

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK093		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Kilfinane Playschool CLG		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Low Bridge Road, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick		
<b>Eircode:</b>	V35 DX54		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Martina Connery		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/10/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	35	PM 12
<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		
<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>	Not applicable		

### Description of service

This community based preschool service opened in 2014. It provides a sessional and part time service for children aged between 2 to 6 years of age from 08.45 to 13.30hrs for 38 weeks of the year. This service operates from a purpose-built facility, located in the village of Kilfinane, Co. Limerick.

The service has 2 designated pre-school rooms, bathroom facilities for the adults and children, an open office, a kitchen /storage room and reception area.

There are enclosed outdoor play areas to the rear and front of the premises. It can cater for 44 preschool children at any one time. The service offers a school aged service to children from the local National school.

### Staffing

The service currently employs 7 staff including the person in charge/service manager. There were 7 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection including the manager. All staff hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework. The registered provider does not work directly in the service and was not present on the day of inspection. There was documented evidence in the service outlining the continued professional training and education undertaken by all the members of staff.

### 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, and 24.  
A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 Record of a preschool child.

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) The person in charge was present on the day of the inspection. A person to deputise if needed was also available.

(b) The staff roster indicated that there were sufficient staff attending the service every day from time of opening to time of closure.

(c) There was clear evidence in the way of a documented roster that outlines a clear management structure, their lines of authority and specific roles and the responsibilities of each member of staff.

(2) All 7 staff files were reviewed on the day. Each staff had the required documents in place.

(a) Two written references were available for the staff working at the service.

(b) References were from previous employers or from reputable sources.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all the staff employed to work at the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for 2 staff members working at the service who had lived outside the state for longer than 6 months.

(4) All the staff had the appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education. A staff member has also completed the LINC programme, a course designed to enhance the inclusion of children with additional needs in the service.

### 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 4 staff working directly with 14 preschool children present in the Little Acorns playroom and 3 staff with 21 children present in the Busy Buds playroom for the morning sessional ECCE service.

There were 4 staff available to supervise the 12 children who remained on at the service until 13.30hrs.

At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

### 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 sample of 10 children’s registration forms were reviewed. The service had a record in writing containing the following particulars for each of the children.
- (a) The name and date of birth of the child.
  - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service.
  - (c) provision to record 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 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 received by the child.
  - (i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

### 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 services objective was to ensure that each child’s learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. There was a healthy eating policy in place to encourage and educate the children about the importance of good nutrition. The parents supplied healthy snacks and drinks for the pre-school children. Information was shared with the parents in the parent handbook on how to prepare varied and nutritious snacks. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator if required.

Children had unrestricted access to the toilets which were located next to the playrooms. Hot water, liquid soap and paper handtowels were accessible to ensure hygienic hand washing. Foot pedal operated, lidded bins were used for the safe disposal of used tissues and handtowels. There were child friendly visual aids to help the children to wash their hands effectively.

A change of clothes was available for all children if needed. Protective clothing was available for children when engaging in messy play activities.

The rest areas with comfortable seating and cushions was accessible to all children in each of the playrooms.

The staff responded to the children's cues for assistance in a prompt and sensitive manner. The children were supported as they played individually and as part of a group. Children spend long periods outside every day at the service.

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

The physical and material environment of the service was carefully planned and organised to ensure each child's learning was facilitated. The indoor environment in the 2 playrooms had many interest areas well developed, included lots of imaginative play spaces with dress up outfits, home corners, construction play areas and opportunities for art and craft activities all accessible. Children's artwork was displayed on the walls of the service. The service follows the principle that exposure to the natural outdoor environment and natural materials such as sand play, water play, gardening/planting are beneficial for the early learning and development of young children. In outdoors areas children spend long periods running, cycling, playing games and playing in small groups or on their own. There were many opportunities to learn about risk and from risk and challenge their own capabilities within safe limits such as the climbing frame with steps and slide, wooden bridge with a climbing wall and raised areas for balancing. Lots of ride on toys were available to use in the larger open space. A large sand pit provided lots of entertainment.

## 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.