

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2017TY087
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Dualla Village Preschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Dualla Community Field, Newpark, Dualla, Cashel, Co. Tipperary
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<b>Eircode:</b>	E25 NX92
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Kelly Reay, Sarah Lawlor
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	28/11/2023
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	17	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Tipperary.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Cullen
<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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Dualla Village Childcare is a part time early years service which provides a play based programme which is substantially outdoors. Located in a prefabricated building on the ground of Dualla Community Field, on the outskirts of Dualla village, near Cashel, Tipperary. The service comprises of one indoor classroom, with children's sanitary accommodation, a covered heated outdoor classroom to the side of the premises and a large tarmacadam outdoor play area.

### Staffing

The service currently employs six staff members, which included both the registered providers who work directly with children daily. Staff members held qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5, 8 and 9 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/ health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 - Record of preschool child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included time spent in the indoor and outdoor classrooms.

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 providers, 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.

(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)(c) There was a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named person was available to deputise as required. An organisational chart provided details of the management and reporting structures within the service. Information was available detailing the role of each staff member and specific responsibilities such as fire officer and designated liaison person for example.

(2) Documentation was reviewed for the six staff members employed by the service.

- (a)(b) Two validated references were available for each staff member from either a past employer, or from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member.
- (d) Police vetting was available for two staff members who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.
- (4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above 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.*
- (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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children.
- (3) The staff to child ratios were maintained above the minimum requirements. There were 17 children aged 2 to 6 years being cared for by 5 staff.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a) – (i) Prior to a child commencing in the service, all parents and/or guardians were issued with a child registration form. This registration form was developed by the service and contained all of the required information for parents and/or guardians to complete.

A sample of ten child registration forms were reviewed on the day of inspection, and all were completed in full with appropriate declarations signed by parents and/or guardians.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 17 – Information for parents

*A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).*

#### Compliance Information

Information for parents was available in several locations, namely: parent’s handbook provided to new families entering the service, on information notice boards, in the services policies and procedures and via the service communication application.

The information provided to parents proposing to register their children in the service included: the details of staff members, the age profile of children who the service caters for, class of service and the hours which are on offer. Details of the services policies and procedures and adult to child ratios. Details of the facilities and the programme of activities and care provided were available and accessible to proposed parents.

### 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

On arrival at the service the inspector observed that children were engaged in self-directed play in the both the outdoor and indoor classrooms. Children were observed to move freely between both spaces over the duration of the inspection. Depending on the numbers of children in each area at any given time, staff members were observed to move between both spaces to support learning and play. Activities and provocations for learning were set up by staff members each morning prior to children’s arrival. These themed based activities were based on the emergent interests from the children and seasonal activities. On the day of inspection some of the provocations included: a winter themed playdough activity and activity trays with an arctic animal experience both

indoors and outdoors. A sensory tray with homemade snow and animal small world, another sensory tray based on the children's interest in transport was resourced with wood chips and vehicles.

The indoor areas were bright, warm, and homely, this was achieved using natural materials, soft furnishings, plants and neutral colours. Low-level open shelving units were used to create areas of interest. Children could freely access materials and resources from the labelled shelves and storage baskets, promoting independence and choice making. A range of play-based materials were offered in the home corner, role play, messy play, and construction, mark making areas of the room. A creative role play area was set up as a ticket office with a large selection of resources to promote engagement in play and learning.

Children's literacy development was promoted with through an inviting cosy library area, which had low level benches with cushions, a large selection of books and props. Dress up materials, a puppet stand and puppets were available for use by the children. All areas of the room and materials were clearly labelled with pictures and words to further support early literacy development.

Outdoors the children had use of the sheltered outdoor classroom, a tarmacadam area, two mud kitchens with real life resources, a small and large playhouse, and a large selection of wheeled toys. The heated outdoor classroom was sheltered from the weather and floored in bark mulch. A small mud digging area was available for children and located near the outdoor sink with hot and cold running water. There were several open-ended activities set up on activity trays linked to children's interests and a seasonal theme. Low-level shelving and clear sealed storage boxes ensured children could access materials of their choosing independently. A large selection of natural resources such as cones, stones, wood chips, wood slices, bamboo and small sticks were available to support play.

Parent and guardian communication during collection and drop off periods, provided an opportunity for staff to share information with parents. Additional methods of communication such as the service's communication application and phone calls were used to share information, pictures and observations.

Children's identity and belonging was fostered through use of meaningful displays of works of art and a 'wow wall' recorded the children's learning. Interactions between staff and children were supportive and children were

observed to enjoy daily tasks such as the 'helping hand'. At snack time a miss you shout exercise was completed by the group to acknowledge children who weren't in attendance on the day.

The service was implementing an inclusion policy and this was evident in their practices during the inspection. The environment was inclusive and representative of the children attending the service, with images of the children and their families displayed. Adjustments to the learning environment and teaching strategies were used to support the learning and development of all 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) There was a record of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 23 October 2023.

(b) There was a record available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 28 August 2023 and the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 06 September 2023.

(4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed in a prominent location in the indoor classroom.