

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WX115		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Firefly Childcare		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Knockskemolin, Oulart, Gorey, Co. Wexford		
<b>Eircode:</b>	Y25 H324		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Tara Finn		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	11/11/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	45	PM 24
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspector Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C. Ryan & L. McGarry		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors		
<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

Firefly Childcare is a full day care preschool service. The service offers a play-based curriculum to children aged from 6 months to 6 years and can accommodate 53 children at any one time. The service operates from four rooms. The baby and toddler room are located to the side of the providers home, with two Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) rooms operating from converted buildings at the rear of the house. There is sufficient sanitary accommodation, a kitchenette, and a designated sleep room. The children have access to a garden and outdoor play areas located at the rear of the premises

### Staffing

There were nine staff working directly with the children in the service on the day of inspection including the registered provider. There was a designated person in charge present on the premises. The staff working directly with children in the service held the minimum Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at level 5, 6 and 8 qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and Recruitment,

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels,

Regulation 15 Record of a Pre-School Child

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

Regulation 21 Equipment and materials,

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,

Regulation 25 First aid,

Regulation 26 Fire Safety and

Regulation 28 Insurance.

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

(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

(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

(1)(a)(b)

On the day of the inspection the registered provider was the designated person in charge of the service. There was a second named staff member available to deputise as needed.

The staff files for 15 staff were reviewed, nine of whom were working on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

There were validated references for all employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service. The service also demonstrated partial compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years. See regulation 23.

(4)  
Certificates of qualifications for all staff members working directly with the preschool children were available on file.

### Non-Compliance Information

(d)  
Police vetting was not available on file for staff that had lived outside the state for more than six consecutive months.

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

The registered provider submitted the following response:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(d) Police vetting was applied for immediately. The police vetting was received, and the staff member provided a translated copy also. We will ensure that new staff apply for police vetting where they have lived or worked outside the state for more than six months.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of the police vetting.

### Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

## 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

Throughout the period of the inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children attending the service.

(2)

In the morning:

- Baby room: There were 5 babies in the care of 2 staff. (3 aged between 0 and 1 years and 2 aged between 1 and 2 years).
- Toddler room: There were 10 children in the care of 2 staff. (6 aged between 1 and 2 years and 4 aged between 2 to 3 years).
- Fia's room: There were 8 children in the care of 2 staff. (All aged between 3 and 4 years)
- Preschool room: There were 22 children in the care of 4 staff. (All aged between 3 and 5 years).

In the afternoon:

- Baby room: There were 4 babies in the care of 2 staff. (1 aged between 0 and 1 years and 3 aged between 1 and 2 years).
- Toddler room: There were 9 children in the care of 2 staff. (3 aged between 1 and 2 years and 6 between 2 and 3 years).
- Fias' room: closed
- Preschool room: There were 11 children in the care of 3 staff. (all aged between 3 and 6 years).

### 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

A sample of 10 children’s enrolment forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

### 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.

### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Children had access to a number of outdoor areas which included an enclosed concreted area suitable for ride on toys, a grassy area and well-developed interest areas. Interest areas included mud kitchen, sandpits, black boards, shelter areas and digging areas.

(b)

There was a designated sleep room available for younger children to sleep. It consisted of five cots. Bed clothes included cellular blankets, and each cot had a waterproof cover. Stackable beds were available for older children. There was a comfortable rest area in the ECCE room. The area consisted of a large comfortable leather couch which children could relax on. There were also cushions and warm blankets available for children to get comfortable.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

1. Children in the toddler room did not have sufficient sleep beds to meet all the sleep needs for the number of children attending. An additional two sleep beds were required.

2. There were some worn and broken toys in the outdoor area which needed to be replaced. For example, there were dolls buggies made of fabric which were weathered and soiled. There were baby dolls which were battered with pieces missing from their bodies.

3. There was no rest area in Fia's room for children to relax in.

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

The registered provider submitted the following response:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Two new beds were purchased and are in place. We will ensure there is an adequate number of beds going forward.
2. The toys were removed from the outdoor area. We will ensure that staff follow daily checks for the outdoor as well as indoor to remove broken toys.
3. Fiadh's room has a relaxation corner. If a child requires sleep, we can take a bed from toddler room.

## Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of new sleep beds.

## Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

## 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

Children in the toddler room enjoyed free play and time outside during the morning and afternoon. Children changed into wellies and wet gear for outdoor play. The toddler room was freshly painted with areas of interest. The staff dimmed the room in the afternoon to provide a calm environment for children to rest and sleep. The baby room was bright and warm. Large soft mats provided space for babies to crawl and roll. Staff were observed down on the floor engaged in play with the children at their level. A large armchair was available to sit to hold, comfort and feed children. A variety of toys and equipment was available for the children. The staff planned daily activities which included sensory and messy play.

