

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MN052
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Threemilehouse Community Playgroup CLG
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Cabra, Threemilehouse, Co. Monaghan
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<b>Eircode:</b>	H18 HC91
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Janet Sherry
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	05/11/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	14	PM	-
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Skinnader
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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

Threemilehouse Community Playgroup CLG is a community run non-profit service in operation since 1999. The service provides part-time care and sessional care to children aged 2 to 6 years of age and caters for a maximum of 21 children. The service operates Monday - Friday from 9.30am – 2pm. The service is located in a prefabricated building in the village of Threemilehouse Co. Monaghan. The service consists of 1 preschool care room, a kitchen area and sanitary accommodation. There is an enclosed outdoor area to the rear and side of the building.

### Staffing

There are 4 staff members employed in the service, all of whom including the person in charge work directly with the preschool children.

### 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 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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. On the day of the inspection the person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived and was present throughout the inspection.

The staff files for all 4 staff members were reviewed on inspection.

(2)(a) & (b) There were two written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for all 4 staff members.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 4 staff members and the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as from the documentary evidence available international police vetting was not required as none of the staff had resided outside the Irish jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 4 staff members working directly with the preschool children had a childcare qualification which met the minimum Level 5 qualification required to enable them to work directly with the preschool children.

### 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 at all times with the children attending the early years' service.

(2) When inspector arrived for an unannounced inspection, the adult to child ratios were correct.

The following adult to child ratios were observed:

There were 14 children aged between 2 years and 10 months to 4 years being cared for by 3 staff members.

(8) The registered provider ensured that there were 2 staff members available 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

There was 1 care room in operation on the day of the inspection.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

### Basic Needs:

- The children who were toilet trained were encouraged to be independent with toileting and staff reported that assistance was given to any child who was toilet training /using pull-up pants. Discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required. Gentle handwashing reminders were given to the children after toileting.
- Tissues were available on a low-level shelf in the room and the children were encouraged to use them independently.

- The service provides toast and a drink for the children every morning at approximately 9.30am. The children bring in their own lunches which were stored appropriately in the fridge in the kitchen. Lunches were observed to consist of sandwiches, fruit, crackers, cereals, rice cakes, cheese and yogurt. Drinks were freely available throughout the day. Staff were observed to sit with the children at mealtimes, to give assistance and to encourage conversations between the children.
- The children had free movement in the care room and a change of environment to the outdoor area. All children were dressed appropriately to go outside.

### Supporting relationship around children

- Communication between the parents and staff was informal at drop off and pick-up. The staff also confirmed that emails were used to communicate and to share information with parents.
- The staff members in the service were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children and staff member.
- The children were observed to seek out the staff for assistance.
- The staff promoted the children's independence in the preschool room, by encouraging the children to tidy up the toys they used.
- There service had strategies in place for children who required additional supports.

### 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) A soft comfortable area was available in the care room. There was a wooden bench with leather effect seat cushions and back support and in addition there was a child size bed with a mattress, blankets and cushions where a child could go to lie down and rest on if they so choose.

(3)(a) There was an outdoor area to the side of the premises which was securely fenced and gated. All surrounding trees had been recently removed. There was a long covered area which contained a mud kitchen, picnic bench, long wooden table and chairs, blackboards and chalk, tyres and “fairy houses”.

There was a small grass area with wooden stumps for balancing on and a muddy area beside the mud kitchen. In addition, there was a tarmacked area with plenty of push and pull toys, tractors, trikes, a further outdoor kitchen and picnic bench and some tyres. There was a large shed which contained toys and which was also used for the storage of outdoor equipment. Some of the children were also observed to bring a few of the small world toys outside to play with. A mat/piece of vinyl covering was placed on the ground for the children to play on.

### 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

The Inspectorate was not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service in relation to the following observations made during the inspection:

#### General Safety:

1. There were unprotected sharp corners on the white shelving units, and these were a potential impact and injury hazard.

### Infection Control:

2. The pedal operated bin in the bathroom was not working and therefore the lid had to be lifted by hand to open the bin. This is a cross contamination and infection control risk.

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

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

The registered provider purchased corner protectors for the shelving units and put them in place.

The registered provider will risk assess any new furniture items in future and put on corner protectors if furniture is not rounded.

### Infection Control:

The registered provider purchased a new pedal bin for the bathroom. The bin will be checked every day.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence

### Summary Comment

The Inspectorate has reviewed the registered provider's response and photographic evidence and is satisfied that the non-compliances have been addressed.

## 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 record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service, the last recorded 23/10/24.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment dated 21/10/24 and 15/2/24 respectively.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance cover in place to cover up to a maximum of 20 children which expires on the 27/03/25.