

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2022GY005
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cairde ELC
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Unit 2, 50 Tuairin, Roscam, Co. Galway.
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<b>Eircode:</b>	H91 XEH1
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Noreen Murphy
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	21/10/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	44	PM	40
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F Kelly, B Lavin
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors.

### 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

This childcare service was established in September 2022. It was purpose built in a new housing estate on the outskirts of Galway city. It offers a full-time, part-time and sessional service to children aged between 1 and 6 years, from 07:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. The building comprises of 3 playrooms, a designated sleep room and both children and staff sanitary areas. The children have access to a secure outdoor play area to the side and rear of the building.

### Staffing

There are 13 adults employed in the service. The registered provider does not work in the service. There was a service manager appointed as the person in charge.

### 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.

Additional non-compliances which posed a risk were identified under Regulation 9, 19, 20 and 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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

This inspection was triggered by information received by the early year's inspectorate.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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.*

*(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 manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspection, the manager and the area manager were on the premises and facilitated the inspection.
- Following discussions with the manager and a review of the staff roster, it was confirmed that there were 5 new staff members since the last inspection dated the 03/07/2024. These 5 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.
- (2)(a) Of the 10 required written and validated references 5 were from a past employer.
- (b) Of the 10 required validated references 3 of the references were from a source other than the most recent employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the staff working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting for staff members every 3 years.
- (d) Five adults worked outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months or more, while over the age of 18 years and had the required police vetting disclosure.
- (4) Five adults who were working directly with the children, had evidence of an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) There were 2 references on file for the staff member that had recently started working in the service. However, these references were not validated by management prior to the person commencing work in the service. This may pose a risk to the children as appropriate vetting procedures were not carried out prior to the staff member commencing employment in the service.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to the staff member being appointed, assigned or allowed access or contact with a child attending the service, therefore may posed a risk to the children attending the service.

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

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

The references have been validated and management will ensure that staff vetting is completed in full prior to commencing employment in the service.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Documentation submitted to the Inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted to the early years inspectorate were reviewed and the non-compliance's identified under regulation 9 have been adequately addressed.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the following policies and procedures were in place as per schedule 5 for the service. The policies, procedures and statements were consistent with the service practices.

The registered provider ensured that the following policies and procedures are in place for the service:

- (a) Statement of purpose and function
- (e) Managing behaviour policy
- (t) Staff training policy
- (u) Supervision of staff policy
- (q) Recruitment policy

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) During the period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.

(2) On the morning of inspection there were 44 pre-school children attending the service.

- Wobbler Playroom- there were 3 adults working with 11 children aged between 12 months and 24 months.
- Toddler playroom- there were 3 adults working with 14 children, aged between 2 years 8 months and 3 years.
- ECCE Pre-school room- there were 3 adults working with 19 children aged between 3 and 4 years of age.

In the afternoon there were 40 pre-school children in attendance.

- Wobbler Playroom- there were 3 adults working with 11 children aged between 12 months and 24 months.
- Toddler playroom- there were 3 adults working with 14 children, aged between 2 years 8 months and 3 years.
- ECCE Pre-school room- there were 3 adults working with 15 children aged between 3 and 4 years of age.

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

(h) Daily attendance records were available in the service.

(i) Staff roster was available.

(k) The registered provider had records of accidents and incidents in the preschool service. These records demonstrated the immediate actions completed by the staff members and how the parent/guardian was informed of the incident.

(3)

The records were available for inspection on the day.

### 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

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

#### Compliance Information

##### Basic Needs

- Drinking water was available to all children in individual beakers throughout the day.
- Children were observed eating their snack which consisted of fruit, yogurt, cheese and sandwiches. Children were supported during mealtimes with opening food items when needed. Independence was encouraged with self-help skills.
- There was a weekly menu in place with the service providing breakfast, main meal and afternoon snack. The main meal served to the children was roast chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, carrots and gravy.
- Children sat at tables and chairs which were appropriate for their height and/or stage of development.
- The staff were observed sitting at the child's level and chatted in a respectful manner.
- The privacy and dignity of each child was respected during toileting and nappy changing.
- Appropriate rest facilities were available in the care rooms in the form of soft matting and child sized couches.

