

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015SO045
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Northside Community Playschool
-------------------------	--------------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Northside Resource Centre, Forthill, Co. Sligo
----------------------------	--

<b>Eircode:</b>	F91 N778
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Denise Carthy
-------------------------------------	---------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	13/02/2024
-------------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	7	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	---	----	-----

<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
<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
---------------------------------	----------------

### Description of service

Northside Community Playschool is governed by a non-profit company titled Northside Community Group Ltd. The service is registered to provide a sessional care to a maximum of 18 children aged 3 to 6 years. The service operates from within a community centre premises in the town of Sligo. The playgroup occupies one room with access to dedicated sanitary accommodation for the service. There is a fenced outdoor play area provided to the side of the building. The children have access to a large indoor hall within the community building.

### Staffing

There are two adults employed in the service on the day of inspection. The Registered Provider is involved in the day-to-day operation of the service.

### 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 an 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 9,11,16k, 19, 23, 24, 25 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations 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.

### 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, 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.

(c).

There is a clear line of accountability and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2)

The records of the two adults employed in the service were reviewed.

(a) Three written and verified past employer references were available in respect of the two adults employed in the service.

(b). One reference from a source other than a past employer was available in the absence of past employment for one adult.

(c). A garda vetting disclosure was available for the two adults in the service dated within the previous 36 months.

(d). International police vetting was required and available for one adult in the service that had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

The two adults employed in the service had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 6 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

### 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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service on the morning of the unannounced inspection. There were two adults working directly with 7 children on the morning.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children ratio were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.

### 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:*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

*(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.*

### Compliance Information

- (1). The person in charge confirmed that there had been no accidents or incidents in the preschool service in the previous two years.
- (2). The person in charge is aware of the retention period in line with this regulation.

### 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*
- (1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*
- (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

The preschool service consisted of one care room planned in various interest areas to stimulate the preschools child imagination. Home corners, construction areas and dress up areas allowed for imaginative and role play. Open level shelving with jigsaws, puzzles, building blocks, threading and pins facilitated fine motor skill development. A library area with books of various interests allowed for language development. Arts and crafts gave the children opportunity for self-expression. The children were observed to move freely around the room, directing their own play. The children played in groups and individually supported by the two staff members in the service.

The staff members created an environment of warmth and kindness, all interactions were of a positive nature and where there were any challenges in behaviour, the staff members responded in a calming voice, deescalating the behaviour, and redirecting the child. On the day of inspection children were shown how to make pancakes for 'pancake Tuesday'. The staff members created this time as a learning opportunity ensuring that all children were included in the task, the children were involved in adding the flour, mixing in the egg and milk.

The staff members introduced different tastes including lemon and sugar and children described how each item tasted understanding the concept of bitterness and sweetness. After the pancakes were cooked, the children enjoyed sampling them and got an easy-to-understand recipe to take home and recreate this task with their family.

The curriculum in the preschool was evident throughout, the children had individual scrap books and folders, evidencing their work to date. Individual observations were recorded, and staff had a plan of weekly and monthly goals.

Children brought in their lunch from home which included sandwiches, fruit and yoghurt, on the day children had pancakes they cooked at the school as well as their home packed lunch. Hands were washed prior to lunch time, prior to baking and after messy play or using the toilet. All children in the preschool were toilet trained and independence was promoted. As the sanitary accommodation was across the hall of the busy community centre, the staff members worked together to ensure children were safe at all times, one staff member stood at the main door of the toilets, promoting instruction if required, while the other staff member stood at the door of the pre-school ensuring supervision at all times.

Children were fully aware of the plan for the day with a picture story of the daily plan displayed on the wall. The staff members used an arrow, informing the children what is next, giving time for adjustment and allowing for smooth transitions from one activity to the next.

### 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 service is in a resource centre. The main entrance is secured by a receptionist who directs people to allocated areas. The main door of the preschool has a bell system in place to ensure no unauthorised access or unsupervised egress.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.

- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Cleaning products were stored out of the reach of preschool children. Cleaning records were in place and up to date.

### Infection Control:

- The sanitary area was equipped with paper towels, liquid soap, warm water and a foot operated waste disposal bin to ensure effective hand hygiene.
- Child friendly hand washing posters were placed over the sinks in the sanitary areas to guide the children on the process.
- The children were observed to wash their hands prior to snack times and after using the toilet and messy play.
- The staff members were observed to clean tables prior to baking, after messy play and prior to snack time.
- Tissues were supplied in the service and children were guided on cough etiquette.
- All children's lunches and perishable items were stored in the fridge in the care room on arrival to the preschool.
- A foot operated bin that was broken on the morning of the inspection was replaced immediately when brought to the attention of the RP reducing the risk of infection.

### Administration of Medication:

- There is no medication administered in the service.

### Fire Safety:

- The fire evacuation process for the service was clearly displayed.
- Fire signage including evacuation points and assembly area was clearly

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Infection Control:

1. A piece of tiling in the children's sanitary area was missing and posed a risk of cross contamination as this area could not be cleaned effectively.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### **Infection Control:**

We have replaced the two floor tiles that were missing on the floor near the back base of the toilet on the left-hand side in the children's toilet facilities the day after our non-compliance was raised on 13<sup>th</sup> of /2/24. I have also sent this evidence to the early year's inspector for her attention and approval on the 15<sup>th</sup> / 2/24.

We will regularly check the condition of the floor tiles in the children's toilet facilities, and if we identify any missing tiles, we will replace them immediately.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence submitted on the 15.02.2024

### Summary Comment

The evidence supplied in the corrective and preventive form has been reviewed by the inspectorate and the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 23 has now been rectified and this regulation is now compliant.

## 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.*
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1). The person in charge had a system in place where all children were recorded when entering and leaving the service. On review of this information, the person in charge ensured that this information was kept up to date.
- (3). A visitors' book was shown to the inspector outlining the necessary details of visitors to the service, their reason for entry and who authorised their entry.
- (4). The registered provider is aware of the requirement to retain this log of visitors for a period of one year.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The preschool service had adequate insurance for 18 children in a sessional service up to the 29/10/2024.