

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2022MO002

**Name of Service:** Sugradh Le Cheile Pre-school and Afterschool

**Address of Service:** C/o Ballintubber National School, Ballintubber, Co. Mayo

**Eircode:** F12 KW18

**Name of Registered Provider:** Helen Farragher

**Service type:** Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 06/05/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	21	PM	No.
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	B Lavin & Fergal Duffy
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector & Inspection and Registration Manager

### 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 service is a privately operated sessional service, catering for children from two years eight months to six years of age. It is open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 12.00pm during the academic year and the service caters for up to twenty-two children at any one time. Two established sister services are located in Westport. The service is located in a purpose built facility on the grounds of a primary school in Ballintubber, Co Mayo. There is one large playroom, a kitchen, sanitary facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area.

### Staffing

There are two staff employed in the service who work directly with the children. The registered provider does not 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. On inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 record of a preschool child.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present or assisted 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) There is a designated person in charge in the service and a named person is available to deputise as required.
- (b) The person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) The records of three adults including the registered provider employed in the service were reviewed.
- (a) Five of the required six written and verified past employer references were available in respect of the three adults employed in the service.
- (b) There were no references for any staff member from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the adults three in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for the three adults.
- (d) International police vetting documents were available on file for two adults who lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as adults.
- (4) Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available on file for the two staff who worked directly with the children.

### Non-Compliance Information

A written validated reference was not on file for one of the adults working in the service.

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

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

None received.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

None received.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider did not submit a corrective or preventative action. There is a requirement for a registered provider to ensure that a non-compliance is corrected and prevented. The non-compliance will remain outstanding and will be reviewed at 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 2 adults working directly with 21 children on the day of inspection.
- The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:
- Twenty-one sessional children aged between 3 - 4 years and 2 members of staff caring for the children.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained.

### 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) to (i) The inspector's reviewed a random sample of 10 children's records. The records contained the required details as laid out under the Regulation.
- (c) The required information was made available for inspection by the person in charge on request.

## 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:

- Drinking water was available to all children in individual beakers throughout the morning session.
- Children were observed eating their snack which consisted of fruit, yogurt, cheese and sandwiches which was provided by their parents/guardians. Children were supported during mealtimes with opening food items when needed. Independence was encouraged with self-help skills. Pleasant social conversation took place between the staff members and children during snack time.
- Children sat at tables and chairs which were appropriate for their height and/or stage of development.
- The privacy and dignity of each child was respected during toileting.
- A child's nappy was changed as necessary and in a timely manner.
- Appropriate rest facilities were available in the care rooms and children were observed spending time in this area for short periods of rest throughout the day.
- Sunscreen was applied carefully by the staff members and children were encouraged to wear their sun hats while playing outside.
- Children had easy access to the outside areas throughout the day and children moved freely between both indoors and outdoors.

- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions to sharing toys, equipment and turn taking.

### **Physical and material environment:**

- The care room was laid out in clearly defined areas which enhanced the learning needs of children across all developmental areas. Examples included a home corner with toy kitchen appliances and utensils, dressing up/role play area, puzzles/board game area, arts and crafts, library area, writing area and a family area.
- Equipment and toys were laid out in baskets on low-level shelving which encouraged choice and promoted independence, which the children were observed exercising throughout the morning. Examples included play figures, dinosaurs, vehicles, construction materials, musical instruments and natural materials such as pinecones and wood.
- The immersive learning environment was supported by pictures displaying days of the week, weather conditions, scenes from different seasons, emotional states and child friendly hand-washing techniques.
- The outdoor play area offered an alternative change of environment for the children. A range of developmentally appropriate equipment was provided in the fully enclosed area which provided opportunities for the children to practice their gross motor skills of swinging, climbing, sliding and running.
- Additional equipment was available from a storage shed with scooters, trikes and bikes.

### 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

- (2)(a) The first aid box was stored in an accessible manner on a high shelf in the premises.
- (b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

#### Non-Compliance Information

- (1) No person trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) was available to the children attending the pre-school service on the day of inspection. One staff member had paediatric first aid.
- (2) The first aid box did not contain the appropriate quantity of first aid supplies. There were two plasters available which was not sufficient for the number of children attending the service. Sterile water was not present in the first aid box.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

None received.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

None received.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider did not submit corrective or preventative actions. There is a requirement for a registered provider to ensure that a non-compliance is corrected and prevented. These non-compliance's will remain outstanding and will be reviewed at next inspection.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service's insurance with an expiry date of 27/03/2026, was for a sessional service, for a maximum number of 22 children. The insurance covered the following,

- public liability,
- personal accident,
- insurance against fire and theft,
- buildings,
- outings undertaken as part of the service provision.

### 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:

1. Whole grapes were present in a child's lunch box. Whole grapes are a choking risk to a preschool child.
2. Two of the lockers used by the children to store their belongings were broken with the tacks exposed. This posed a risk of injury to a child.
3. Cleaning products were accessible to children in the staff toilet. This posed a risk of injury to the children.
4. The tuff tray in use by the children in the outdoor area had a large crack on the tray. This posed a risk of injury to the children.
5. There was black weed control netting exposed in the outdoor play area. This posed a trip hazard to the children playing in the area.
6. A storage container accessible to children was broken in the outdoor play area. This container stored garden tools. This posed a risk of injury to children.

**Infection Control:**

A sealed foot operated nappy bin was not in use on the day of inspection. This posed a risk of infection to the children and staff.

**Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

**Corrective & Preventive Action**

**General Safety:**

None received.

**Infection Control:**

None received.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**General Safety:**

None received.

**Infection Control:**

None received.

**Summary Comment**

The registered provider did not submit corrective or preventative actions. There is a requirement for a registered provider to ensure that a non-compliance is corrected and prevented. These non-compliances will remain outstanding and will be reviewed at next inspection.