

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LM035
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Manorhamilton Childcare Services CLG
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Bee Park Community Centre, Main Street, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim
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<b>Eircode:</b>	F91 HCD9
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Pat Rynne
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	25/10/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	56	PM	23
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L Costello and N.McEndoo.
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors

### 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

Manorhamilton Childcare Services CLG is located adjacent to the Bee Park community centre in the Leitrim town of Manorhamilton. The service is registered to provide a full day care facility for 94 children aged 0 – 6 years. The service operates from 07:45am to 6pm weekdays, which includes a sessional service from 09.15 – 12.15pm. A school age service is also provided. The service occupies two separate sections of a purpose built, two story community centre building. The main crèche contains two ground floor playrooms and a third playroom at first floor level. The sessional service operates two rooms at the opposite side of the centre building. The crèche includes a sleep room for babies, a kitchen for preparing children’s meals and other relevant ancillary facilities.

### Staffing

On the day of inspection there were seventeen staff working in the service, fourteen staff working directly with the children. The person in charge worked in the office, there was one cook and one office administrator.

### 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 Management and Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing levels, Regulation 17 Information for Parents, Regulation 19 Health Welfare and development of the child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, safety and welfare of the child, Regulation 25 First Aid, Regulation 26 Fire safety measures and Regulation 32 Complaints. 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.

## Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to service on the day of inspection. This related to the water temperature in the sanitary area. The temperature was in excess of the recommended 43 °C. Once brought to the attention of the person in charge immediate action was taken and the temperature was reduced to the required level.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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.

(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) (b).

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required. There is a clear management structure in the service including room leaders, deputy manager and person in charge.

(2) (a) (b).

The records of eleven adults that had been employed since last inspection were reviewed.

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all eleven adults.

- (c)  
A garda vetting disclosure was available for all seventeen staff employed in the service.
- (d)  
International police vetting required for one adult who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months was available for inspection.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were completed prior to any adult being appointed, assigned or allowed access with a child attending the preschool service.
- (4)  
Ten of the adults whose files were reviewed had attained major awards in Early Childhood care and education at level 5 on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirements.

## Non-Compliance Information

- (4) One adult who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months did not have the required international police vetting available for inspection on the day.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

A certificate of police vetting for this staff member is now on file. An amendment has been made to our standard induction check list to flag this.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence submitted.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider to address the non-compliance in relation to regulation 9 found on inspection have been reviewed by the inspectorate. This regulation is now compliant.

## 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.*

*(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*

*(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

### Compliance Information

- (1)  
The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were always working directly with the children. On the Inspectors unannounced arrival, to the service there were 13 staff providing direct care to 59 children. Two additional adults were providing relief cover for staff breaks.
- (2).  
The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.
- (8)  
The registered provider ensured that there were at least 2 adults on the premises at all times when children were present in the service as evidence in sample attendance records reviewed.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 17 – Information for parents

*A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that parents and guardians received all necessary information in relation to regulation 16 (a-c) on enrolment to the service.

The registered provider has also provided information notice boards at the entrances to the service, these notice boards include the statement of purpose, how to make a complaint, the menu plan, fees, opening hours, the adults working in the service and their qualification. The service also displays their child safeguarding statement for the attention of parents and guardians.

## 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*

*(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

#### Compliance Information

All rooms in the service were decorated with evidence of the curriculum, children's Halloween artwork added colour to the walls decorated with pictures of ghosts, pumpkins, and leaves. The materials and resources in all rooms included tabletop activities, arts and crafts, sensory tables to include water, rice, and sand. Interest areas included home corners, construction areas, dress up and shop areas to develop imagination and promote role play. The outdoor play area provided an alternative change of environment for the children. There were three separate areas for the different age groups of children, however all areas were connected. A range of developmentally appropriate equipment was provided in the fully secure outdoor play area this included playhouses, wooden bridges, boats, seesaw, slides, bikes, and trikes.

Opportunities were provided for the children to explore nature with a plant growing area and a bug hotel. Individual care plans were in place for children who required additional supports. The service is regularly engaging with an outside agency to ensure those children and staff are both supported.

On the day of inspection children led the program of care, opting to go from one activity to another. In the Little learner's room, the room was set up on arrival with various interest areas, children choose what activity they wanted to do, and staff were observed to link in with the children and offer guidance if required. Staff were observed to have positive interactions with the children, children were spoken to in a kind manner and staff were observed to be encouraging and praising children on completing various steps of the tasks at hand.

