

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2016WW006
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Imagination Station
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Unit 1 Croghen Industrial Estate, Arklow, Co. Wicklow
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<b>Eircode:</b>	Y14 WK53
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Joyce Myler
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	26/02/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	35	PM	4
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co.Dublin.
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Mona Condon
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Imagination Station provides part-time and sessional care to pre-school children who are currently between two and a half and five years of age. The service hours of operation are 09:30 to 14:30 daily and it is located in an industrial park in Arklow town, County Wicklow. There are three preschool rooms and sanitary accommodation. The outdoor area is located at the front of the premises.

### Staffing

There were six adults present on the day of inspection working directly with the pre-school children. In addition, the Registered Provider and a student on work experience were present. The Registered Provider was engaged in facilitating the 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 and safety. 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.

### Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the Registered Provider on 26/02/2024. Their response was received on 26/02/2024 and was accepted.

### 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

*(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

(2)  
Following a discussion with the person in charge it was confirmed that four new members of staff were employed in the service since the last inspection on 16/01/2023. A student was also present. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults as follows:

(a)(b) Ten validated references were available.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all nine staff members and the student. 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 one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six months as adults.

(4)  
Documentary evidence was available to confirm that four staff new members had 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.

### 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) At all times during the inspection an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children for part-time care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 35 children attending the service being supervised by six adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) The staff roster demonstrated that at least two adults are on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

### 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)- (i)

Fourteen files were examined.

In relation to the files examined, the record required in writing in relation to (a)-(i) above was kept for each child.

The children's files were located in a secure place in the service.

(3)(c) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) (a)-(i) was open to inspection on the premises by the inspector.

## 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)

### Basic Needs of Children

There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service. The food choices provided by parents for their child were nutritious. Children enjoyed freedom of movement indoors and outdoors. Children's behaviour was managed positively by the staff caring for them and children were praised and encouraged throughout the morning. Children were observed washing their hands before snack, following outdoor play and toilet use.

### Supporting Relationships around Children

The atmosphere in the pre-school was happy, relaxed, friendly and child centred. Staff members were respectful and kind towards the children in their care. It was evident by the interactions with the children that the staff knew

each child very well. Adults were observed assisting the children when needed. Smooth transitions were observed with notice given by staff regarding a change of activity.

### **Physical and Material Environment.**

The pre-school room was equipped with low level tables and chairs and low-level shelving units with equipment, toys and materials easily accessible to the children. The care rooms were laid out with Montessori equipment, construction toys, art materials and a rest area beside the library. The outdoor area at the front of the service had additional equipment including a sand pit, climbing frame and slide, transport toys, play house with kitchen.

### **Non-Compliance Information**

The temperature of the sanitary area on the first floor was too cold to provide comfort to the children. When checked the temperature of the room was 15.6. The recommended temperature of the sanitary area in a service is 18-22

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

An electric heater in the sanitary area has been installed to ensure the temperature is between 18-22 degrees as recommended.

The electric heater will be switched on daily when required to ensure the sanitary area is a comfortable temperature for the children to use. The temperature of the sanitary area will be monitored daily to ensure it is within the recommended temperature which is recommended.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence of the electric heater in place in the sanitary area.

### **Summary Comment**

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliance as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 19.

## **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 service met the necessary safety requirements in regarding of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

#### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members supervised children's and handwashing routines were well established. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues. Written cleaning schedules were on display for the room environment and sanitary area 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

#### Fire Safety:

Fire exits were unobstructed.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. Unauthorised access was possible to the indoor rooms within the service and to the outdoor area as follows:

- On arrival to the service unauthorised access was possible into the service via the main door which was unlocked. The doors to care rooms 2 and 3 were unlocked. There was a total of 25 pre-school children indoors.
- Unauthorised access was possible into the outdoor area at the front of the premises also. The latch on the gate to the outdoor area could be opened from outside, so that an unauthorised adult could gain access. There were 10 pre-school children with 2 adults present in the outdoor area at the 10:10 am.

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the Registered Provider on 26/02/2024 and their response was accepted.

2. The procedure for hygienic nappy changing was not in place as evidenced by the following:

- Following the removal of wet/soiled nappy the adult did not change gloves prior to using clean nappy and dressing child.
- The adult cleaned the changing mat with a cloth which was re-used again after the second nappy change. This posed a risk of cross infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. We have put a plan in place that the front door will be locked on entry and exit of the building at all times when using the outdoor playground. Each staff member will be equipped with a set of keys on their staff lanyard at all times. This will prevent any unauthorised access to the building. The two gates accessing the outdoor play area will remain bolted at all times during use. A new policy has been put in place which has been circulated to all staff.

##### Infection Control: Corrective Action

2. An updated procedure for nappy changing has been created using step by step guide with images for ease of use. This visual guide is now placed in the nappy changing rooms. The guide clearly outlines when it is appropriate to remove gloves to prevent contamination risk. A decision to use disposable antibacterial wipes to clean the unit between nappy changes. This procedure has been circulated to all staff and will be regularly reviewed at staff meetings to ensure it is remaining effective.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

A copy of the new policy in relation to use of the outdoor play area.

##### Infection Control:

Copy of step-by-step visual guide for nappy changing.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances as identified on inspection in relation to Regulation 23.

### 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) Four adults trained in First Aid Response were present and immediately available to the pre-school children.

(2) (a)(b) The first aid box was stored in an accessible area and was available to the children 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

(a) A record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2024

(b) Records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms dated August 2023 and September 2023 respectively.

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

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The insurance provides cover for up to 54 children attending on a part-time basis.