

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2020CE001		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Burren Preschool		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	New Quay National School, New Quay, Burren, Co. Clare		
<b>Eircode:</b>	H91 HY40		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Gerry Naughton		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	07/06/2023		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	7	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. McCarthy		
<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
---------------------------------	----------------

### Description of service

Burren Preschool was established in 2020 and is located in New Quay National School, in North Clare. The service currently facilitates a sessional, play based programme of care for children ranging in age from three to six years, Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 12:00 for 38 weeks of the year. Care and education are provided in one large playroom with a sanitary facility and an enclosed outdoor play area is located to the rear of the service.

### Staffing

During the inspection the manager facilitated the play-based programme of care. The registered provider is part of the board of Directors and does not work in the service. Two emergency contact/relief persons are available as required and live within close proximity of the service. The manager and the two relief persons held appropriate qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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 inspections may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19(1)(a), 23, 25 and 26. 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.

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*

*(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)

The manager was the designated person in charge and two contact persons are available within close proximity to cover in the event of an emergency.

(b)

The manager was the designated person in charge and was available at all times during the inspection.

Four files were available in respect of the registered provider, the manager, and the two emergency contact persons.

(2)

(a)

Four references with evidence of verification were available from past employers.

(b)

Where past employer references were not available, four verified references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda Vetting disclosures were available and reviewed in respect of the registered provider, the manager, and the two relief persons/emergency contact persons.

(d)

Not applicable, as the adults had not lived outside the state for a period longer than six months.

(4)

The manager and two relief persons/emergency contact persons held an Early Childhood Care and Education qualification at Level 6 and Level 7 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.*

*(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*

*(c)*  
*a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)  
An adequate number of adults work directly with the children attending the pre-school service at all times.
- (3)  
The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained at all times. The manager worked directly with the seven children throughout the inspection.
- (8)(c)  
The service is operated single-handedly by the manager. Two adults are available within close proximity of the service to provide relief cover when required.

### 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

(1)(a)

The inspector observed the children's learning, development, and well-being to be supported by the staff member. The staff member demonstrated respect and warmth towards the children in their care using soft and gentle tones of voice, positive language and engaging with the children at their level. During observed interactions, the staff member demonstrated a good knowledge of the children's individual interests, needs and learning preferences. The staff member interacted warmly with the children, listened carefully to their stories and questions, responded to them with interest and provided regular praise and encouragement throughout the session.

The children were supported to be independent, according to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, caring for their belongings and retrieving their lunches from their bags. Free-play activities predominated for the duration of inspection and the children had access to plenty of free space to move around both indoors and outdoors and the children were free to select which activities they chose to engage with. Children's language development and communication skills were supported through the positive and on-going conversations and visual aids observed during the inspection. The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their meal in a relaxed and unhurried environment. Lunchtime was observed to be a sociable occasion for the children who could sit and chat with their peers.

The indoor and outdoor environment featured a range of developmentally appropriate toys, equipment and play materials suitable for the age range and number of children in attendance. The indoor play setting was a bright and colourful space which was decorated to reflect the children's sense of identity and belonging. The wall space was used to display children's artwork, literacy and numeracy aids and posters linked to curricular themes which the children had been learning.

The layout of the preschool room was carefully considered to encourage children to make choices and initiate self-directed play and activities. Resources were easily accessible, and the children demonstrated familiarity with navigating their environment to independently access the toys, equipment and materials they chose to play with. There was plenty of clear floor space to enable the children to move around unhindered and appropriate furnishings of low-level tables and chairs were available to facilitate mealtimes and tabletop activities.

The outdoor area was accessible directly from the preschool room to the rear of the service. This area had a grassy surface, and the surrounding perimeter was enclosed by fencing and a lockable gate and externally by the school yard and a gated entrance. The play area offered a suitably resourced space for the children to freely move and engage in physical, sensory and pretend play.

### 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 to the service was secured to prevent unauthorised persons from entering or unsupervised children exiting the building.
- The children's arrival and departure times were recorded in a logbook and the children were supervised at all times.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored safely out of reach of the children.
- The blind cords on the windows were secured out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor play area was adequately secured with a high fence and gate.

##### Infection Control

- The service was maintained in a clean condition and completed cleaning schedules were available.
- Running hot water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lined, lidded pedal bins were available in the care room, the toilet and the nappy changing area.
- The children's hands were washed at appropriate intervals after using the toilet, cleaning nasal discharges, outdoor play and before snack time.

### Administration of Medication:

- The manager stated that medication is not routinely administered in the service, however documentation for staff to record medications given was available in the event that medication was required.

### Fire Safety:

- The fire escape routes and passageways in the service were clear from any obstructions.
- The fire assembly point was clearly displayed in the school yard.
- A visual aid was available to demonstrate the fire evacuation procedure and the reasons for completing fire drills in a child friendly manner.

### Outing:

- The manager confirmed that outings are not 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)  
The manager and one of the emergency contact persons had First Aid Responder training and the certificates were valid to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2024.

(2)(a)  
A suitably equipped, first aid box was stored in a designated area in the care room.

(b)  
A first aid box was available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

### 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)

Records were available demonstrating that fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis. The last completed fire drill took place in June 2023.

(b)

A record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire alarm system were available on the premises with the most recent service having been completed respectively on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2022 and the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2023.

(4)

A fire action notice was displayed in the service demonstrating 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

An up-to-date insurance certificate was provided to the Inspectorate demonstrating insurance cover for eleven children attending the service. The insurance cover was valid until the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024.