

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Tusla I.D.: TU2023DL003

Name of Service The Meadow Childcare

Address of Service: Ballygay, Milford, Donegal. F92F6YA

Email Address: themeadowchildcare@outlook.com

Name of Registered Provider: Neasa McBride

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	x	Part-Time		Sessional	x
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in Number of Children that can be Accommodated from 15 to 62 children (additional 2 units) • Change in Service Type from Sessional to Full Day, Sessional • Addition of a Session (Sessional Service Only) Additional Room 22 Children • Change in Hours of Operation from 09:15-12:15 to 08:00-18:00 • Change in Number of Staff Employed from 2 to 12 staff
Proposed Number of Children:	62 preschool children
Recommended Change Following Inspection:	Full day care service to accommodate 62 preschool children maximum.
Registered change:	

Date of Inspection:	2	7	0	8	2	0	2	5
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Inspection undertaken by: N. McEndoo

Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, 2nd Floor, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F95 XK94

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Rationale for Inspection: Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day Care & Sessional Service For 62 Children Maximum
Date of Registration	12.09.2025

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	The applicant proposes to operate a full day care service accommodating up to 62 preschool children, aged between 2 and 6 years. The service currently provides sessional and school-age childcare from the existing premises. A newly constructed building, located adjacent to the original facility, has been developed to support the expansion and includes two additional care rooms. The registered provider is also separately registered to operate as a childminder.
Premises	The proposed service is located in a rural area approximately 3 km from Milford, on the grounds of the registered provider's family home. The service will operate across two buildings: Building 1, houses the existing care room currently in use for sessional and school-age services. Building 2, is a newly constructed facility containing two care rooms, a newly fitted kitchen, staff room, and sanitary facilities for both children and staff. Additionally, a securely fenced outdoor play area located to the side and rear of the building and off-street parking to facilitate safe drop-off and collection of children.
Staffing	The service is operated by the registered provider, who is actively involved in the day-to-day running of the sessional service. In total, it is proposed there will be 12 staff members employed in the service.
Methodology	<p>The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes; Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.</p> <p>The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.</p>
Acknowledgements	The Inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a) The service has a proposed designated person in charge and a proposed person to deputise as required.

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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)—

(b) a childminder shall ensure that a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the childminder in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the childminder in the event of an emergency, and

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school 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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The service proposes to cater for a maximum of 62 preschool children on a sessional and full day care basis. There will be 12 staff members employed. The proposed allocation of staff to children is accepted as meeting the required adult child ratios.

(2) The registered provider confirmed that they are aware of the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in Part 2 of Schedule 6 and will ensure that an adequate number of adults will at all times work directly with the number of children attending the service.

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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, and*
 - (b) *there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*
- (2) *A registered provider—*
- (b) *of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016, shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.*

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

(1)(a)

With regard to the number and age range of preschool children which the service proposes to cater for and the amount of time they spend on the premises there were adequate and suitable indoor play facilities in place.

- The two new care rooms contained a well-stocked array of play equipment and materials divided into clearly defined interest areas. These included arts and crafts, construction, small world items, dress up materials, a play kitchen, a library area, and manipulative play resources.
- There were open low level shelving units provided, ensuring all items are readily available to the children.
- There were adequately sized tables and chairs available for play activities and mealtimes.
- There were adequate and suitable outdoor play facilities in place within a dedicated area at the rear the building, fully enclosed and secure for children’s play. Ground cover to the rear of the building consisted of a large, grassed area to the side, and artificial grassed area to the rear. The area was sufficient in size to accommodate a large group of children to engage in gross motor physical play such as ball games, running and jumping. Play area consisted of a footballs and goals, a climbing frame, a slide, and large sand pit with accessories for digging and building. There are plans to further develop the area when in operation.

(1)(b)

For children aged from 2 years, the service ensures developmentally appropriate sleep arrangements are available. Stackable floor beds equipped with suitable bedding is available to support rest as needed for the children who require it.

(2) (a)

There was a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space that will be available to the children. The boundary of the outdoor play area was secured with hedging, fencing

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and locked gates. The location of the outdoor play area on site allowed for unrestricted daily access.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met.

