

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MH179
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	St Brigid's National Playschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	St Brigid's School Cortown Kells Co Meath
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A82 VX38
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Edel Tuite
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Dates of Inspection:</b>	27/09/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	17	PM	0
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Family Resource Centre Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D. Murray
<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

St Brigid's National Playschool provides a sessional service for children from 2 to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). The hours of operation are from 9am to 12am each weekday. The service is located to the rear of the St Brigid's National School in a pre-fabricated building and consists of 1 care room with sanitary facilities. The service has access to the outdoor facilities provided by the school as an outdoor space.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs a deputy person in charge and 1 other staff member. Two other adults are available to provide relief if needed. On the day of inspection, the registered provider was present with the deputy staff member.

### 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.

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 co-operation of the registered provider, deputy person in charge 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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Ten validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for 5 staff members.

(d) Not applicable as no staff member had resided outside the jurisdictions for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The five childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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 registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) On the day of inspection, the correct adult/child ratio was maintained. There were 2 adults working directly with the 17 children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 6 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, and

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

##### Basic Needs of the Infants and Children:

- Children moved about the room freely engaging in tabletop activities, free play and imaginary role play.
- Children's individual needs were well supported by the staff members who engaged in play activities with the children which included art and crafts, singing and storytelling. During activities children were offered choices and sought out the staff members for praise, encouragement, and reassurance.
- Children's personal hygiene was attended to with regular handwashing and supervision while using the toilet. Transitions were handled smoothly with staff members giving the children ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- The children brought their own healthy lunches which they had at 11am. Staff members were observed chatting with the children at lunch time, helping the children when required whilst encouraging conversation and extending interactions.
- The theme of the month was "Autumn" with artwork activities which reflected this theme.

##### Supporting relationships around children:

- The adults were observed promoting positive behaviour and supported children to find positive solutions when they experienced challenge in sharing play equipment and materials. New children were supported and encouraged to develop interaction and friendships with other children. The children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (2) A registered provider-
- (a) of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that is registered for the first time on or after 30 June 2016 shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b) A cosy area consisting of cushions and a mat were available in the care room should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest.

(2)(a) The service has access to 2 playing pitches, a sheltered area and the school yard as outdoor spaces. The staff provided assurance that the entrance at the front of the school is supervised at all times when the children are playing in close proximity to this area.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

*A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- The care room was well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in areas of interest. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books. All play materials and equipment were easily accessible on open shelving at the children's height which encouraged active engagement and involvement.
- Equipment for the outdoor areas was stored in a shed and brought out as required.

## 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The main door to the service was secured which ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- All play materials were placed on stable based shelving units. Play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children present in the service.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed.

- The hand washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times. Warm running water was available in the children's sanitary area, along with a supply of liquid soap and hand paper towel for effective hand washing.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis. Tables were cleaned after activities before meals.
- A fridge was available for the storage of perishable items in the children's lunch boxes.

### 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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

### 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) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 01/09/2023.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and mains powered smoke alarms on the premises. The fighting equipment was last serviced in June 2023. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 02/06/2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the care room.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

*A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 22 children at any one time attending the sessional and school aged service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2023 to 27/03/2024.