

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK066
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Elmwood Community Pre School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Gerald Griffin National School, Loughill, Co. Limerick
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V94 EK19
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Colette Moloney, Anne O'Brien
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	05/06/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM	No.
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years inspectorate, Tusla, Estuary House, 1 <sup>ST</sup> Floor, Henry St, Limerick
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Ellen Browne
<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

The service caters for children aged 2 – 6 years for 3 hours a day (09:30 – 12:30 hours), Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. The service is operated from a designated room at the local national school located in the village of Loughill, Co Limerick. The service comprises of one playroom room, sanitary facilities and two outdoor play areas. The service is registered to provide care and education for 21 preschool children.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge and is working directly with the children in the service daily. There is a second person available two to three days each week but is available on site in the national school if required at other times.

### Methodology

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 24, 25, and 26. 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 wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the *registered provider, 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,

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the registered provider was present, and the staff roster indicated that this person or their deputy were always available on the premises.

(c) There was 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 member of the team.

(2)(a) All staff files were reviewed. There were two written and validated references available for all staff members employed to work at the service.

(b) References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of A Garda Síochána were available for all staff members working at the service. Garda vetting for the staff members was dated within the last three years as per the regulatory notice, EYI-RN12.3 renewal of garda vetting, published by the inspectorate in September 2023 and effective from 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2024.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff member who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures were carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4) The adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) On the day of the inspection there were ten pre-school children and two adults on the premises for the sessional service. The adult child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

### 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 ensured that each child's learning and development was facilitated within the daily life of the service. A healthy eating policy was in place and children brought a healthy snack each day with them to the preschool. Children's drinks were stored in the door of the fridge in the preschool room and were always accessible to the children. Drinks were taken outside to the play area when children were outdoors. All the children were toilet trained and had unrestricted access to the bathroom facilities. Help was offered if required. Nappy changing facilities were available if needed. Hot water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were accessible in the bathrooms to ensure hygienic washing of hands. A child-size couch was in the library area of the room. This provided the children with a rest space if they needed quiet time away from the general play areas. The room had a supply of tissues and wipes, and pedal operated, lidded bins were accessible for the safe disposal of waste. Children had daily access to the school yard with a grassy area and an all-weather enclosed outdoor space too. Opportunities to run, climb, crawl and use the ride on bike and trucks were available in these spaces, with low level climbing frames, tunnels, slides for challenging play and garden seats to rest if required.

The staff interacted with the children in a caring and respectful manner. Staff were observed conversing with the children at their level, using a soft tone of voice and staff responded promptly to their cues for assistance. The staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the children's personal interests and capabilities. Staff supported the children to be independent in their chosen play-based activities both individually and as part of a group

##### **PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:**

The indoor environment was well laid out with a good range of developmentally appropriate and challenging experiences for the children. Low level tables and chairs provided a space for the children for tabletop activities and for dining at mealtimes. Play equipment and materials were displayed on open low-level shelving and were grouped to provide specific interest spaces. Some of the areas included a construction area, a home corner equipped with a play kitchen, food props, dolls and prams, an imagination play area with dress up clothes, a rest /relaxation reading corner with a soft couch located next to a book stand, an art/craft area and a sensorial and

messy play area. Children’s family photographs and educational posters were displayed on the walls of the room at children’s eye level.

The outdoor areas of the service offered the children space for physical play, for movement and for exploration. The children were observed moving freely in the indoor and outdoor environment throughout the morning.

### 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 service ensured that the safety of the children was paramount, and the facility was regularly checked to ensure proper safety standards were maintained both internally and externally. On arrival to the service, the main entrance door to the school premises was secured. This prevented any unauthorised entry to the school and any unsupervised exit of children from the service. All outdoor play areas were safely secured and were surrounded by walls and fencing. All emergency exits and fire doors were unobstructed

##### Infection Control:

A detailed infection control policy was in place and the registered provider and staff were familiar with the procedures outlined in the policy. Staff and children were observed washing their hands before their break and after play and toileting. The playroom, sanitary facilities and premises appeared clean and well maintained. All tables’ surfaces were cleaned before break time and after play activities.

##### Medication:

There was a policy on administration of medication and staff knew the requirements and had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on administration of medication.

##### Fire Safety:

There was evidence of the fire safety policy being implemented. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system were serviced annually, and the maintenance records were on file for inspection.

##### Outing:

The outing policy was in place and the staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to outing from the service. No outing had taken place in the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Each child was checked in by an adult on arrival to the service. At home time each child was checked out by an adult. The time of arrival and departure was documented for each child.

(3) No person other than a child attending the service, a person dropping or collecting a child, an employee or an unpaid worker could enter the premises without prior approval.

(b) All visitors were signed in and out, documenting their time of arrival and departure and the reason for their visit. The name of the person who admitted them to the building was also recorded.

### 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 and the one staff member had up to date first aid responder training on file.
- (2)(a) The registered provider ensured that a suitable equipped first aid box for children was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the preschool.

### 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.*
- (2) *The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
  - (a) *a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,*
  - (b) *an employee, and*
  - (c) *an authorised person.*
- (3) *A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation*
- (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)(b) A record of the maintenance of the smoke alarm system and firefighting equipment in the service were available for review by the inspectorate. The smoke alarm system and firefighting equipment were serviced in April 2025.
- (4) A fire action notice was clearly displayed in the service.

## Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) Fire drills were not carried out by the service every month and more frequently if necessary. The records demonstrate that only two fire drills took place from January to June 2025, and these were dated 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2025 and 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2025. From September to December 2024 only two fire drills were practised, and these were dated the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2024 and 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2024.

This posed a risk to the safety of the children and staff attending the service.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has stated that:

A fire drill took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2025. Fire drills will be conducted monthly in Elmwood Preschool.

The updated 'Fire Drill Log' is displayed and the service plans to review and update the policies/logs more frequently.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted

## Summary Comment

The evidence submitted was reviewed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures point (1)(a).