

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>   | TU2016FL500  |    |        |
| <b>Name of Service:</b>  | Roots and Wings Early Years Education and Care   |    |        |
| <b>Address of Service:</b>   | 22 Beresford Road, Turvey Ave, Donabate, Co. Dublin  |    |        |
| <b>Eircode:</b>  | K36 YF99   |    |        |
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>  | Nickola Cullen   |    |        |
| <b>Service type:</b>   | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional   |    |        |
| <b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>  | 30/04/2024   |    |        |
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b>  | AM   | 59 | PM No. |
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>  | Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency, 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin. |    |        |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>   | S. Cully   |    |        |
| <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

Roots and Wings Early Education and Care, established in 2017, is one of 3 privately owned Early Years services operated by the registered provider. This service provides full day care, part time and sessional care to children from the ages of 2 – 6 years for 51 weeks of the year, from 7.45am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday. The service is also registered to provide School Age care. Roots and Wings Early Education and Care operates from a purpose-built centre located in a residential area. There are 3 care rooms named the Caterpillar room, the Part Time Butterfly room and the Full Time Butterfly room. The service has a large enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the building. In the outdoor area there is also a cabin, which is used for small group activities.

### Staffing

On the day of inspection there were 16 staff members working in the service, including the service manager. The registered provider was also present in the service on a daily basis and arrived to the premises shortly following the inspectors arrival. The service manager and the registered provider are available to assist with the care of the children if required. Four core staff members were on statutory leave on the day of inspection.

### 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 registered provider, the service manager, 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) The service manager was the designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person available to deputise when required.

(b) The service manager was present on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection. The registered provider was present soon after the inspector's arrival and remained on-site for the duration of the inspection.

On the day of inspection, the files for 15 employees including the service manager were reviewed. The registered providers file was also reviewed. Ten of these employees worked directly with the preschool children on a daily basis, one of which was on leave on the day. Two staff on the premises were working with the school aged children. One file was for the driver of the school age transport vehicle, and one file was for the services' chef.

(2)(a)(b) There were 2 written, validated references available for the 15 members of staff and the registered provider whose files were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 15 members of staff and the registered provider. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for 2 staff members who had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Documentary evidence was available that 10 staff members working directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

The service manager, registered provider and two staff working with school age children also held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher 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.*

*(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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service at all times.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced at 9.35am and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed during the inspection:

- In the Caterpillar room there were 11 children aged 2 years 8 months to 3 years 3 months being cared for by 2 adults.
- In the Part-time Butterfly room there were 18 children aged 3 years 4 months to 4 years being cared for by 3 adults. A staff member in this room was employed to reduce the adult to child ratio to support children with additional needs, when necessary, as part of the Access and Inclusion Model scheme.
- In the Full-time Butterfly room there were 27 children aged 3 years 8 months to 5 years being cared for by 3 adults.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times, verified by staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained at the service.

### 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) A sampling process was used in relation to the children's records. All 11 sampled registration forms were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

(3)(c) The children's records were available and open for review by the inspector as authorised persons.

### 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, and

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

#### Basic needs:

- For the duration of the inspection the early years practitioners, manager and registered provider were observed providing attentive care and nurturing interactions to the children. When the inspector arrived unannounced the children in all care rooms were actively engaged in play and activities that sustained children's interest guided by practitioners who sat close to them encouraging discussion and exploration.
- The service provides a seasonal rotating menu consisting of a range of meals for breakfast, snack, lunch and tea in-line with the healthy eating policy. Children's allergens and dietary requirements are also catered for. Mealtimes were observed to be a social experience for children, as they sat and spoke freely together and with the early years practitioners. The practitioners encouraged children's independence skills during mealtimes, allowing children to take their own cutlery from low level shelving and serve themselves from the table while being supervised and supported.
- Younger children's nappies were changed at scheduled times and more frequently as required. The practitioners used the opportunity to engage warmly with the children chatting and singing with them. The children who were toilet trained were encouraged to use the toilet independently and were reminded to wash their hands afterwards while being supervised discreetly.
- Self-care stations were set up in each room which consisted of a mirror, tissues, and wipes to support children to meet their own personal care needs. The early years practitioners also met children's personal care needs by assisting them when needed or ensuring they were dressed appropriately for outdoor play.
- There were comfortable rest areas in all of the care room with each room having sofas and small armchairs, rugs and cushions available. The younger children in the Caterpillar room were facilitated to sleep on floor beds within the care room.

