

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2018WW504		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Curious By Nature Preschool		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Winetavern, Stratford on Slaney, Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow		
<b>Eircode:</b>	W91 N9T3		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Michelle Lavelle		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	16/11/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	22	PM 15
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Mona Condon		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector.		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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		

### Description of service

This sessional service operates in a purpose-built premises located adjacent to the registered provider's home in a rural area in County Wicklow. The service operates two sessions per weekday between 08.30am and 11.30am, and 11:40pm and 14:40pm. There were 22 children present for the morning session and 15 children present for the afternoon session on the day of inspection. Care and education is provided to children aged 2-6 years. The service has one indoor care room, with an adjoining sanitary area and a covered conservatory area available to the children. The registered provider stated that while an indoor pre-school room is available, all learning takes place in the large outdoor area located at the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

There are a total of four adults employed, which includes the registered provider, who 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 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.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the Registered Provider, staff members 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 (4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and*

*(4), 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 for four staff members were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b) There were eight written and validated references available for the four staff members.

(c) Documentary evidence of a processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for four staff members.

(d) International police vetting was available for two staff members who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Three adults employed held major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at National Framework for Qualifications or the equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(4)

It is acknowledged that one adult had evidence of a qualification in childcare from another jurisdiction. However, it could not be verified that this qualification was equivalent to a at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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

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

A copy of the new staff member's qualification has been sent to the DECDIY for verification and we are awaiting their response.

### Summary Comment

This non-compliance remains outstanding and will be reviewed on next inspection.

### 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 four adults, which included the Registered Provider, working directly with twenty-two pre-school children for the morning session and four adults working with fifteen pre-school children for the afternoon session.
- (3) The adult/child ratios were maintained throughout the inspection.

### 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)

Thirteen 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.

Each child's file was 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 inspectors.

### 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-*

*(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(b)

Staff demonstrated warmth and affection in their interactions with the children. They addressed them by name, used gentle tones and interacted with them in a positive manner.

The Inspector observed that staff were attentive to the personal care of the children. Staff assisted children in the bathroom used opportunities when assisting with personal care for warm individual engagement with the children.

Children were engaged in activities during the session and played alone, in pairs and in small groups, while being supervised and guided as needed by the staff present. Transitions from one activity to the next were observed and occurred naturally with each child engaging in play and activities for periods of time and then changing as they wished. There was a choice of several interest areas outdoors which included, swings, slides, climbing area, sand play, construction, art/painting, puzzles and a home /kitchen area. Staff interacted with the children encouraging turn-taking, sharing, and giving them an opportunity to try equipment/toys safely.

Staff sat with the children when eating. They provided them with help when needed whilst supporting their independence.

## 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 outdoor play area was secured by walls and gates. The main entrance to the premises was secured.
- All cleaning products were stored out of the reach of children.
- Fire exits were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

- Pedal operated bins were available for the safe disposal of used paper towels in the sanitary areas and outdoor area.
- Table cleaning was observed before snack time.
- Hand washing by the adult and children was observed after using the toilet and before lunch. Liquid soap and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing.

##### 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.

##### Outings:

- The Registered Provider confirmed that no organised outings are undertaken by the service.

### 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)

Two adult trained in First Aid Response was present and immediately available to the pre-school children. Another staff member was qualified in Paediatric First Aid.

(2)

(a) The first aid box for children was safely stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the pre-school.

(b) At all times the first aid box was available to the children.

### 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 record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last fire drill was recorded on the 19/10/2023.

(b)

A record was available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarm, both dated May 2023.

(4)

Notices were displayed in conspicuous positions, detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

## 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<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The insurance provides cover for up to 22 children.