##### Supporting relationships

- Each care room had a learning journal for the parents to view photos and descriptions of the children's, activities and learning.
- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. The inspector observed children getting praise for their efforts in play and learning.

- The inspector observed a child receiving reassurance in the toddler room when they needed additional support at nappy changing. The staff member offered reassurance and communicated using soft gentle tones.
  - A staff member was observed rocking and soothing a child who required extra support at nap time.
  - The service provided parents and guardians with daily information, including significant events or activities involving their child through the use on an online application and through verbal communication at drop off and collection times.
  - Staff members talked to the children in a manner which encouraged language development. Children's attempts to say new words were recognised and encouraged with repeating back what the child had said and providing praise and acknowledgement for description words such as the "black bin".
- (3) The inspectors did not observe any practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

## Non-Compliance Information

1. There was no evidence that staff members were using ongoing observations and interests of the children to create an effective programme of activity for the children in the playrooms. The Toddler and the ECCE playroom followed the same curriculum plan.  
  
The curriculum plan was developed in September outlining the weekly plan until December. This may have a negative impact of the wellbeing, learning and development of the children attending.
2. A staff member in the Wobbler room was observed placing a child's dinner directly down on the highchair tray, the young child was expected to eat their dinner of chicken stew with their fingers from the tray. There was no effort to provide the child with age-appropriate crockery and cutlery suitable for their age and stage of development. This practice did not encourage the child to learn the skills of using cutlery and learn the skills of self-feeding.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Staff have received training on child led activities and emergent curriculum planning from the service area manager. Staff will continue to review and discuss curriculum planning at team meetings.
2. This was discussed at a staff meeting and staff will ensure to follow the service policy on healthy eating and use age-appropriate crockery and cutlery.

## Supporting documentation submitted

No documentation submitted.

## Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted to the early years inspectorate were reviewed. The non-compliance's identified under regulation 19 have been adequately addressed.

## 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 to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day.

## Non-Compliance Information

The points below outlined areas where the learning and the development needs of the children were not accommodated and may have an impact on the children attending these playrooms:

- (1) The interest area provided for children in the Wobbler room and the ECCE room were poorly stocked with toys and had poorly defined interest areas for the children to play. The children in the ECCE room were observed to be engaged in predominantly tabletop activities through the session. There was a lack of sensorial developmental toys and imaginative role-playing toys available to the young children attending this room.
- (2) The children were observed taking part in adult led activity which involved making a cobweb. This activity was linked to the theme which was "Halloween". The staff member was observed to show a child how to weave wool around lollipop sticks in the shape of a 6 sided cross, to represent a cobweb. The child attempted to do this activity; the staff intervened and took the sticks from the child and proceeded to undo what the child had done and handed it back to the child and redo it again correctly. This activity was adult led. There were 4 children sitting around the table watching each child been shown individually. This arts and craft activity carried a risk of not facilitating the children's learning and development as it was not based on their ability and skill level.
- (3) The children in the Wobbler room were observed engaging in a painting exercise (painting on a paper plate), however only 2 of the 11 children attending got to complete the activity as the staff member

informed the inspector there weren't enough resources for each child to complete the task. This arts and craft activity carried a risk of not facilitating the children's learning and development as there were insufficient resources to facilitate the number of children present.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The management team and room leader have made changes to the preschool room to allow for more imaginative role play. A referral has been made to Better Start to help the staff further their understanding of the need for a variety of play activities.
2. A review of the planned activities within the preschool room took place at staff team meetings. An early year's child led approach will be adopted and the support of the Better Start service will reinforce this.
3. There are sufficient materials to complete the tasks and activities set for the children.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

No documentation submitted. Statements from the registered provider have been accepted.

### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted to the early years inspectorate were reviewed and the non-compliance's identified under regulation 19 have been adequately addressed.

## 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.*

### Non-Compliance Information

#### **General Safety:**

There were a number of tall free-standing units in each of the care rooms that were not secured to the walls. This posed a safety risk to the children in the care rooms.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### **General Safety:**

The units have been attached to the wall with appropriate wall brackets. All free-standing units will be wall attached in the future.

## Supporting documentation submitted

### General Safety:

No documentation submitted. A statement from the registered provider was accepted.

## Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted to the early years inspectorate were reviewed and the non-compliance identified under regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.