspector's arrival at the service, the main entrance door was found to have been secured and was maintained secure when not in use.
- There were no cleaning agents accessible to the children.
- The first aid boxes were appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- Unsupervised access to a children's toilet facility and storeroom beside the sleep room was prevented through the securing of these doors when the facilities were not in use. A key was stored on a high-level wall hook and a shooting bolt at adult height was on the toilet door.
- Low-level glass panels were brightly painted, to reduce the risk of a child sustaining a collision injury in the creche and sleep room located on the ground floor.
- Restrictive opening devices were in place on the low-level cupboards and fridge in the creche.
- The emergency fire exit door was unobstructed in the sleep room.
- The stairwell was well lit with non-slip surfacing. Two handrails installed at child and adult level were in place.
- There were no cables or trailing flexes within the children's reach in each of the playroom.
- The outdoor play area was enclosed and found adequately secured with high metal fence and gates, and the building.

##### Infection Control:

- Suitable handwashing facilities was available in the playrooms and adult toilet facilities. Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap and disposable paper towels were in place. Recorded water temperatures in the wash hand basins in the children's toilets were 28°C on day of inspection.
- Handwashing by the children was observed before mid-morning snack, after toileting and messy play and outdoor play.
- New pedal operated bins were purchased following the last inspection and were in place in the playrooms and toilet facilities.

- The premises was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition and corresponding cleaning records were available. The openable windows allowed for natural light and ventilation.
- Tables were observed to be sanitised before snack time.
- Within the nappy changing areas, there was individually labelled storage for the children's toiletries.

### Safe Sleep

- Ten-minute sleep checks were maintained for each sleeping child by the adults monitoring the sleeping children.
- The children aged under 2 years rest needs were facilitated in one designated sleep room for the children beside the creche room. There were an adequate number of standard cots with safety mattresses for children under two that required a sleep with individual accompanying bed linen.
- Each of the safety mattresses was covered with a waterproof mattress cover.
- The air temperature reading of the sleep room was within the required range of between 17°C to 19°C.
- Children over the age of 2 years had access to low beds for sleep as required. No child was observed sleeping in the preschool room at time of inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

#### Fire Safety:

- There was wooden barrier located on the inner side of the emergency fire exit door in the creche room. The half sized-timber gate structure was constructed to prevent the children from pushing the steel bar located at child height, when pushed, opens the emergency fire exit door.

A written referral by the Inspectorate to the Fire Safety Officer following the last inspection dated the 14 May 2024 was issued. On inspection it was found that this issue had not been reviewed by the Fire Safety Department since the last inspection and a written reminder of the referral was sent following this inspection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) received from the person in charge the following was stated:

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

- The Fire Safety Officer visited the service on receipt of the referral on the 1 May 2025. The person in charge in a written statement to the Inspectorate, stated that the Fire Safety Officer verbalised that the service could continue to use the wooden gate in front of the emergency fire exit door in the creche, once the gate is easily opened by a child, for example that it is not locked.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

- The written statement from the Fire Safety Officer to the Inspectorate stating that a visit was planned on foot of the referral, to the service, on the week beginning the 28 April 25, was accepted as evidence.
- The written statement from the person in charge of the outcome of the Fire Safety Officers visit to the service is accepted as evidence.

### Summary Comment

- Correspondence was received and deemed to meet the requirement of the issue documented under Regulation 23, General Safety, of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

## 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 5 staff members held current up to date training.

- (2)
- (a) The first aid boxes were safely stored out of children's reach in the service. The first aid boxes were stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises
  - (b) The fully equipped first aid boxes were available at all times to adults if in the event that a child may require treatment.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

(b) From visual inspection the premises appeared safe and secure. The entrance door was adequately secured to prevent unauthorised entry and unsupervised exit of children from the service.

(c) The two playrooms were provided with a combination of natural light, through windows and artificial lighting. Adequate lighting was also in place in the sanitary facilities and passageway, as supplied through artificial lighting. Light fittings were noted to have protective covers installed. The openable windows in the playrooms allowed for a supply of fresh air. Toilet areas were ventilated by means of mechanical ventilation. The vents were visible clean and in a proper state of repair.

(d) The premises was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition and corresponding cleaning records were available.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(e)  
In the children's toilet facility beside the preschool room, while there were two children's toilets, there was only 1 wash hand basin in place when 2 wash hand basins were required. On day of inspection there were 14 children present. The ratio is 1 wash hand basin to every 11 children. A second wash hand basin is required.

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

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) received from the person in charge the following was stated:

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

(e)  
Funding is in the process of being requested from Pobal in order to install a new wash hand basin (as well as plumbing system). In the meantime, a wash hand basin located in the preschool room will be designated for the children to wash their hands after going to the bathroom.

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

(e)  
The written statement from the person in charge is accepted as evidence that the work is planned to take place.

## Summary Comment

Once the funding is received, a plan is in place to install the wash hand basin in the toilet facility beside the preschool room. Photographic evidence will be forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate when the work is completed. This issue remains outstanding.

This issue will be assessed at the next inspection to ensure regulatory compliance.