

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015TY061
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Rainbow Pre School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Dromin Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
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<b>Eircode:</b>	E45 VF29
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Cordelia Cormack
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	21/05/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	47	PM	23
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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 privately owned full day care service was established to provide care and education to children aged 1 – 6 years old. A registered school aged care service is also provided for children aged 5 – 12 years old. The service operates Monday – Friday, 7.30am – 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. This includes a three-hour sessional service operated under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) which runs Monday – Friday, 9am – 12pm for 38 weeks of the year.

The service is operated from a single storey, detached premises in the town of Nenagh in north Tipperary which was remodelled and renovated from residential premises for use as an early years service. The service consists of the main building plus two modular buildings. The main building contains eight activity rooms, six of which have a double door that connects them to an adjoining room and which can be opened to create three large rooms; sanitary accommodation areas and a kitchen. The outdoor play area is located at the front of the premises. The two modular buildings are located at the side of the outdoor play area: one is the office and the other, called the garden room, is a combination sensory room and outdoor play room.

This is one of three services owned and operated by the registered provider, the others being Rainbow St Mary's and Rainbow Tyone Preschool and Childcare Centre.

### Staffing

The registered provider oversees and visits each of the three services on a daily basis and was present in the service on the day of inspection. The service manager is the person in charge on a daily basis. There are 20 staff employed in the early years service including 14 staff who work directly with the children, administration staff, managers, catering and maintenance staff. Some staff work with the early years children in the morning and with the school aged children in the afternoon. There are also two students engaged in studies in early childhood care and education undertaking work experience 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, 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)(4)(8), 19(1)(b), 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28.

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

*(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 files of all staff were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

(2)(a) Written, validated references from past employers were available in respect of 21 members of staff.

(b) Written, validated references from a source other than a past employer were available in respect of 8 members of staff.

(c) Garda vetting had been carried out in respect of each member of staff and relevant records were maintained on file. Garda vetting was renewed on a three yearly basis.

(d) Police vetting was available in respect of staff who had lived outside the state and relevant records were maintained on file.

(4) Staff employed to work directly with the early years children held recognised qualifications in early childhood care and education at levels 5, 6, 7 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.*

*(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*

*(a) a sessional pre-school service, and*

*(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

*(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 13 staff working directly with 47 children aged between 2 and 5 years old on the morning of the inspection. There were also two childcare students working with the children in a supernumerary capacity and were therefore not included in the adult to child ratios. Other staff on the premises but not working directly with the children included the registered provider, service manager, administrator, caretaker and staff responsible for catering and transport. At 2.30pm on the day of inspection there were 6 staff working directly with 23 children aged between 2 and 5 years old. The childcare student who was also present was not included in the adult to child ratios. There were also 4 members of staff working with 13 school aged children who were present in the service.

(2) and (4) The adult to child ratios were maintained within the requirements for the duration of the inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least 2 staff present at all times while the service was in operation.

## 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-*

*(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

(1)(b) The following practices were observed on the day of inspection which supported the health, welfare and development of the children.

The children attending the ECCE session were divided into small groups of approximately 7 children. Each group moved between the activity rooms and outdoor play area in a planned manner, co-ordinated by the supervisors in each area, which ensured they had the opportunity to engage with all of the available toys, materials and experiences available. Each group joined with another group in spaces which were larger, that is, when the doors between two rooms were opened to make one big room. This supported the children to form friendships both within their own group and across their peer group.

The children benefitted from small and large group play during the day. Additional staff, such as the area supervisors, were available to work with children on a one-to-one basis when children demonstrated that they needed this break from group work. The staff were observed to know the children in their group very well and to respond appropriately to their needs and wishes.

Children in the Juniors room were either toilet trained, in the process of toilet training or in nappies. Staff supported the children who were in the process of toilet training by responding to the children's needs and encouraging them during this significant learning phase and transition. The children's toilets were located adjacent to the room to aid this process.

Staff sat with the children during meals and snack times and helped to create a relaxed atmosphere through encouraging conversation and giving the children as much time as they needed to finish eating and drinking.

### 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

The following was observed on the day of inspection which supported the health, safety and welfare of the children.

##### **General Safety:**

The front of the premises was secured by a high wall and gate. This was the only way to access the site. The gate had a high sliding bolt which was inaccessible to children. Outside the gate was a tubular metal barrier to prevent children running onto the roadway in front of the premises when they were leaving the service.

The buildings on the premises were kept secured and entry managed by staff to prevent any unauthorised entry to or exit from the buildings.

Staff in the office building were able to see the front gate and observe who was entering the premises.

The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.

Hot water for hand washing was thermostatically controlled not to exceed 43°C. Water was heated by newly installed air to water heat pumps which ensured that hot water was available throughout the year.

There were soft fall surfaces under climbing equipment in the outdoor play areas.

##### **Infection Control:**

There was an infection control policy for the service, a cleaning policy and documented cleaning schedules for the premises, facilities and equipment.

The children and staff practiced good hand hygiene throughout the day. Hand washing was carried out before eating and after outdoor play, messy play, using the toilet or nappy changing. There were hand washing sinks available in all of the sanitary accommodation areas and in several of the activity rooms which ensured easy access to hand washing facilities when required. Staff were observed to supervise the children during hand washing and to give them instruction as required.

##### **Administration of Medication:**

There was a policy regarding the administration of medications to children attending the service. Signed parental consent was sought prior to the administration of both prescription and non-prescription medications to children attending the service. Care plans were documented and available in respect of children with medical care needs.

Medications were stored in a wall mounted cupboard in the corridor near the kitchen, which was inaccessible to children. A member of staff was responsible for checking medications to ensure that they were in date.

### Safe Sleep:

Children were supported to sleep according to their individual sleep rhythms and needs. Standard cots with fitted mattresses and stackable camp beds were available and stored outside of the activity rooms and set up when required. The room, formerly called the Green room, had been renovated with a new window in the ceiling with blackout blind so that this area could be darkened and made conducive to restful sleep for sleep times. Children were checked at 10-minute intervals while asleep and a record was maintained of these checks.

### Fire Safety:

Fire escape routes were kept free of obstruction.

### Outing:

Risk assessments were carried out and control measures put in place as needed for any outings to or from the service, including the transportation of children from Rainbow St Marys to 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) The staff in each area were responsible for recording the arrival and departure times of the children on the attendance register.

(3)(a) Staff met any visitors to the service at the office or at the front door before allowing them access to the service.

(b) Visitors to the service signed in at the office and a record was maintained of their visit.

### 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) Several members of staff held current certification in first aid response (FAR).

(2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid cabinet on the wall in the corridor and additional first aid boxes in several of the rooms where they could be easily accessed when required.

(b) The first aid supplies were available if required by a child attending the 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) There was a written record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service, most recently on 23 April 2024.

(b) There was a written record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. The firefighting equipment was serviced annually, most recently in March 2024. The smoke alarms were serviced annually by an electrician.

(4) A notice of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire were displayed on the walls in each room.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The service had current insurance for a full day care service catering for up to 65 children at any one time valid until 27 March 2025.