In the Little Learners room staff supported children to engage positively with one another and the children were encouraged to engage in play activities that required turn taking and sharing. One child who did not want to take turns at the water table was supported by Staff who was heard encouraging the child to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together.

In the Faraway tree room, younger children from the Busy Bees room had the opportunity to mix with their peers, leading to opportunities for the older group to model behaviour around mealtimes, turn taking and taking part in story times. Children were given the choice of playing outdoors or remaining in the classroom, all children opted to play outside. One staff member was observed to clean and dry down the play equipment ensuring it was safe prior to the children going outside. Children were supported to be independent in putting on coats, and help was given where required. Children and staff sought out autumn leaves to use for an art activity as part of the planned curriculum. Childrens photos, from home and of them playing in the service could be seen on the walls of the care rooms. Children discussed some of the photos of themselves with the inspector, explaining they were playing in the leaves. Each child had their own individual folder containing their own artwork and 'all about me' booklet that children and staff had completed together.

In the Superstar's room, one child attending the service had his birthday, this was celebrated in the room with a birthday cake and all children and staff sang happy birthday and participated in party games in celebration. Morning snack is provided by home and included sandwiches, fruit, and yoghurts. All other meals and snacks are provided by the service. On the day of inspection, the main meal served was penne arrabiata. The service operates a four-week menu plan, which on review appears balanced and healthy. Drinking water was always available to the children throughout the day.

In the Rainbow room children were observed to choose their own activities and were able to move freely between them. One staff member was observed to spend her time engaging with the children, chatting, labelling, and asking open ended questions, moving between each group, and down at the children's level at all times.

Children enjoyed the engagement and continued their conversation and play between themselves as the teacher moved around.

Children's individual sleep needs were met with standard cots for children less than two years of age and low-level sleep beds were in place to meet the sleep needs of older children. There is one dedicated sleep room in the service and one member of staff was observed to remain in the sleep room to support children as they slept and monitor breathing, position, and temperature. Rest areas were provided in all care rooms to facilitate children to take a break or opt out of an activity if they choose.

Children who were toilet trained, were supported, and encouraged by staff to use the toilet independently as needed with prompts of hand hygiene. Nappy changing was observed to be undertaken regularly and more frequently if required for those children not toilet trained. Nappy changing was a positive experience for children. The staff were observed to interact positively with each child and handled them with care as they were changed. Children's sleep, nappy changes and eating habits for each day are electronically recorded and shared with parents.

### Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure children's learning, development and well-being was always facilitated through appropriate interactions. The following examples were observed on the day of inspection:

- Children were not always spoken to in the correct manner. In the Rainbow room children were observed to be addressed by a staff member loudly from across the room on two occasions.
- Children's interests were not always followed. Three children who expressed an interest in joining an activity were told by a staff member to go play somewhere else.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

Targeted staff engagement has taken place on these issues. The correct means of reducing noise levels in rooms has been discussed and agreed with all staff together with the most appropriate means of introducing variety in children's activities whilst respecting the principles of child led play. Additional staff training – positive behaviour management course scheduled. Additional management interaction on this topic to be reviewed at monthly supervision meetings. Specific initial supports have been put in place where necessary.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider to address the non-compliances in relation to regulation 19 found on inspection have been reviewed by the inspectorate. The non compliances have now been addressed and this regulation is now compliant and corrective and preventative actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

### 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:

- Cleaning products were stored up high in cupboards out of reach of children. Lower cupboards were secured with safety latches.
- Equipment, materials, and toys were in good order throughout the service and developmentally appropriate to the children using them.
- The Kitchen was inaccessible to children.
- All windows had safety restrictors in place.
- Nappy changing units were sturdy and stable to prevent tipping over.
- Suitable handrails at the children's height have been fitted on staircases.
- Waste is inaccessible to the preschool children both indoors and outdoors.

##### Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available to promote adequate hand hygiene practices.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior and post mealtimes.
- Cleaning schedules were in place and up to date in all care rooms.

##### Administration of Medication:

- On discussion with staff members, staff were aware of the service policy on administration of medication and are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the administration of medication.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Two standard cots were provided in the service.
- Low level sleep beds were available for older children.
- Sleep was always supervised by the presence of a staff member in the sleep room.
- Rest areas were provided in care rooms, with soft furnishings and matting.

