

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2022WW006

**Name of Service:** The Cove Preschool

**Address of Service:** Coolnagreina, Trafalgar Road, Greystones, Co. Wicklow

**Eircode:** A63 K668

**Name of Registered Provider:** Jennifer Pust, Michelle Fenelon

**Service type:** Part Time, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 14/05/2025

|                                   |    |    |    |   |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|---|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 16 | PM | 8 |
|                                   |    |    |    |   |

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| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Tusla Child and Family Agency<br>First Floor Trinity Building<br>IDA Business Park<br>Southern Cross Road<br>Bray<br>Co. Wicklow |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | H. Bourke  |
| <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).

**Conditions if applicable** N/A

### Description of service

This service was first established in 2022 and is located in Greystones village, Co. Wicklow. It comprises of one care-room, a sanitary area, and a hallway. These areas occupy the ground floor of a semi-detached house. Security gates at the side of the premises are opened at beginning and end of session to allow children and parents to enter and exit safely. An outdoor area is available at the rear of the premises. The hours of operation are between 08.30 to 13.30, and the service operates for 38 weeks of the year. The service offers sessional or part-time care to children aged between two and six years. Twenty-two children can be accommodated at any one time.

### Staffing

There are two registered providers, both of whom work in the service. One other adult is employed in the pre-school.

### 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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 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.*

*(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme.”*

### Compliance Information

Following a discussion with the registered providers and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that three adults work in the service, these files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

One registered provider was present and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

One registered provider was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspector and the second registered provider arrived a short time later. Both registered providers remained on the premises for the remainder of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of three adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for three adults.

(4)

Three staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(6A)

One adult was employed under the Access and Inclusion Model.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

International police vetting was not available for one adult working in the service who had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d)

Staff member only lived outside Ireland for 5 months. We will ensure this information is correctly provided to the inspector.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(d)

Photographic evidence of signed affidavit confirming time spent abroad submitted with CAPA response.

### Summary Comment

The above action has addressed the non-compliance found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation (9)(2)(d) 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.*

*(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.*

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

*(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

### Compliance Information

(1)  
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)  
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were three adults present working directly with 16 children on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)  
The registered providers ensured that there were two adults on the premises at all times. This was confirmed by reviewing the staff roster.

### 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)

The registered providers ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, were kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The registered providers ensured that these records were available for inspection to an authorised person.

## 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:

- All toys were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route from the pre-school room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

#### Infection Control:

- The sanitary area was beside the pre-school room. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- A foot pedal bin was available in the sanitary area and in the pre-school room for the safe disposal of used paper towels and other waste matter.

- Table cleaning was observed before and after snack time.
- A cleaning schedule was present and maintained in the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. On the day of inspection, the inspector was able to gain access to the service through the main door which was unlocked. Service doors should remain secure throughout the day to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised and unauthorised people gaining access to the service.

#### Infection Control:

2. On the day of inspection, no hand washing took place between the children returning from playing outside and starting their snack indoors. Hand washing by both adults and children is essential for the prevention of the spread of infection and infection control purposes.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. A new lock has been added to the garden gate. Signs are now displayed to ensure the main door is locked during the day. A staff meeting was held to brief all staff on the new policy. Reminders are set to ensure all doors and gates are lock by a designated time.

#### Infection Control:

2. Staff meeting was held to reiterate the importance of hand washing for the children and staff. Posters are now displayed at the wash area to aid the children along with books, songs and social stories at circle time.  
  
All staff signed a signed copy of the minutes of the meeting and will comply with the policy. Hand washing in factored into the daily timetable.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence of a new gate lock, new door signage and evidence of staff retraining was submitted with the CAPA response

### Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence of handwashing posters erected in the sanitary area, and staff retraining was submitted with the CAPA response

### Summary Comment

The above actions have addressed the non-compliances found on the day of inspection in relation to Regulation 23 General Safety and Infection Control and will be reviewed on next inspection.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

### Compliance Information

(1)  
The registered providers ensured that all children attending the pre-school were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The registered providers ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people had access to the pre-school.

(b)

The registered providers had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the pre-school.

## 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 registered providers were trained in FAR first aid and available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place within the pre-school room.

(b)

The first aid box was available to the children attending the service at all times

## 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

*(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*

*(c) an authorised person.*

*(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 having taken place in the pre-school service on a monthly basis. The registered providers carried out their current fire drill on the day of inspection.

(b)

There was a maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke detectors on the premises dated May 2025 and the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2025 respectively.

(2)(c)

The above records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to inspection by an authorised person.