

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016KE003
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Childs Play Early Education
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Kildare Town Educate Together National School, Melitta Road, Kildare Town, Co. Kildare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	R51 RX38
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Georga Dowling
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	07/04/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	29	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency Suite 7 Vista Primary Care Centre Ballymore Eustace Road Naas Co. Kildare W91 X38W
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F. Maher
<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).

Conditions if applicable

Not applicable.

### Description of service

This private service is one of two services operated by the registered provider, the second being a full day care service in Newbridge. A sessional service is offered to children between the age of 2-6 years old. The service opens Monday-Friday from 08:30am-12:00hrs for 38 weeks of the pre-school year.

The service is located on the grounds of Kildare Town Educate Together primary school and two pre-school rooms are provided across two modular units with a covered play area between both. The pre-school has access to the large tarmac playground to the front of the pre-school.

### Staffing

There were four adults present in the service working directly with the children. Two members of the management arrived to the service at 09:30 and remained for the duration of the inspection.

The registered provider was not present during the inspection but if required can work directly with the children.

### 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 centre managers, 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)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

Seven staff records were reviewed and included the management staff present and the registered provider.

(2)(a)(b)

Fourteen written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source, in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of seven adults whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all employed staff members.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed.

(d) Police vetting was available for two staff members who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

All members of staff employed and who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed, held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education, or equivalent 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.*

*(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)  
There were 29 children attending the service being supervised directly by 4 staff members during the inspection. Two members of the management team who had arrived to the service at 09:30am, were also available to support the staff.
- (3)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day as specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6.

### 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-*  
*(c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

A sample size of 10 child enrolment forms were reviewed.

The information for each child as outlined in (a)-(i) of this regulation was completed for each record reviewed.

(3)(c)

The records were available for inspection.

### 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

There was a good variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys, materials and learning equipment available for the children to use and play with during the day. There were suitable and real-life props for the interest areas and manipulative games and puzzles for fine motor skill development. Low level open shelving units displaying the materials and equipment ensured these resources were always easily accessible to the children in each of the pre-school rooms. Sand trays and water play was available and a large sensory tray was available and contained coloured rice grains in the Red pod room. There was plenty of art and craft materials available including, paint, paper, crayons, play dough and materials for gluing, cutting and sticking. There were trikes, hula hoops and balls for gross motor development when playing in the large playground. The covered area was equipped with an outdoor kitchen, sand play, large building blocks and a small enclosed area was equipped with building/climbing equipment.

The resources and materials facilitated all types of play and learning and encouraged each child to experiment and use their imagination and self-direct their individual learning and activities.

Child sized tables and chairs were maintained in good condition in both rooms and ensured the children could sit comfortably for tabletop activities and when eating their snack.

### 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

Parents provided the morning snack for their child and the staff members ensured all food provided was nutritious and suitable. Snacks observed included fresh fruit and vegetable pieces, cheese, yoghurts, rice cakes and a variety of sandwiches with healthy fillings. During conversations with staff members, they advised the inspector they were very observant of any food provided that had the potential risk of choking and immediately halved or cut food. The children were given plenty of time to eat and crackers were available should any child still feel hungry. The staff members also advised they encouraged healthy eating practices with the children and the food pyramid was displayed at eye level in both rooms to facilitate the children's interest and knowledge around healthy food choices. Drinking water was freely available in each pre-school room.

### 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 doors to each of the pre-school rooms in the service were secured and controlled by staff to prevent the pre-school children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school. When in the covered area between both rooms, the staff ensured the walkway

entrance was cordoned off to ensure a child did not leave the immediate area and children were observed being supervised by staff at all times.

There was an outdoor play policy in place to guide staff when the children were playing in the adjacent school playground; the entrance gate to this area is a main fire evacuation point for the school and while secured with a slide bolt mechanism, remains unlocked during the day. When in the play area with the children, one staff member is assigned to monitor the gate area at all times to ensure a child does not access the gate and to prevent unauthorised access to the play area during this time.

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

### **Infection Control:**

Children's hands were routinely washed before eating, following toilet use, outdoor and messy play. There was a supply of liquid hand soap and paper towel at the sinks to support hygienic hand washing and foot pedal operated bins were available for the hygienic disposal of used paper hand towel and tissues. Both pre-school rooms and sanitary areas were observed maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

### **Administration of Medication:**

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection and in conversation with staff members, they were aware of the procedures to be followed to administer medicine safely to a child if required while attending the service.

### **Fire Safety:**

Regular monthly fire drills were carried out and records maintained. All fire exits were easily identifiable and unobstructed.

### **Outing:**

Outings do not take place from the service; this was confirmed by the person in charge.

## **Non-Compliance Information**

### **Infection Control:**

1. Art and craft materials were observed stored in the disabled access toilets in both pre-school rooms and included coloured rice grains on a foil plate and staff personal belongings placed on the floor beside the toilet in the sanitary area of the Red pod room. Other items observed included an empty box on the floor that was a loose part for future play and bags of play/craft equipment were tied to a rail on the inside of the bathroom door.

This practice of storing items in the toilet cubicles was a risk of cross contamination and infection for children and staff.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Infection Control:

Both Red Pod & Blue Pod disabled toilets have been cleared.

We have purchased storage units for both rooms.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Infection Control:

Photographs x 2

### Summary Comment

Following review of the written response and submitted photographic evidence the inspector is satisfied the requirement for Regulation 23 has been met at this time.

## 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.*
- (2) Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.*
- (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 members ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in the pre-school room.
- (2)  
Not applicable as this was not a drop-in service.
- (3) (a)(b)  
The person in charge ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.

### 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)  
Three staff members present were trained in first aid response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2)(a)  
The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in each pre-school room.
- (b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the children 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 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 written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was recorded on 11 March 2025.

(b)

Records were kept of the maintenance of the firefighting and the smoke alarm system in the premises which was last serviced 26 August 2024 and 27 March 2025 respectively.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.