- It is proposed that all meals and snacks will be prepared and cooked on the premises. A comprehensive four-week menu plan has been developed, which includes alternative options to accommodate individual dietary requirements. The registered provider will undertake the role of chef and assume responsibility for the preparation of all meals and snacks on-site.
- A refrigerator is available in each care room for the storage of food items that may be brought in from home contained within the children's lunchboxes.
- A supply of drinking water will be available to the children throughout the day.
- The service has a healthy eating policy available that will be communicated to parents and guardians. The policy contains guidance on the provision of healthy food for children attending the pre-school.

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.

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met:

- The main entrance to the premises is secured by lock and key, preventing unauthorised entry to the premises. Children will be met at the lobby by staff and taken to their care room.
- Internal doors are fitted with elevated handles positioned out of children's reach, preventing unsupervised exit from the care room. Rooms are only accessible from the outside with a key fob or key code.
- Windows have been risk assessed, and safety window latches are in place.
- The kitchen is inaccessible to the children.
- A refrigerator is available to store perishable food items for children attending on a sessional basis to store their lunch boxes brought in from home.
- The service's waste area is located outdoors and is inaccessible to children.
- All toys and resources are in good condition and free from pinch or crunch points.
- A locked storage room, located within one of the care rooms is used for the safe storage of cleaning products and supplies. The room is inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The bathrooms are stocked with liquid soap and paper towels for effective hand washing.

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- Foot pedal operated bins are used for waste disposal.
- The warm water in the sanitary accommodation is thermostatically controlled and can be maintained to a safe temperature no great than 43°C. 4

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—
- is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and
 - is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Requirement met:

- (1) Four staff members employed in the service have up to date certification in First Aid Response (FAR) training with expiry dates ranging from 09/10/2025 to 06/12/2026.
- (2) (a) (b)
There was a suitably equipped first aid box available to the preschool children in each of the care rooms if required.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of—
- any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
 - 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.

Requirement met:

- This requirement has been met:
- (1) (a) The registered provider demonstrated that monthly fire evacuation drills will take place in the service and that provision for recording fire drills is available.
- (b) A record of the maintenance of all firefighting equipment was available with the most recent maintenance date of 27th August 2025.
- (4) Fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed on the wall of the care room. The fire assembly point is located to the front of the premises.

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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met:
The service has a certificate of insurance for full time day-care service commencing 1st September 2025 for a maximum of 110 children at any one time with an expiry date of 27th March 2026.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met:

- (a) On a visual inspection the service appeared to be of a sound and stable structure. The registered provider confirmed that they were not aware of any deficits with the building.
- (b) The care room and outside play area were observed to be safe and secure.
- (c) Adequate lighting is available in the proposed care room with the provision of a mix of natural and artificial lighting. Large openable windows provide adequate light and ventilation, while natural light is supplemented by fluorescent lighting.
- (d) The service is clean and appears well maintained.
- (e) The proposed care rooms have sanitary accommodation which consists of one nappy changing area, five children’s toilets and five children’s wash hand basins for the use of the preschool child. Staff sanitary facilities are also available on the premises. Two further handwashing sinks are available to the children, one in each of the care rooms.

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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (4) *Where a registered provider contemporaneously provides—*
- (a) *a sessional pre-school service, and*
 - (b) *a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum clear floor space applicable for the duration of the sessional preschool service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the floor space specified in paragraph (3).*

Requirement met:

This requirement has been met:

(1)

Adequate floor space is provided in the proposed classroom for the free movement of children to work, rest and play.

(4)

Room 1:

It is proposed that a maximum of 16 children aged 2-3 years will attend the service's proposed new room on a full day care basis. The service demonstrated adequate free floor space for this number of children.

The care room measured 46.65m².

Room 2:

It is proposed that 31 children aged 3-6 years will attend the service's proposed new room on a sessional care basis. The service demonstrated adequate free floor space for this number of children.

This room provided adequate floor space for 27 of these preschool children wishing to stay on for the full-time day care service.

The care room measured 62.84m².