The ECCE room was equipped with adequate play equipment for the stimulation and enjoyment of the children in attendance. There were jigsaws, small world animals, cars and trucks for children to play with. These were well laid out on low level shelves and were easily accessible to the children. There was a supply of paint, crayons and paper for children to use. There was a family wall with photographs of the children with their families displayed in the room. The areas of interest were well developed.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. Staff in the baby room were not provided with suitable chairs to sit on while feeding babies while in highchairs. The staff were observed standing over the children while feeding. They were not seated face to face to make the feeding experience more sociable and encourage babies with self-feeding development.

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

The registered provider submitted the following response:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action:

1. Two chairs (foldable) are in situ for feeding time, I also purchased a floor chair for staff comfort when on the floor with babies. Ensure going forward that feeding time is a more sociable activity, by ensuring staff use chairs and are face to face at feeding time.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of chairs in the baby room.

### Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

## 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

Staff sat with the children during meal and snack times making it a sociable time for them. Parents provided the snacks and meals for the children attending the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

The inspector observed that some of the foods available to the children were high in sugar or salt and inadequate to meet nutritional requirements for a full day care setting. This was evidenced by the following observations on the day of inspection:

1. Many of the children in the ECCE room had large bottles of juice to drink. Juice drinks are not recommended in preschool services as they can cause tooth decay in children.

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

The registered provider submitted the following response:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Parents were sent the healthy eating policy and asked to send water only to drink. A note regarding healthy lunch boxes was also sent. If the issue persists, we will provide the drinks to the children as needed.

### Summary Comment

The requirement of the regulation is met.

### 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 entrance to the premises was secured. Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the children.

#### **Infection Control:**

There was warm water, liquid soap and hand towels available for hygienic handwashing. Nappy changing observed in the baby room and toddler room was in line with the service policy and good hygiene practices were observed.

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

Records of administration of medication reviewed on the day showed that the practice was consistent and in line with safe administration of medication.

#### **Safe Sleep:**

There was one sleep room located between the toddler and baby room. There were standard cots available for young children in the room. Sleep mats were available for older children. The sleep mats were set up in the toddler playroom after lunch, with sheets and blankets. The sleep room temperature was maintained between 16 and 20°C which was in line with best practice.

The sleeping children's colour, breathing and position were observed and recorded every 10 minutes on the day of inspection. Staff were observed to physically check children while sleeping in the sleep room.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. 1. There were inconsistencies in the recording of accidents and incidents within the service. Staff practices were not in line with the service's policy. Staff in one room were recording accidents and incidents in a copybook and not in the services accident and incident record book. These logs in the copybook did not give an accurate account of the incident, actions taken and how the parents were informed.
2. Monthly fire drill practices were not in line with the Fire Safety in Pre-Schools 1999 guidance document. The document recommends that fire drills should include a monthly complete evacuation of the children from the premises to a place of safety in the open air. The service only carries out individual room fire drills.
3. Fire assembly points were not clearly identified on the premises.

#### Infection Control:

4. Nappy changing in the ECCE room was carried out on a mat on the floor of a toilet attached to the preschool room which was not appropriate for staff and children and posed as an infection control risk. This was non-compliant on the last inspection.
5. Mops and buckets were stored in the toilet of the ECCE room. This practice poses a risk of cross infection in the service. This was non-compliant on the last inspection.
6. There was no water flowing from the hot tap in the toilet of Fia's room. There was no disposable hand paper dispenser available in the toilet.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider submitted the following response:

#### Corrective & Preventive Action:

1. Staff have been advised to record properly in the accident/incident folder. Records will be checked weekly.
2. A whole service fire drill was carried out on the 27/11/2024 and 03/12/2024. All fire drills are carried out together now and going forward.
3. These are marked by a fire point sign and were in situ on the day of inspection.
4. A carpenter is going to make a unit for us and steps are ordered to go with it.

5. Cleaning equipment stored in shed outside and we will ensure proper storage of cleaning products going forward.
6. This tap stopped working and was in need of repair, we were waiting on proper taps to come in, these have since been fixed and are now in working order.

Supporting documentation submitted:

Copy of completed fire drills, photograph of invoice for steps, picture of fire assembly points.

**Summary Comment**

The requirement of the regulation is met.

**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 were staff trained in FAR and first aid for children available to the children attending the preschool service.
- (2)(a)(b)  
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

### 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)

The last recorded fire drill was carried out in October 2024.

(1)(b)

A record was maintained of when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm were serviced in July 2024.

(4)

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

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available to demonstrate that insurance was in place.