

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2017CC111
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	The Farmyard Kindergarten
-------------------------	---------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Strawberry Hill, Off Blarney Street, Co Cork
----------------------------	--

<b>Eircode:</b>	T23 TWF4
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Paddy Lynch
-------------------------------------	-------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	14/01/2026
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	16	PM	5
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	---

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, 13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork, P51 DD5Y
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	N O'Donoghue
<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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

### Description of service

The Farmyard Kindergarten has been in operation since 2017 and is registered to provide a sessional early years service for children aged 2 to 6 years. Two daily sessions are offered, with registered times from 9.00am to 12.30pm and from 1.30pm to 5.00pm, in conjunction with the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. However, the afternoon session is currently operating from 1.00pm to 4.30pm in the afternoon. Steiner pedagogy is implemented, and the service is predominantly based outdoors. The premises is situated in an urban area, on the north side of Cork city. There is a large outdoor area and an indoor care room on the ground floor, which has an adjoining kitchen and both child and adult sanitary facilities. The service also operates as part of a multiple service.

### Staffing

There were six adults attached to the service on day of inspection, this included four childcare practitioners, one student on placement and the registered provider who is not service based.

### 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. 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 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

*(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.*

*(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.*

*(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 had a designated person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection.
  - (b) A person in charge was on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.
  - (c) There was a clearly identified management structure in the service. This included the person in charge, deputy person in charge and childcare practitioners.
- (2) There were six adults attached to the service; all six adults files were open to inspection.
- (a) Of the 12 references required, 10 validated references were available from past employers.
  - (b) Of the 12 references required, 2 validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures has been obtained for all the six adults with direct access to children. 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 deemed to be required for three of the six adults working in the service and copies of the relevant documents were maintained on file for two of these adults.
- (4) All four adults working directly with children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(d) On review of one staff members staff file and in conversation with the person in charge, it was determined that an international police vetting was required for one staff member. This was not available on the day of inspection.

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

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

The person in charge obtained the international police vetting and placed it on file. The police clearance document will remain in the staff file onsite. International police vetting will be available for future inspections.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence of the international police clearance was received by the Early Years Inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (2) (d) has been adequately addressed.

## 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) The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(3) On the day of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of the regulation.

- In the morning Farmyard Kindergarten session, there were 3 staff working with 16 children, aged between 3 years and 5 years, all attending sessional care. One student was also observed in the room.

- In the afternoon Farmyard Kindergarten session, there were two staff working with five children, aged between 2 years and 3 months and 4 years and 6 months, all attending sessional care. One student was also observed in the room.

### 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) Twenty five children were registered as attending the service. Of the 25 children registered, 12 enrolment records were available on the premises. These were open to inspection. Eleven of the 12 records inspected had the detail required as listed from (a) to (i).

### Non-Compliance Information

(1) (g) (h) (i) One child's enrolment record did not have the required information on the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner, record of immunisations, if any and written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

(3) The person in charge did not have records for 13 children who attended the service. On discussion with the person in charge, they were aware these records were not available and stated they would get them as soon as possible. The service did not have accessible children's records on the premises for all children attending the service, posed a risk to the safety and care of the children.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) (g) (h) (i) The person in charge obtained the missing information identified on the child's enrolment records. Children's enrolment records will be reviewed and counted in early September and updated if necessary and as needed throughout the year. These records will remain stored onsite.

(3) The person in charge obtained all enrolment forms for the 13 children who attended the service and did not have a record onsite on day of inspection. These records will remain onsite and available to staff and for inspection going forward. The person in charge created a new policy with regards to the storage of children's enrolment records onsite.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

(1) (g) (h) (i) Photographic evidence of the 13 children's enrolment records were forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate.

(3) A copy of the new policy was furnished to the Early Years Inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 15 (1) (g) (h) (i) and (3) have been adequately addressed.

## 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

##### Basic needs:

- Children had access to their water bottles throughout the session.
- Children were encouraged in developing their independence skills such as putting on their own coat and zipping it up. Staff were available to support children if required.
- Parents/guardians provided a mid-morning snack which consisted of sandwiches, fruit and yoghurts.
- The children were observed independently accessing the sanitary areas. The staff were available to provide assistance, if required.

##### Supporting relationships:

- Staff spoke with children at their level, in a calm and relaxed tone. Children were at ease with staff and were comfortable in expressing their feelings and emotions to the staff members.
- Children engaged in parallel play and were observed to check in on their friends and include them in play.
- Staff were asking children if they wanted to participate in cleaning up, children were observed to freely get the dustpan and brush and support staff with clean up after free play.
- During mealtime staff sat at the table and engaged in social conversations with the children.
- Partnership with the parents was a predominant focus in the service. Staff engage with parents at collection and drop off. Parents were invited into the service on day of inspection to celebrate a child's birthday. This is an ongoing practice in the service.

## 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 19 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)

- The care room in use on day of inspection was clean, organised and free of clutter to facilitate the children on that day. The care room had an open shelving unit where children accessed toys such as kitchen utensils, dolls, puzzles and animals. There was also distinctive play areas identified around the room including play kitchen unit, a construction table and creative area.
- The outdoor area was accessible by the main room, with access to bikes, scooters, wheelbarrows, tuff trays, sensory activities including a mud kitchen and sand-play area. There were climbing areas and planting areas available in the outdoor area. It was secured by an iron fencing.
- There was an adequate number of toys available to the number of children attending the service on the day.
- Additional resources were available in the storage room.

(1) (b)

The care room had a rest area available to children which consisted of a couch, cushions and books, which were accessible for children to use when relaxing.

### 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 internal and external doors of the service were secured and prevented children from exiting the premises and unauthorised persons accessing the service.
- Toys and equipment appeared in good condition and well maintained.
- Blind cords were securely out of reach of children.
- The openable windows were out of reach of children.

##### Infection control:

- Staff were observed cleaning tables between activities and prior to mealtimes.
- Regular handwashing was observed throughout the day. Staff were observant of handwashing and ensured children's hands were clean from dirt from outdoor play.
- Pedal operated bins were observed in the main room and sanitary facilities.
- All perishable foods were stored in the refrigerator.

##### Administration of medication:

- No administration of medication was observed on the day of inspection. Discussion with staff ensured staff were aware of the correct process for administering medication in the event it was required.

##### Fire safety:

- Fire exits were clear of any obstruction and were clearly identified in the room.
- Fire equipment was available in the event it was required.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

It was evident throughout the day of inspection that children are supervised at all times, this was observed by staff engaging in supervision by sight and sound. Staff supported children when required. This was observed both indoors and outdoors.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certificate for the service was furnished to the inspector. The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- The contact details for the insurance provider.
- The name and address of the service insured.
- The number of children covered by the insurance was 22 children.
- The categories of insurance cover for the service.

The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27 March 2026.