

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LH030
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Greenacres Playschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Sandpit Hall, Sandpit, Termonfeckin, Drogheda, Co. Louth
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A92 VW64
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Brenda Kavanagh McGrane
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	12/05/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	32	PM	No.
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child Wellbeing Centre, Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. Flood
<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

Greenacres Playschool was established in 2010 as a privately-owned and operated sessional pre-school service which participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service caters for a maximum of 38 preschool children aged 2-6 years and operates from 9:00 to 12:00 each weekday.

This service operates from within a community hall which is located in the small village of Sandpit, County Louth. The premises consist of 2 playrooms, storage facilities, sanitary areas and access to an outdoor play area on the grounds of the building.

### Staffing

The registered provider and 4 staff members work directly with the pre-children who attend the pre-school service.

### 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 9,11, 19,22,23,25 and 26 ; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 would like 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

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. The person in charge who is also the registered provider, and the deputy person were both on the premises when the inspector arrived on the premises and were present throughout the inspection.

Following a review of the service file, staff roster and a discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed to the inspector that there was one new member of staff employed in the service since the last inspection.

The staff file for the new staff member was viewed on the day of the inspection:

(2)(a) & (b) There were 2 written and validated references available, one from a past employer and one from an alternative source.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for the new member of staff.

(d) Following a review of the staff files presented for inspection, documentary evidence of international police vetting was not required at this time.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the childcare qualification observed on file for the new staff member met the minimum requirement to enable them to work directly with the preschool children.

### 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) During the period of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(3) On the day of the inspection when the inspector arrived at the service there were 2 rooms in operation which included:

- **Large Room** : There were 3 adults (including the registered provider) working directly with the 21 pre-school children present, aged between 3 -5 years.
- **Small Room**: There were two adults was working directly with the 11 pre-school children present, aged between 3-4 years.

### 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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

##### Basic Needs

- The personal care provided met the basic needs of the children attending the service e.g., hands were washed, and noses wiped as necessary.
- Independence with toileting was promoted for all children while discreet supervision was also provided to give gentle reminders with hand hygiene. Those children who required assistance with toileting or nappies changed were supported with toileting and changed as necessary. Good interactions were also observed between the staff and the children during nappy changing procedures.
- All children attending the service brought their own lunches and snacks from home. The staff encouraged the children to tidy up when lunch time was finished. Children who required additional time to eat their lunch were afforded the opportunity and were also provided with assistance as required.
- Individual inclusion plans were available in the service and were being implemented in line with the children's individual needs. The staff present were obviously familiar with the interventions that were being implemented in the service based on each child's developmental stage and need. This ensured that each child learning and development was supported in the service.

##### Supporting relationships

- The adults throughout the service were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children in both rooms.
- A key worker system was in operation in the service.
- The staff reported that communication with parents occurs regularly and that a variety of methods are used including verbal engagement at collection and drop off, social media, small messaging service, written letters and the parents' communication board which is located at the front gate of the service.

## Physical and Material Environment

- Child sized furniture and equipment was in use throughout the service.
- A variety of age-appropriate materials and equipment were available in the care rooms that support many areas of development such as fine and gross motor skills, role play, speech and language and sensory development.
- Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in all rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children.

## Programme of Activities:

- Artwork was visible such as, sponge and shape painting, pelican and penguin colouring pictures, sticking and gluing pictures and football flags for the county team which the children had made earlier in the morning which they were then given to take home.
- The children were observed to engage in a variety of activities that promoted many areas of development including singing, nursery rhymes, outdoor play, story time and a practice for the upcoming graduation.

## 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 snacks/ lunches were provided by parents and were appropriately stored in the children's identifiable bags/ lunchboxes in the refrigerators on the premises. A healthy eating policy was in operation in the service and the children were observed to eat a variety of food e.g., fresh fruit, sandwiches, and crackers. Potable drinking water was available for the children to access as required. The lunch break was observed to be sociable with the children engaging in conversation with their peers and the staff present.

### 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

It was observed that the registered provider has taken the following measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service including:

##### General Safety:

- The external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Documentary evidence of daily risk assessments were evident in the service.
- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.
- The outdoor area was enclosed and secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised.

##### Infection Control:

- There was a constant supply of thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and single use paper hand towels available to support effective hand washing in the service.
- Good environmental cleaning practices were observed during the inspection, with tables being wiped down prior to lunch, snack times and after activities.
- Up to date documented cleaning records were on display in each of the care rooms. Staff were able to verbalise correct cleaning processes for toys and equipment.

#### Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection.

##### General Safety:

1. A free-standing unsecured gate was accessible to the preschool children in the outdoor area and was a potential injury risk.

##### Infection Control:

2. The single use paper hand towels used by the staff and children in the nappy changing area of the service were not hygienically dispensed from a paper towel dispenser and were observed as loose sheets of paper towels sitting on top of the toilet cistern. This practice is a cross-contamination risk.

3. One staff member did not wear a disposable apron during a nappy changing procedure. Additionally, the nappy changing procedure on display in the nappy changing area did not detail the requirement to wear a disposable apron or the wash the children's hands. It is acknowledged that the staff member and the child's hands were washed after the nappy changing procedure.
4. A wicker, unlidged bin which is unsuitable was observed in use for the disposal of used paper hand towels in the nappy changing sanitary area.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Actions

##### General Safety:

1. This gate has now been removed from the play area.  
The gate if returned for the childrens' use will be secured with adequate supports.

##### Infection Control:

2. As the single use paper hand towels were not hygienically dispensed a new dispenser has been ordered and installed in staff toilet area.
3. Disposable aprons provided for nappy changing. Nappy changing Policy and Procedures amended. Notice placed on wall and all staff have been trained.
4. Wicker basket has now been removed and replaced with foot pedal bin in sanitary area.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic evidence of new dispenser
- Revised Toileting and Nappy changing policy and procedure submitted to the office of the early years inspectorate.
- Photographic evidence of the new pedal bin submitted.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance. Based on this information remedial actions have been taken to achieve regulatory compliance under Regulation 23.

### 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) Documentary evidence was provided to demonstrate that a member of staff with an up to date FAR qualification is available to the children at all times.
- (2)(a) and (b) The first aid boxes were available in each of the care rooms and were stored in a conspicuous location where they are easily accessible in the event of an emergency.

### 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)(a) A record was maintained of the fire drills which had been completed in the service. A fire drill which included a full-service evacuation was carried out during the inspection and was completed quickly and efficiently.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment was last serviced on 08/2022 and the smoke alarms on 27/10/2022.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency was displayed in the service.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

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

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated, and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained, and repaired, as required, and*

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (d)
1. In the sanitary areas the sinks did not have a backsplash and in a number of areas the paint on the wall was lifting. This did not allow for effective cleaning.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d)
1. All sinks in each sanitary area now have backsplashes installed.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliance together with photographic evidence. Based on this information remedial actions have been taken to achieved regulatory compliance.