

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK084
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Herberstown Community Childcare
-------------------------	---------------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Herberstown National School, Herberstown, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick
----------------------------	--

<b>Eircode:</b>	V35 WY80
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Kate Clifford
-------------------------------------	---------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	05/10/2023
-------------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM	No.
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E 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
---------------------------------	----------------

### Description of service

This community based preschool service opened in 2008 and it operates from a modular unit located on the grounds of Herberstown National school. It provides a sessional service for children aged between 2 and 6 years of age from 09.00 to 12.00hrs for 38 weeks of the year. The modular unit consists of 2 playrooms, bathroom facilities for the children and adults, main entrance hall, an office and outdoor facilities for the children.

It caters for 22 preschool children at any one time.

The service offers a breakfast club and a school aged service to the school aged children from the Herberstown National school.

### Staffing

There were 5 staff members including the person in charge present on the day of inspection and they were working directly with the children.

There was 1 additional staff on an employment scheme present in the service.

The staff working directly with the children had an appropriate 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 24, 25, 26, and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed significant risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 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 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

(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 designated person in charge was present on the day of the inspection. There was a second person available to deputise if needed.

(b) The staff roster indicated that the manager or their deputy was always available on the premises.

(2)(a) Two written references were available for each staff member working at the service. All references were validated.

(b) All references were from each person's previous employers or from a previous school or college.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the 5 staff members and 1 adult working at the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff who had lived overseas for longer than 6 months.

(4) The 5 staff working directly with the children at the service had 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.*
- (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) The manager of the service ensures that at all times the correct number of staff were rostered to work at the service. On the day of the inspection there were 5 staff present with 18 preschool children for the morning session. The adult/child ratios were correct.
- (3) The registered providers ensured that at all times the number of staff present in the service met the requirements of the regulations

### 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

##### (1)(a) BASIC NEEDS:

The services objective was to ensure that each child's learning, development and well-being was supported, taking all children's individual interests, needs and stage of development into consideration. There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service to encourage and educate the children about the importance of good nutrition. The parents supplied healthy snacks and drinks for the pre-school children. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator until required each day. A rolling lunch break was in operation for the children to choose when they would like to have their food. A member of staff sits with the children at break time. Childrens drinks were stored out of their bags and were easily accessible to them throughout the morning.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets which were located next to the main preschool room. Foot pedal operated lidded bins were used for the safe disposal of used tissues. A nappy changing facility was available if required. Staff were available to assist children at all times if needed. There was a couch in the smaller playroom for the children to relax and have some quiet time away from the main playroom.

A large outdoor play area was used by the children for long periods each day. Here children had lots of opportunity for active movement and exploration.

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

The modular unit had two rooms in operation a main playroom and a smaller room. These spaces were inviting and welcoming and contained many interest areas for the children. Low level tables and chairs were accessible for dining and for tabletop activities. Imaginative play areas with dress up clothes, play kitchen and a home corner were available. A reading area with soft seating and a wide range of books, a construction area with building materials and an art and craft area with paints, brushes and paper were also provided in the room.

All equipment was stored at children’s eye level and was well labelled. Childrens artwork was visible around the room. Children were observed directing their own play, working in small groups and staff were observed joining with them when invited.

The facility had a large outdoor play area where children had an opportunity to play in all weather conditions. The outdoor area provided opportunities for fresh air, discovery, movement, exploration and activities exclusive to the outdoors. A space for jumping, running, climbing, ball games, balancing were also accessible. A covered area in the playground provided shelter for the children in all weather conditions. Children were observed playing in a large sandbox which was open for sensory play .

## 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.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Fire Safety:

A fire drill for this September preschool year has not been carried out to date.

#### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Fire Safety:

The fire safety drill for September was completed the week following the inspection which was dated the 5<sup>th</sup> of October .

Monthly fire drills will be completed.

The service had discussions with staff on how to safely carry out fire drill particularly with the new children in the group.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Fire Safety:

No.

#### Summary Comment

The action as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 fire safety has been adequately addressed. This will be assessed at the next inspection.

### 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) A staff member checked in and checked out every child to the service when they arrived and when they left the premises. The staff documented their arrival time and their departure time each day.

(3)(a) The service ensured that only children attending, the person who drops and collects children and employees are allowed entry to the premises.

(b) All visitors to the service must be signed in and signed out by a staff member.

### 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) There were 5 staff members on duty with an up-to-date certificate in first aid response training.

(2)(a) There was a well-stocked first aid box located on the premises.

(b) The first aid box was readily available and easily accessible if required.

### 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) Fire records indicated that fire drills had taken place regularly up to June 2023.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment was available on the premises with the most recent service carried out in September 2023.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed on the wall at the entrance to the main Preschool room.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) There was no maintenance record available of the most recent servicing of the smoke alarm system for the service.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(b)

The smoke alarm system is scheduled to be serviced in November 2023 by a reputable company.

This will be done on a yearly basis going forward.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

No

### Summary Comment

This requirement under Regulation 26 Fire safety point 4 remains non-compliant until the action as stated by the registered provider is completed and evidence such as the certificate of servicing for the smoke alarm system has been submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

## 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 a current insurance certificate which outlined that adequate insurance was available for 25 preschool children to attend the service. The insurance cover commenced on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2023 and will expire on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

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

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

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (c)
1. The nappy changing unit located in a small modular unit in the outdoor area was cold and recorded 16 degrees which was below the recommended room temperature of 18 to 21 degrees Celsius.
- (d) The outdoor play area was poorly maintained and much of the wooden play equipment was in a poor state of repair.
2. The all-weather ground surface was unclean in many areas with dirt and moss accumulated particularly under the climbing frame.
  3. Play equipment such as the wooden house the timber was broken and damaged with a nail visible. The paint work was chipped in many areas.
  4. There was a broken storage box which posed a safety risk to the children and staff.
- (e)
- The nappy changing room was poorly maintained and untidy.
5. There was a hand operated bin for the nappies which posed the risk of cross infection to the staff.
  6. There was no supply of paper towels to dry the hands after handwashing.
  7. The nappy changing policy to guide the staff when changing a nappy was not visibly displayed.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (c)
1. The heater will be turned on to ensure the temperature in the nappy changing unit is between 18 to 21 degrees Celsius and this will be checked regularly to maintain the correct room temperature.
- (d)
2. Weeds in the outdoor surface were removed and outdoor surface was swept. Outdoor surface will be cleaned and tidied up.
  3. The wooden truck was dismantled, and all broken wood was taken away from the service.

4.The broken storage box was removed from the area.

(e)

Nappy changing unit is being maintained and tidied and a new nappy changing bed was obtained.

5.The hand operated bin was removed and replaced with a pedal operated bin for nappy changing.

6.Paper towels are now in place.

7.The nappy changing policy is visibly displayed for staff.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

No

### Summary Comment

The actions as stated by the registered provider in relation to the non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 Premises have been adequately addressed. This will be assessed at the next inspection.