

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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|--|---|----|-------|
| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>   | TU2015OY043   |    |       |
| <b>Name of Service:</b>  | Clever Clogs  |    |       |
| <b>Address of Service:</b>   | Laughaun, Dunkerrin, Birr, Co. Offaly   |    |       |
| <b>Eircode:</b>  | E53 DT32  |    |       |
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>  | Mary Bolger   |    |       |
| <b>Service type:</b>   | Full Day  |    |       |
| <b>Date of Inspection:</b>   | 23/05/2025  |    |       |
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b>  | AM  | 27 | PM 13 |
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>  | Early Years Inspectorate,<br>Tusla, Child and Family Agency,<br>Primary Care Centre,<br>Church Avenue,<br>Tullamore<br>Co. Offaly |    |       |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>   | K. Murphy   |    |       |
| <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 full day care service provides full day care, part time and sessional places for children. The service operates from 08:00 to 18:00 on a Monday to Friday basis. This full day care service is part of a multiple.

The Early Years' Service is located in a purpose-built single storey building adjacent to the home of the registered provider. Two pre-school rooms and a kitchenette are provided. An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the service. On-site parking and set down facilities are available. The service is rurally located in Dunkerrin, Co. Offaly.

### Staffing

On 23 May 2025 the registered provider, designated person in charge and one adult were working directly with the children in the morning. An additional support person was also present.

The registered provider, designated person in charge and two adults were working directly with the children in the afternoon.

### 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.

Regulation 9- Management and recruitment - (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4)

Regulation 11 -Staffing levels - (1) (3) (8)(a)

Regulation 16 Record of a pre-school service – (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j)(k)

Regulation 19- Health, welfare and development of child - (1)(a)

Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and Play -- (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)

Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25- First aid - (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 -Fire safety measures - (1)(a)(b) (4)

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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 registered provider, 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.

(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 registered provider and the designated person in charge were available in the service.

(b)

The registered provider and the designated person in charge were present for the duration of the inspection.

Seven files including the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available for six adults from past employers and from a source other than a past employer. Two written references were available in respect of the registered provider.

- (c)  
A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the seven files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)  
Police vetting was available in respect of two adults who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (4)  
Staff members working directly with children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at levels 5 to 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed 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.*
- (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 minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.
- (2)  
There were twenty-seven children attending the service supervised directly by three adults in the morning. Thirteen children were present in the afternoon supervised by four adults.

(8)(a)

The staff attendance records reviewed indicated that two adults are on the premises during the hours of operation.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1) (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) and (k).

## 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*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Children were observed to enjoy the indoor and outdoor environments engaging in creative play, imaginative play, physical play and gross motor activities.

Children were encouraged to be independent as they washed their hands before snacks and mealtimes. Older children went to the toilet independently supervised by staff.

The staff were positive towards children and were familiar with each child, their personalities and their daily routines. Staff used individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities, and mealtimes.

A range of developmentally appropriate experiences to meet children's learning needs was available in the pre-school rooms. Age and stage appropriate toys and materials were accessible to children on low level shelving.

Parents were observed to collect their children from the pre-school rooms after the ECCE session. A verbal handover was provided to parents at this time. Newsletters are circulated from the office to each family attending the service.

## 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-*

*(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*

*(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*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable play equipment was provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, tabletop activities, arts and crafts, sensory play and home corners.

(b)

Soft furnishings provided the rest areas in the pre-school rooms. Low level beds were available in a quiet area for any child requiring sleep.

(3)(a)

The outdoor play area was located to the rear of the premises. The perimeter was secured by a high-level concrete wall. A natural grass surface area was noted. The area was equipped with a large climb and slide unit and planting areas. Additional play equipment was available in a storage unit.

## 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 entrance to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. Visitor access was controlled. Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.

#### Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. A cleaning schedule was available for the service. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet.

A refrigerator was available in the kitchenette for the storage of perishable food stuffs. Correct temperatures were maintained.

The pre-school rooms were ventilated by natural ventilation with windows open. The sanitary accommodation was ventilated by natural ventilation. Supplies of paper hand towel and liquid soap were available in the sanitary accommodation.

**Administration of Medication:**

Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature and was stored safely in the service.

**Safe Sleep:**

Staff were observed to sit with two children aged 2-3 years until they fell asleep. Regular physical checks of the sleeping children were carried out by the staff member to observe the sleeping children.

**Fire Safety:**

Fire exit routes were unobstructed, and a fire assembly point was located to the front of the premises.

### 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)  
Four adults were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and were available on the premises during the hours of operation on a rostered basis.

(2)(a)  
A stocked first aid box was readily available in the kitchenette.

(b)  
A first aid box was accessible to the adults caring for the children in the pre-school service.

## 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 firefighting 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 for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 12 May 2025.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced in August 2024.

The smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in February 2025.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2026.