

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015TY008				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Thurles Targeted Early Intervention Service				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Slievenamon Road, Thurles, Co. Tipperary				
<b>Eircode:</b>	E41 AC97				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Kevin Gregory				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	17/10/2023				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>26</td> <td>PM</td> <td>25</td> </tr> </table>	AM	26	PM	25
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L McGeeney				
<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
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### Description of service

This full day care service was established to provide care and education to children aged 2 – 6 years. The service operates Monday to Thursday, 8.45am -1.30pm, for 48 weeks of the year for eligible children.

The service is operated from a two-storey, semi-detached building in the town of Thurles in north Tipperary. The entire building is used by Barnardos services with four rooms specifically used by the early years service. The children have access to two activity rooms, a sensory room and sanitary accommodation areas downstairs and an activity room and sanitary accommodation area upstairs. The grounds have been developed as an outdoor play area for the children.

This is one of seven services across Ireland which is operated under the auspices of Barnardos.

### Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. The service manager is the person in charge on a daily basis, supported by eight staff and a volunteer who work directly with the children. There are other staff in the building who can be called on if required as well as ancillary staff including a chef, bus driver, administration and cleaning staff.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(2)(4), (11)(1)(2)(8), 15(1)(3) 16(1)(3), 20(1)(3), 21, 22 and 24(1).

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9 Management and Recruitment.

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

*(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

The staff files of two staff who had commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 27 January 2021 were reviewed as part of the inspection process. Staff files of existing staff had been reviewed previously and were found to be compliant.

(2)(a) Written, validated references from past employers were available in respect of both members of staff.

(b) Not applicable as all available references were from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting had been carried out in respect of the members of staff and relevant documents were held on file.

(d) Not applicable as neither member of staff had lived outside the state.

(4) Staff employed to work directly with the children held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 6 or 8 on the national qualifications framework.

## 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) There were 8 staff working directly with 26 children aged between 2 and 5 years across three rooms in the morning. This included 2 staff employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM) which supported favourable adult to child ratios in each room. The service manager was available to call on to provide relief if required. There was also an adult volunteer working in the service. There were 6 staff working directly with 25 children in the afternoon.

(2) The adult to child ratios were maintained at greater than the minimum requirements throughout the day.

(8)(a) There were at least two staff present in the service at all times while it was in operation.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The registration form of the service contained all of the required particulars as detailed under subsections (a) to (i) of this regulation.

(3) Registration forms were uploaded to an electronic system with security processes to ensure that only authorised persons could view the records. The records were available to those authorised to see them as detailed under subsections (a) to (c) of this regulation.

### 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;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (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.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

#### Compliance Information

(1) The written records required under subsections (a) to (k) of this regulation were available in the service. Written records were available as printed booklets, recording sheets and duplicate books.

(3) The records referred to above were available and open to inspection by an authorised person.

### 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, or*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The children had access to three activity rooms and a sensory room in the building called: Ladybirds room, Butterflies room and Honeybees room. Each room was set up with a variety of clearly defined interest areas suitable to the age and stage of development of the children who used the rooms as well as to their individual interests. Butterflies room was recently reopened after being repaired and renovated over the summer months. All of the children enjoyed indoor and outdoor play on a daily basis.

(b) The children could rest and relax in the cosy spaces in each room during the day. They could also access the sensory room for quiet play or for rest and sleep. Staff said that it was rare for the children to sleep during the day but facilities such as camp beds, sheets and blankets were available if required.

(3)(a) There was an outdoor play area at the side of the premises which was available to the children throughout the day. The space was a 'V' shape with tarmac covering one part and grass the other. There were two storage sheds which had been renovated and upgraded by the supplier since the last inspection. One shed was used as a sand-play room while the other provided storage for equipment as well as a sheltered play space that could be used in all weathers. The outdoor play area was enclosed by walls on three sides and secured by two sets of gates which prevented the children from exiting the service unattended or gaining access to the road in from of the premises.

### 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 was well equipped with furniture, materials and resources suitable to the children’s interests which supported them to explore and learn through play. There were child sized tables and chairs in each room as well as seating for the staff and soft seating in the cosy areas. Toys and materials were stored in labelled boxes or on open shelves where the children could easily see and access them independently. Tuff tray tables were used as special interest zones where the children could explore materials including messy and sensory play. A large rectangular beanbag had been purchased for the newly refurbished Butterfly room which the staff said the children really enjoyed. It provided a comfortable place to sit or lie down or to gather with their friends.

Toys, equipment and materials were well maintained and clean.

Outdoor equipment included bench seating, ride on toys, push toys, balls, vehicles, sand and water, planting areas and hoops.

### 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 healthy eating policy. All food and drink consumed by the children while attending the service was supplied by the service. The children had a morning snack and a cooked dinner each day. On the day of inspection the snack was a selection of mixed fruit with a drink of milk and dinner was chicken and broccoli bake. The children had beakers and drink bottles that were labelled with their names and refilled with water as needed throughout the day, The drinking vessels were placed on a countertop or trolley in each room where the children could access them when they wanted a drink.

The service had a chef who prepared all the meals.

Children’s food allergies, intolerances or special diets were taken into consideration when planning the menus for the service.

## 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) Staff in each room recorded the daily attendance of each child, including the times of arrival and departure, using paper records that were kept in the rooms.

(3)(a) Staff at the reception desk beside the entrance to the service recorded the arrival and departure of any visitors to the service.

(b) A written record was maintained of the presence of any visitors to the service, such as the inspector.