

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2016LD004

**Name of Service:** Lámh Beag

**Address of Service:** St. Mary's GFC, Higginstown, Granard, Co. Longford

**Eircode:** N39 E436

**Name of Registered Provider:** Anna Lynch, Elaine Woods

**Service type:** Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 21/01/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	28	PM	22

**Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:** Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.

**Inspection undertaken by:** T. Duignan

**Title:** 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

Lámh Beag is a full day care service located on the outskirts of Granard in Co. Longford which is registered to operate from 8.30am to 5.30pm each weekday, accommodating a maximum of 30 pre-school children on a daily basis. The service caters for pre-school children from 6 months of age until they commence attendance at primary school. Lámh Beag is conducted from a single-storey premises located on the grounds of St. Mary's Gaelic Football Club, with two care rooms in operation. Ancillary accommodation within the premises includes an entrance hallway, sanitary accommodation, a sleep room and a kitchen. A fully enclosed spacious outdoor play area is provided which has direct access from both care rooms. A large car park is in place in front of the premises for those using cars to drop off and collect the children in attendance and for staff members.

### Staffing

There were six adults present on the day of the inspection including the registered providers, who work in the service on a daily basis.

All adults working directly with the children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under

- Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4) - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1),(2),(8)(a) – Staffing Levels.
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.
- Regulation 24 – Checking in and out and record of attendance.
- Regulation 25 – First Aid.
- Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures.
- Regulation 28 – Insurance.

however, on inspection additional non-compliance was identified under:

- Regulation 29 (c),(d) – Premises.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

### Additional Information

1. A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child was issued to the registered providers by the Early Years Inspector on 22 January 2025.
2. The written response received by the Early Years Inspector on 23 January 2025 from of the registered providers in relation to the immediate action was accepted.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered providers, 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

The files of nine employees and contractors were reviewed.

(2)

(a)(b) Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of nine adults employed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for nine adults working in the service. 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 available for four adults who had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months whose records were reviewed.

(4) Six adults employed and working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(4) There was no documentary evidence available that one adult held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) Lámh Beag have used a local agency for staff cover in the past and will continue to use these as a means of emergency cover for staff absences.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Document

### Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered providers have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 9(4).

## 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) There were twenty-eight children attending the service being supervised directly by five adults.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the Inspection. This was confirmed following review of the staff roster for 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 entrance door to the service was secured and managed by staff members to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. The manager documented the inspectors' visit to the service in the visitor's book on arrival. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. There was documentary evidence available that daily indoor and outdoor risk assessments were completed daily and reviewed by the manager weekly to promptly identify and manage any potential risks in the care rooms. The service had a system in place to manage maintenance issues.

##### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members were familiar with the importance of handwashing practice as a means to control the spread of infection in the service. They supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. Nappy changing practices were consistent with the nappy change procedure for the service. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues. The soiled nappies were removed to the outdoor bin following nappy changes being completed. Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

##### Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection, written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The staff members were familiar with required safe practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored.

##### Safe Sleep:

There was one sleep room with a total of four cots provided for children less than 2 years of age; five low level sleep beds and five sleep mats were available for all children aged over 2 years requiring sleep. There was an adequate number of cots to provide needs led sleep for young children. The staff members were familiar with current safe sleep guidance and the required care of sleeping children.

It was observed that 10-minute sleep check observations were completed on all sleeping children and the staff documented the colour, position and breathing of sleeping children in their care.

Comfortable rest areas were available for the children in each care room if they wished to take a break from activities and rest.

### Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service. The fire exits were not obstructed.

### Outing:

The service does not conduct outings.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Safe Sleep:

1. The mattress on the second cot on the right-hand side did not fit the cot frame as there was a gap at the bottom which could potentially cause a foot hold injury to a child.

#### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Safe Sleep:

1. A new mattress was purchased. In order to ensure this non-compliance from reoccurring in the future we have included a daily mattress check (including wear and tears or gaps that may cause a foot hold injury to a child) in our daily risk checklist for the sleep room.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Safe Sleep:

1. Invoice, revised checklist.

### Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered providers have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 23.

### 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.
- (4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

#### Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in each care room.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a),(b) The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained.
- (4) The registered provider confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

### 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) Staff members present were trained in 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 the two care rooms.
  - (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes for children were 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 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 was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 2 December 2024.
  - (b)
- A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment was serviced in November 2024 and the smoke alarm was last serviced on 15 July 2024.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the entrance hallway and rooms of the service.

## 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 valid until 27 March 2025. The insurance provided cover for 30 children.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 - Premises

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

*(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated.*

*(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(c)

- The environmental temperature in the nappy change area and the sanitary area used by 'Seomra 2' was not maintained between 18° – 22° Celsius.  
*A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child was issued to the registered providers by the Early Years Inspector on 22 January 2025.*

(d)

- The walls in the sanitary area used by 'Seomra 1' were stained. There was evidence of mould growth at the base of the walls in the two toilet cubicles.
- The handle of the entrance door had broken the wall surface leaving a small hole in the wall visible.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(c)

- A new radiator with a controlled thermostat has been fitted to the ceiling of the nappy room. A daily temperature record will be taken in this area as part of our daily checklist. Further radiators will be fitted if required.

(d)

- Mould has been cleared off the walls and treated with a mould shield before being repainted.

3. The hole in the wall behind the door has been refilled and a door stopper installed behind door to stop it from banging against the wall.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

1. Two photographs and revised checklist .
2. Two photographs.
3. One photograph.

### **Summary Comment**

The written response, documentary and photographic evidence submitted by the registered providers have been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 29 (c), (d).