

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015TY106		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Emly Playschool		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Tennis Club, Emly, Co. Tipperary		
<b>Eircode:</b>	E34 VK02		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Joanna Carroll		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	12/02/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	15	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Tipperary.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Cullen		
<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

Emly Playschool is a sessional early years service located in the rural village of Emly on the Tipperary/Limerick border. The service provides an early childhood care and education program to children aged two to six years of age. The service operates from a room in a community premises known locally as the Tennis Club. The service is open from 9:00am to 12:00pm, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. The service has direct access to a large secure outdoor play area to the rear of the building and use of adjoining sports fields.

### Staffing

The service currently employs four staff members who work directly with children. The registered provider does not work directly with children in the service. Staff members held qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5 and 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### 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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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

- (2) Documentation was reviewed for the four staff members employed by the service.
- (a)(b) Two validated references were available for each staff member from either a past employer, or from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.
- (4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

## 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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children.
- (3) The staff to child ratios were maintained above the minimum requirements. There were 15 children aged 2 to 6 years being cared for by 3 staff.

### 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.*

*(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service comprised of a single room that was well laid out and resourced. The furniture and equipment had been used to create well defined interest areas with ample space in each area for children to play, explore and work together in pairs and small groups. Interest areas included: a cosy library area, imaginative play area, tabletop activities area, manipulative play area, and small world areas. Outdoor play was available onsite.

(b) The service had a cosy library area with a couch and a dark den where children could rest during the session if required. These were located in a quieter area of the room.

(4) Outdoors, children had access to a range of play spaces. Accessed directly from the classroom there was an enclosed concrete play area, and to the rear of the building was a grass and concrete area which had a selection of timber play equipment. In addition to these spaces the service regularly utilises the local amenities co located on the site, such as the tennis courts and adjoining Gaelic athletic association's walking track, grass pitches and all-weather playing pitch. On the day of inspection, the children used the enclosed all-weather playing pitch.

## 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 had a good range of equipment and resources available to support children’s play and learning. Furniture such as chairs and tables were appropriately sized for the age range of children attending the services. Materials and resources were provided in sufficient quantity and variety to support play. Materials and equipment were in good condition and appropriately maintained through regular cleaning and safety checks. The person in charge advised that the service operated a toy rotation system whereby materials and resources were changed to address the interests and developmental needs of children attending the service.

## 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) There was a person trained in a first aid responder available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the classroom and was available for the use of the children attending the service.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service demonstrated insurance cover for a sessional service for 22 children. The insurance policy commenced 28 March 2023 and will expire 27 March 2024.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The premises was a single storey building. The person in charge confirmed that they were not aware of any structural defects.
- (b) The premises was safe and secure. The access points were kept secured to prevent unauthorised access. The outdoor area was enclosed and gated.
- (c) The room was well lit by natural light through large windows, supplemented by artificial light. The windows were openable to allow for natural ventilation. The room temperature was recorded at 21.4°C which is within the required range of 18-22°C.
- (d) The room, fixtures and fittings appeared to be clean, well maintained and in a good state of repair. There were cleaning schedules in place for the service.
- (e) The service had two cubicles each with a toilet and wash hand basin, available for use by children. A separate staff toilet and wash hand basin was also available.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

*(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*

*(3) A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The room measured 52.95m<sup>2</sup> which is more than adequate space for the number of children the service is registered to accommodate.

(3) There was sufficient clear floor space for the 20 children currently attending on a sessional basis.