### Fire Safety:

- Child friendly real life picture evacuation plans were displayed in all care rooms.
- Emergency exit doors were free from obstruction.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. Flexes were observed by the inspector to be hanging loosely and not secured to the wall in the little explorers and superstars' rooms, posing a risk of pulling equipment down on top of a child.
2. A window blind in the busy bee's room was not secure to the wall. It is noted that the window was out of the reach of the child and not an immediate risk.
3. Sharp knives were stored on top of the paper towel dispenser in the Rainbow room, which if fallen would pose a risk of injury to the child.
4. Water temperatures in the sanitary area adjacent to the Faraway tree room measured at 63.9°C, resulting in a risk of scalding. It is acknowledged that an immediate action notice was issued and the registered provider, provided evidence the next day of the remedial work conducted to bring the water into acceptable levels for safe hand hygiene.
5. The main door was not secure on the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, allowing the inspectors to walk directly into the service.

#### Infection Control:

6. Children in the Busy bees room were served their afternoon snack of pizza and garlic bread directly on to the table. No plates were used, resulting in an increased risk of contamination.
7. Children in the Busy Bees room and Faraway tree room were observed not to wash their hands after nappy changing took place.
8. The bin in the nappy changing area was hand operated and not in line with current infection control guidance.

#### Safe Sleep:

9. Part of the sleep room was used as a storage area with a door and boxes located on the route to the evacuation door which may hamper a quick emergency evacuation.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

##### **General Safety:**

1. All flexes / phone charger cables have now been securely clipped out of reach. The presence of flexes / charger cables has been added to our daily risk assessments to identify any reoccurrence.
2. Window blind has been repaired. Window blind was an isolated issue and is unlikely to reoccur.
3. Knives have been relocated to the adjoining storeroom and are kept in a locked cabinet. Knives are now stored in a separate locked cabinet.
4. A defective blending valve which was identified as the root cause of over temperature water at one child accessible sink has been replaced and the issue is now resolved. Water temperature is currently subject to daily checks.
5. The main door is fitted with an access control system which in general is very effective. Staff have been asked to be mindful of the need to ensure all doors are closed firmly after. A contractor has been engaged to source and install a self-closing mechanism on the door in question to reduce the risk of the door not being firmly closed in the future.

##### **Infection Control:**

6. Whilst there was a practice of providing finger food in one room directly on a table which was wiped down before and after use, this has been discontinued and individual plates are now in use. Staff advised plates now to be used for all food provided.
7. Reviewed the requirements with staff. Child sinks to be fitted for use in nappy changing area December 2023. Nappy changing procedure reviewed with staff. Child sinks to be fitted in nappy changing area December 23.
8. New bin purchased and installed which has required pedal operated self-closing mechanism. All future bin purchases to be of required type.

##### **Safe Sleep:**

9. These materials were here in the context of building upgrade works which were ongoing at the time. They have now been removed. In future any materials arising in the course of building works will be stored in an adjoining storeroom with external access.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

**General Safety:**

Photographic evidence submitted.

**Infection Control:**

Photographic evidence submitted.

**Safe Sleep:**

Photographic evidence submitted.

**Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the registered provider to address the non-compliances in relation to regulation 23 found on inspection have been reviewed by the inspectorate. The non compliances have now been addressed and this regulation is now compliant and corrective actions will be reviewed on next inspection.

**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) Six persons working on the day of inspection were trained in first aid responder (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2). (a)(b).

A first aid box adequately equipped was readily available and safely stored in a conspicuous location in the service in each of the care room and the service also has a fully stocked first aid box in the outdoor area.

## 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.*
- (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).

The person in charge provided evidence of monthly fire drills taking place in the service the most recent being on the 04.09.2023.

(b) The service maintained an inventory of all fire equipment and smoke detection systems in the facility with the most recent service date of the 19.09.2023.

(2)

All fire safety records were made available to the inspector for review on the day of inspection.

(4)

The fire evacuation procedure was clearly displayed in all care rooms in both written and picture format.

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
  - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with.

### Compliance Information

- (1) The complaints policy in operation in the service was reviewed in March 2022 and clearly outlines the procedures to follow to make a complaint, how the complaint will be dealt with and information on how the complainant will be updated on the process.
- (2) (a) (b).  
The service has no active complaints, on interview the person in charge was clear of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the complaints policy.
- (4)  
The service has not received a complaint in two years.