

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MH193		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	The Hive Childcare		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Summerhill, Summerhill, Co. Meath		
<b>Eircode:</b>	A83 YD81		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Marie Daly		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	12/11/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	41	PM 34
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	AM Cunningham & D Murray		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors		
<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

The Hive Childcare, (Summerhill Childcare Centre CLG) is an established childcare facility located within the local community in Summerhill Co. Meath. The childcare service provides full day care, part time and a sessional service to children aged from 0 to 6 years. The service operates from 07:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday. The building is purpose-built single-story facility and consists of 5 care rooms namely, the Nursery room (which was closed on the day of inspection), the 1-2 room, the 2-3 room, preschool room 1, and preschool room 2, office, kitchen, sanitary facilities (nappy changing area), and sleep rooms. Additionally, the outdoor play area was located to the side of the building.

### Staffing

Eighteen staff members were employed in the service which includes the manager, assistant manager, 12 childcare practitioners, a cook, receptionist and two cleaners. On the day of inspection, the manager, assistant manager, 10 childcare practitioners, a cook, receptionist and two cleaners were present. Two students were also present.

### 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.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, 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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

#### 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 inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(c) A clear management structure was displayed in the entrance hallway in the service.

Eighteen staff files along with two student files were reviewed.

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

(c)Garda vetting disclosure was available for all staff and the students. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years which were within the 3-year timeframe as required by the Regulatory notice.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All 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.

(6A) One staff member was employed under the access and inclusion model.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) One staff member who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than six months did not have police vetting available.

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

#### **Corrective Action**

(2)(d) Police Vetting obtained from Australia for relevant staff member

#### **Preventive Action:**

Review all employee & student/volunteer files ensuring all correct vetting is in place.

Initiate the vetting process to obtain police vetting for affected staff member immediately.

Conduct regular reviews to ensure ongoing compliance with police vetting requirements.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Police vetting received by the inspectorate for the relevant staff member.

### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 9.

### 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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed:

- **Nursery Room:** closed on the day of inspection.
- **The 1 to 2 Room:** there were 8 pre-school children aged between 1 to 2 years, all children were attending on a full day care basis, being cared for by 2 staff members. A student was also present in this room.
  - **The 2 to 3 Room:** there were 5 children aged 2 to 3 years, all children were attended for full day care, being cared for by 2 staff members. A student was also present.
- **Preschool Room 1:** there were 16 children aged 3 years to 5 years, 11 children were attending for full day care basis, and 5 children were attending on a sessional basis being cared for by 3 staff members.
- **Preschool Room 2:** there were 12 children aged 2 years 8 months to 4 years, 10 children were attending for full day care basis and 2 children attending on a sessional basis, being cared for by 2 staff members.

(8)(a) On the day of inspection, based upon a review of the staff roster and staff attendance times reported to the inspectors at least 2 adults were on the premises at all times.

### 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 children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the children. Four care rooms were in operation during the inspection.

#### Basic Needs of Children:

The adults treated the children in a kind and caring manner, and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults conversed with the children in a sensitive and respectful manner, used soft tones of voice, engaged with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance and comfort. The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings and using the toilet. Staff chatted to children during nappy changes and toileting. Nappies were changed frequently and on an individual need's basis. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care and nasal care appropriate to their age and level of development. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and promoted to be independent. Children from the 2-3 room ate their dinner in the dining room. The adults offered praise and encouragement, and children were respected and supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities. The children in each room were offered a range of developmentally challenging play and learning activities and the children were observed to be fully engaged and included in all activities in the indoor and outdoor environments. The children transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor area for play based activities.

#### Supporting Relationships Around Children:

The staff demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge of the children's preferences, interests, and individual capabilities. The adults followed the children's lead in the care rooms, and the children were supported in individual and group play. The rooms accommodated visual routine displays demonstrating photographic illustrations to support and include all children in the programme of care. The children were notified and

consulted in advance of changes in the activities. The transitions in the programme of care were completed cohesively in a calm manner in the care rooms. The children's care need observations were shared daily with parent/guardians by means of an electronic device. The adults in each room worked effectively together to facilitate the programme of care and education. The adults communicated informally with parents/guardians on messaging system and during collection periods.

## 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.*

*(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-*

*(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or*

### Compliance Information

(1)(b) Cosy areas consisting of mats, cushions and soft furnishings were available in all care rooms should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. Three adjoining cot rooms were available for the younger age group who required sleep. One cot room had 5 cots available, the second room had 1 cot available, and the third room had 5 cots available with a total of 11 cots in the service. The older children requiring sleep were accommodated on stackable beds on the floor in the 2 to 3 care room.

(3)(a) The outdoor area to the side of the service was enclosed by walls and railings with a secure gate which had a press button release along with a high bolt. The surface area consisted of grass.

### 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

Each of the care rooms were bright and spacious with clearly defined areas of interest that children could engage in independently or with other children. Pictures of the children taking part in different activities in the setting were displayed on the walls as was the children's artwork. Age-appropriate toys were available to the children in the care rooms well developed areas of interest home corners area, dress up, construction, messy play, and table tops activities. Low level shelving containing boxes of items such as puzzles, animals and construction toys were accessible to the children.

Equipment in the outdoor area included a wooden sheltered area, wooden activity unit with a slide and swings, wooden hut, small playhouse, tuff trays, climbing frame and ride on toys.

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

#### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

The service had a 4-week menu plan with a variety of dishes ranging from vegetarian, meat and poultry freshly prepared in the service. All food is provided by the service except for the children attending on a sessional basis who brought in their own lunch. There was evidence of a good supply of fresh fruit and vegetables in the kitchen store in addition to a supply of canned and dried foods. Morning snack commences at 10am which was apple and banana slices and cracker, dinner was served at 12midday which consisted of boiled ham, mash, peas and broccoli, extra helpings were available if children requested some and afternoon snack was served at 3pm which consisted of vegetable soup and brown bread. Water and milk were the drinks of choice.

## 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:

A secure bell operated system was in place at the entrance door to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility.

The outdoor area was secured with fencing and gates to protect the children within. The children were supervised at all times during the inspection.

The children's arrival and departure from the service was recorded in the record book.

Medication and cleaning agents were stored in a secured area out of reach of the children

##### Infection Control:

The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined pedal operated bins.

The children washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, using the toilet and before mealtime.

The nappy changing procedures were completed in accordance with the service's infection control procedure. A procedure was displayed in the nappy changing facilities.

##### Administration of Medication:

The adults demonstrated a good knowledge of the service's administration of medication policy and procedure. Documentation was available should medication be required.

##### Safe Sleep:

The sleep room accommodated standard sized cots with standard mattresses for the children to sleep.

The sleep room and care room temperatures were maintained between 16-20°Celsius in the areas where children sleep. An electronic thermometer was available for staff to measure and monitor the room temperatures.

The adults demonstrated an awareness of the service's safe sleep policy. The children's sleep observations were recorded by staff every ten minutes. These observations included the children's colour, position and breathing.

### 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) Records demonstrated that the date and time of attendance and departure in respect of each pre-school child is recorded on a daily basis.

(3)(a) All persons were approved by an employee prior to entry to the pre-school.

(b) Visitors are announced and approved by an authorised staff member on arrival; the visitors' details are entered into the visitors' book.

### 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) An adult working in the service had a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.
- (2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box were stored in the kitchen.
- (b) The first aid box was available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency

## 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) Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out by the service The last fire drill took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025.
- (b) Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system took place respectively in July 2025 and the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025.
- (4) A fire action notice was available demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

## 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 75 children at any one time. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026.