

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO049				
Name of Service:	Sligo Springboard CLG Resource House Project Creche				
Address of Service:	2 Racecourse View, Cranmore, Sligo, Co. Sligo				
Eircode:	F91 Y295				
Name of Registered Provider:	Clara Meehan				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	12/06/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>8</td> <td>PM</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </table>	AM	8	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84				
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello				
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

Sligo Springboard Resource House Project Creche operates from a premises within a housing estate close to Sligo town. The service is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children in the age range of 1 to 6 years between the hours of 9.15 am and 12.45pm daily. The premises are situated on the ground floor of a community building. There is one children’s playroom, a sleep room and a kitchen. An outdoor area for the childcare service is situated to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service is staffed by 4 adults who are employed by the service. The registered provider does not work in 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 unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health/ 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, 10, 11, 17, 21, 23, 26, 27 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 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 deputy 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. The deputy person in charge was in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2) (a) (b).

The records of all four adults in the service were reviewed.

Five written and verified past employer references and three references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of all four adults in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for all four adults in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was not required as all the adults employed in the service that had not lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Three adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Non-Compliance Information

(9) (3)

The vetting procedures carried out were not completed prior to an adult having access with children as evidenced by one adult whose vetting was obtained a month following their start date.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the registered provider stated:

The service has updated its vetting policy and will no longer except historical vetting while waiting on new vetting to be complete. Sligo Springboard will have completed a full vetting check before starting an employee in the childcare room.

Supporting documentation submitted

Vetting policy submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately addressed the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The service written policies were found to be compliant:

- (f) policy on safe sleep
- (k) policy on authorisation to collect.

Non-Compliance Information

On the day the service could not provide the required policy on:

- (h) Inclusion policy.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the registered provider stated:

Sligo Springboard have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy in the setting since 2018. Sligo springboard are currently reviewing its policy and will update to meet with current regulations and guidelines

Supporting documentation submitted

Policy submitted to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

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 service demonstrated that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the preschool children considering their age and duration spent within the service.
- (3) The minimum adult to child ratios were observed on the day with three adults working directly with eight children between one and three years of age.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The service demonstrated that all information in relation to a child attending a preschool service is made available prior to their attendance. This information on fees, policies and procedures, opening hours and qualifications of staff are provided in the parent information handbook and displayed on the services notice boards.

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 service demonstrated that there is adequate and suitable play materials and furniture available in the preschool. The main playroom consisted of two rooms separated by an arch way used as one open plan area. Low level accessible shelving was resourced with a variety of toys including small world figures, farm animals, musical toys, lock boards, robots, cars and trucks, building blocks and sensory boards. A rest area with a canopy and soft matting allowed for children to rest or look through a book from the library.

Highchairs with safety harnesses were provided for the younger children and size appropriate chairs and table were provided for the older children for snack time and tabletop activities.

The outdoor area provides a change of environment for the children where a shock absorbing flooring in one area provide space for children to play on ride on toys, see saws and rocking horses. A wooden playhouse in a grassed area with trees provides opportunity for the children to be immersed in nature and to plant flowers. Other resources in the outdoor area include balance tyres, playhouses and mud kitchens. Picnic benches in the outdoors allow for children to enjoy their snacks outdoors in the fine weather.

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 resource centre and access is supervised by staff on duty. The building was locked on arrival and a buzz entry system was in place.
- The perimeter consisted of a high concrete wall and wooden secure fencing.
- All external waste bins were locked away behind a wooden gate in the outdoor area.
- Windows were high and out of reach of the preschool child.
- Window blinds were secure.

Infection Control:

- Warm water liquid soap and paper towels were available for safe hand hygiene practices.
- The table were observed to be cleaned after messy play and prior to snack times.
- Children were encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet.

Administration of Medication:

- The service has a medication policy in place, however, does not administer medication regularly due to the length of time the child spends in the service.

Safe Sleep:

- The service has a designated sleep room however; this has not been used since 2023 as the children currently attending the service have not presented with requiring sleep throughout the three hours.
- A sleep record is in place which demonstrates how a child is supervised when sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency evacuation doors remained unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- (1) A toy that was not suitable to the age and stage of the child playing with it, posed a potential choking risk due to the small parts. When brought to the attention of the deputy person in charge this was removed immediately.
- (2) A foot operated pedal bin in the sanitary area was broken and required replacing.

(3) Children's runny noses were cleaned with strong blue role, which is not suitable for cleaning young children's skin.

Infection Control:

- (4) There was no access to a waste bin in the preschool and the adults used a bin bag in the sink, this posed a risk of infection.
- (5) The nappy bin was not the required foot pedal operated bin.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

In a written response the registered provider stated:

- 1. A review of the daily risk assessment has been carried out and age and stage of children's toys has been added to this check.
- 2. The bin has been replaced.
- 3. A nose cleaning station is now in operation staff have been reminded that soft tissue paper is to be used for nose cleaning only.

Infection Control:

- 4. Waste bin now in place.
- 5. Nappy bin has been replaced to the required foot operated bin.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

- 1. Risk assessment submitted.
- 2. Photographic evidence submitted.
- 3. Photographic evidence submitted.

Infection Control:

- 4. Photographic evidence submitted.
- 5. Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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) (b)

The service demonstrated that emergency evacuation drills take place monthly as evidence by a written log, with the most recent fire drill occurring on the 2nd of May.

A list of all firefighting equipment was available on the day with the most recent service date on the 21st of August 2024.

(2) (c)

These records were made available to the inspector on the day.

(3) The person in charge is aware of the regulatory requirement to maintain these records for a period of 5 years from its creation. This was evidenced on the day with records available from 2019.

(4) A fire evacuation notice was displayed clearly in the playroom.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Supervision on the day was primarily by sight. The young children spent much of the morning indoors in their care room and the three adults spaced themselves in the room to ensure that all children were in view throughout the session. Children who were toilet trained were supervised and the adults were observed to prompt the children for the tasks at hand.

At mealtime the younger children sat in high chairs while the older children were seated in height appropriate chairs at a table. The three adults supervised all children and offered support throughout while encouraging independence.

In the outdoor area, the adults checked the area prior to use, ensuring toys and resources were dry and the area was secure. Once the check was complete, children in appropriate wet gear played outside while the adults positioned themselves to ensure all children were in view.

At collection time, the manager of the resource centre stood at the services main entrance ensuring that those only authorised to collect did so.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service demonstrated it had adequate insurance with a certificate up until the 14th of October 2025.