- There was ample space in the care rooms and outdoors for children to move freely around their environment. The services' ethos of child-led teaching and play based learning also facilitated children's opportunities to navigate their learning environments with confidence, choosing resources and areas to play in smaller groups.
- The early years practitioners were responsive to opportunities that supported children's positive social development and behaviour, facilitating children to negotiate together to resolve minor issues and offering appropriate solutions when needed.
- All children attending the service had opportunity to spend time outdoors on the day of the inspection.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff in the service were observed to have respectful relationships with the children. Children were spoken about positively and were often given encouraging feedback and praise. Individual care plans for children who required additional resources or support were documented to be child-centred and strengths-based. The children were given opportunities to contribute to the daily routine by helping the staff with small tasks. The early years practitioners were observed to make themselves available to all children by either sitting at tables with them, being on the floor with them or bending to their level when speaking with them.
- The children were observed to be comfortable and familiar with their peers, carers and environment. They were confident in sharing their thoughts and ideas with the adults and looked to them for support, comfort, or guidance. Children's suggestions or new interests were documented around the care rooms and used to plan interesting activities for them. For example, the children in the Caterpillar room had shown interest in the local postman and their thoughts about his job were documented and on display. Activities were then planned around their contributions to extend their learning. This recognition of children's knowledge and contributions supports children's well-being and sense of identity as a confident and capable individual.
- The management and staff team communicated well together throughout the inspection to support a smooth daily routine and consistency of care for children.

### Physical and material environment:

- Each care room consisted of clearly defined and labelled interest areas to facilitate meaningful self-directed play and extend children’s learning. These interest areas included well developed home corners, construction corners, art and craft stations, sensory play stations, small world play, reading areas, and tabletop activity areas. There was a wide range of natural, open ended and sensorial materials in each care room and in the outdoor space which encourages creativity, imagination, and sensory development. The care rooms also were decorated with soft furnishings such as fairy lights, plants and flowers and drapery which create inviting and comfortable spaces for children to spend time in.
- Materials and resources were well organised and stored on low level shelving which support children’s independent choices, allowing them to find materials with ease and put away their equipment during clean up time.
- The outdoor play was spacious and was organised into interest areas to facilitate outdoor learning. One area was covered by a canopy with seating areas for children to work and play at. In another area, there was a large sandpit surrounded by a raised decking with a wooden climbing frame close by. The third learning space was covered with a soft bark surface where children had access to sunken large tyres, wooden stumps and a bridge for climbing. A water wall was mounted along the back wall where there was also a sheltered construction area with a leather sofa and well-resourced mud kitchen. There was also access to ride on toys and bikes.
- The cabin located in the outdoor area was available to facilitate small group work. The cabin was resourced with an extensive book collection, props to support storytelling, a projector, puppets, soft toys, musical instruments, and cosy seating.

### 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 door and internal doors of the service were appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.

- The warm water temperature in the sanitary accommodation did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C which reduced the risk of scalding for the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely on and out of reach of children.
- The internal staircase was well lit and in a good state of repair.

### Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available at all the sinks throughout the service. There was also a handwash station available in the outdoor play area. Staff and children were observed to wash their hands at the appropriate times such as before meals or following outdoor play.
- Suitable disposable gloves and aprons were available and observed being used and disposed of by staff members after each individual nappy change. Pedal operated lidded nappy bins were provided for the disposal of nappies which reduced the risk of cross-infection.
- The service implemented effective soother management procedures. Soothers were stored and sterilised daily in microwave sterilisers.

### Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children.
- No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection. However, one child was on a medical care plan where medication may be required due to a medical condition. The service held all relevant paperwork in regard to an appropriate care plan, and staff demonstrated familiarity of the child's medical care needs during discussion with the inspector.

### Safe Sleep:

- Children over the age of 2 slept on floor beds and were provided with bedlinen.
- Records of sleep checks were maintained noting the child's position, colour and breathing pattern.

### Fire Safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Following review of staff files and the staff roster, it was evident that the registered provider ensured that there was a member of staff trained in First Aid Response (FAR) on the premises at all times.

### 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 fire fighting 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 record was maintained of fire drills which had been completed in the service. Based on the records maintained and as reported by staff members, fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 24/04/2024.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Fire extinguishers were certified as having been serviced in September 2023 and the smoke detection system in February 2024.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.