

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WH025		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Shannon Pre School		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Resource Centre, Connaught Street, Athlone, Co. Westmeath		
<b>Eircode:</b>	N37 V9K6		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Cyril Dully		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/10/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	13	PM NA
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co Westmeath.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C. O' Connor Hughes		
<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

This part time service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The age range of children enrolled in the service is 2 to 6 years of age. The service is currently operating a sessional service from 09:30 to 12:30 on a Monday to Friday basis. The service is part of a multiple operated by Athlone Community Services Council, CLG. The Early Years' Service consists of two pre-school rooms in an adapted single storey building located on Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath. A small outdoor play area is located at the back of the service.

### Staffing

The designated person in charge and a staff member were working directly with children on the 3 October 2024.

### 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.

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 member and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part II - Registration and Register

#### Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C (2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.*

#### Compliance Information

The service submitted a change in circumstance in respect of the new registered provider on the 18 September 2024 to the TUSLA registration office. This change was approved by the registration office.

### 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)

The designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

The designated person in charge was present for the duration of the inspection.

Five staff files including the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

Two written validated references were available in respect of the staff members.

Two written references were available in respect of the registered provider.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the staff members and the registered provider.

The service 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 or the registered provider had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(3)

The childcare manager ensured completed vetting procedures were in place before staff members commenced employment in the service.

(4)

The staff members working directly with children attending the service and held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 5 and 6 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.*

*(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).*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.

(4)(a)(b)

There were thirteen children attending the service supervised directly by two adults including the designated person in charge.

### 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

In a review of twelve child enrolment records information relating to (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h) was available in respect of the children attending the service.

(1)(h)

Six child enrolment records held information in respect of childhood immunisations.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(h)

Six child enrolment records did not have a record of childhood immunisations received.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

A letter has been sent to parents again requesting immunisation records with a return date before 15th November to submit. If the parent does not wish/cannot supply the record, they may submit a letter stating same but for the child's protection, inform us whether the child is immunised.

Administrative staff will ensure that immunisation records or as stated above a letter from parents must be attached to child's registration on commencement in the service.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Parent letter.

### Summary Comment

The corrective action stated by the childcare manager will address the non compliance when the information is received by the service on the 15 November 2024. This will be assessed on the next TUSLA inspection.

### 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;*
- (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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in accordance with Regulation 16 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) and (k).

### 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

A parent booklet was available for review with information in respect of 16 (1)(a) to (g).

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 18 – Copy of Act etc.

*A registered provider shall ensure that a copy of Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act and of these Regulations is kept on the premises and the said copies shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (a) a parent or guardian of a child attending or proposing to attend the service,*
- (b) an employee, unpaid worker or contractor, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

A copy of the of Part V11A (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No.40 of 2013)) of the Act and Regulations was available.

## 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,*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Children were learning to adapt and settle into their new pre-school routine. Adults supported children during the morning play activities that included free play, tabletop activities and outdoor play.

Positive behaviour strategies were used by adults including redirection and positive reinforcement while supporting children requiring extra assistance. Individual names were used and eye contact was maintained when adults communicated with the children in their care. Adults were positive towards children settling in giving hugs and reassurance as needed. A bell system was used to help smooth transitions for children to move from one activity to another.

Parents provided snacks for their children which included sandwiches, crackers, fruit and yoghurt with water to drink. Milk was offered to children as an alternative. Adults sat with children during snack time offering assistance

and support to children as needed. Children were encouraged to be independent as they dressed for outdoor play with the assistance of the adults.

Children use the toilet independently with the assistance of adults. Children in nappies are collected from the service by their parent and changed at home prior to returning to the pre-school.

Partnership with parents is maintained through a verbal handover on collection, via a short messaging system (SMS) with information and updates, a parent handbook and one to one telephone calls as required.

### 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 child friendly interest areas that included a home area, dress up, construction area, playhouse and developmentally appropriate toys and materials provided in the pre-school rooms met the needs of the children in the service.

### 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 main entrance door to the service was secure to ensure the safety of the children within. A bell system was in use for entry to the pre-school service. The inspector signed the visitors book in the service.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

##### Infection Control:

All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed.

Children were observed to wash their hands during the inspection.

Hand paper towels and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation.

The pre-school rooms were ventilated by openable windows. The mechanical ventilation in the sanitary accommodation was in working order.

### **Administration of Medication:**

No medication was given at the time of the inspection. Temperature reducing medication was stored safely in the service if a child presented with a high temperature.

### **Fire Safety:**

Emergency exits were unobstructed from the pre-school rooms in the service. A fire assembly point was located to the side of the building.

### **Outing:**

The service does not undertake outings.

## **Non-Compliance Information**

### **General Safety:**

1. The mats in the sanitary accommodation were not nonslip in nature which posed a potential risk of a slip or fall to a child and required replacement.
2. The wooden fence in the outdoor play area was worn and broken in places with nails protruding which posed a potential risk on injury to a child.
3. The lower end of the outdoor play required review as the surface is unsuitable for children to play on.

### **Infection Control:**

1. The water in the sanitary accommodation was too cold and ineffective for infection control purposes. The water temperature recorded was 14.2 degrees Celsius.
2. Two pedal bins were broken and required replacement in the kitchen and sanitary accommodation.

## **Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

### **General Safety:**

1. Non slip mats in sanitary accommodation were removed. Mats are not to be used in sanitary accommodation. (floor inspection as per hazard inspection)
  2. Wooden fences have been removed and replaced with PVC fencing. PVC fence to be inspected regularly for wear and tear.
  3. Lower end of garden area has been cleared and replaced with mulch. A mud kitchen has been installed in this area for the children.
- Caretaker has been requested to add this area to his list of weekly inspections and upkeep.

### **Infection Control:**

1. Warning sign placed over heater switch to prevent inadvertent switching off hot water. Staff and caretaker made aware of signage to ensure water heater is left in on position.
2. Pedal bins replaced in both kitchen and sanitary accommodation. Staff to report any broken damaged equipment on hazard inspection sheet.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **General Safety:**

Photograph and hazard inspection sheet.

#### **Infection Control:**

Photograph and signage.

### **Summary Comment**

The non compliances have been addressed.

### 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)

A staff member held a First Aid response (FAR) certificate. The designated person in charge stated she was participating in the FAR training currently.

(2)(a)

A first aid box was located in the pre-school room in the service.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school 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)

A written record of fire drills was available. The designated person in charge stated a fire drill would be carried out in October when children were fully settled into the service.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The smoke alarms and the firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced

on the 15 December 2023 and 6 September 2024 respectively.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

### 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

Children were supervised by adults in both pre-school rooms, in the outdoor play area and when using the toilet during the inspection.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 28 February 2025.

### Part IX - Inspection and Enforcement

#### Regulation 33 – Furnishing of information to agency

*A registered provider shall furnish the Agency with such information as the Agency may reasonably require for the purpose of enforcing and executing these Regulations and the information shall be in such form, if any, as may be specified by the Agency.*

#### Compliance Information

The service furnished the necessary information required for the inspection.