

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2023MH006
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Dolphins Early Education and Childcare Centre
-------------------------	---

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Dun Rioga Close Dunshaughlin Co Meath
----------------------------	---

<b>Eircode:</b>	A85AK68
-----------------	---------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jennifer Healy
-------------------------------------	----------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day Care
----------------------	---------------

<b>Dates of Inspection:</b>	28/11/2023
-----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	41	PM	35
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Family Resource Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath.
---	--

<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D. Murray & C Tunney
----------------------------------	----------------------

<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
---------------------------------	----------------

### Description of service

Dolphins Early Education & Childcare Centre provide a full day care, part-time, sessional service to children from 1 to 6 years. The service operates from 07:30hrs to 18:30hrs each weekday and eligible children participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. A school aged service is also provided.

The service is located in a purpose-built facility and consists of the following rooms:

**Room 1** provided care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 6 years attending the service on a sessional, part-time basis from 08:00am to 13:00pm. On the day of inspection this room was not opened as 5 children who normally attend this room was facilitated in Room 4. This room catered for school aged children in the afternoon.

**Room 2** catered for children from 2 to 3 years attending the service on a full day care basis.

**Room 3** facilitate the care of children from 1 to 2 years attending the service on a full day care basis.

**Room 4** provided care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 6 years attending the service on a sessional, part-time, full day care basis.

Other rooms in the service included a cot room, staff room, laundry room, kitchen and staff and children's sanitary facilities.

An outdoor area was located to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

Employed to work in the service were the manager, assistant manager, 8 childcare staff members and a cook who were all present on the day of inspection.

### 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 announced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,20,22 and 28. 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

08/12/2023 An Immediate action notice was issued pertaining to Regulation 9 Management and recruitment with a response received which was accepted by the Inspectorate.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the manger, 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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2)(a)&(b) Eleven staff files were reviewed. Twenty two validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 10 staff members.

(d) Police vetting was available for 5 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) All 10 childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

## Non-Compliance Information

(2)(c) One staff member working directly with the children did not have Garda vetting. An Immediate Action Notice was issued on the 08/12/2023 with a response received which was accepted by the Inspectorate.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(c) Garda vetting has been obtained and submitted to the inspectorate. The registered provider will ensure that all staff members are Garda vetted before commencing employment.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Garda Vetting for the staff member.

## Summary Comment

The registered providers in the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan has addressed the non-compliance for Regulation 9 (2) (c) Management and recruitment. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

## 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 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) On the day of inspection there was a manager, 1 assistant manager and 8 adults working directly with the 41 children attending the service.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed on the day of inspection:

- Room 1 Part-time room was closed.
- Room 2 Toddler room had 12 children between the ages of 2 to 3 years attending the service on a full day care basis being care for by 2 adults.
- Room 3 Wobbler room had 7 children attending the service on a full day care basis being cared for by 2 adults.
- Room 4 Full Day Care room had 22 children, 17 of which were attending on a full day care basis, 4 children attending on a part-time basis with 1 child attending on a sessional (ECCE) basis being cared for by 4 adults.
- One staff member and the manager were able to provide assistance to the rooms as required.

(8) The registered provider ensured that there were always two adults on the premises when the service was in operation, as evidenced in the staff roster maintained in the service.

## 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 following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

### Basic needs:

- The staff members in all care rooms were observed encouraging and collaborating with children in their play activities. They used welcoming facial expressions and gentle vocal tones when engaging with the children and showed a keen interest in what each child was doing.

- Children individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required. In the Toddler room 2 and the Wobbler room 3 children who became upset were picked up and nurtured and cuddled until they settled. Children were settled to sleep at the designated sleep time after dinner. In the Full Day Care room 4 children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.
- Staff members were observed changing children’s nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care.
- The staff members sat and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required whilst encouraging conversation and extending interactions.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning. Children were observed become involved in meaningful, sustained play experiences with both their peers and staff members.
- Transitions were handled smoothly with staff members giving the children ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.
- Staff members stated that the themes of the week were “Shapes” “Animals,” “Trains “and “Sensory play” with art works displayed to reflect these themes in the care rooms.

### Supporting relationships around children:

- A record was kept in the Wobbler /Toddler rooms of issues pertaining to each child as occurred during the day and this information was passed onto parents or guardians by an electronic tablet device.
- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed on “The Family Wall” in the care rooms which gave a sense of identity and belonging. Overall, the children appeared comfortable, happy and relaxed in their environment.

## 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
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

### Compliance Information

- (1)(a) A cot room with 8 standard cots was available for the younger age group requiring sleep. Stackable beds were placed in Room 2 Toddler for the older children requiring sleep. Cosy areas consisting of mats and cushions were available in all care rooms for children to take a break from activities and rest if needed.
- (3)(a) An outdoor space was located to the rear of the premises, which was enclosed by walls and fencing with 2 secure side gates. The surface area consists of an artificial grass surface, cement and tarmacadam. Equipment includes a kitchen, activity tray, goal posts, slides, ride on toys, enclosed boxes with additional play equipment and 2 wooden benches.

## 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.*

#### Compliance Information

All meals and snacks were provided and prepared onsite by the cook. The service has a 3-week menu plan with a variety of dishes ranging from meat, chicken, fish and a vegetarian option. A constant supply of water was also available and accessible to the children.

Breakfast was served from 8 to 9am which consisted of a choice of cereals and toast. A morning snack of sliced apples and oranges and crackers were served at 10am. The main meal of the day was served at 12:00am which consisted of sausages, mash potatoes, peas, sweetcorn and gravy.

An afternoon snack of tomatoes and cheese toasties were served at 14:00pm with a further snack of fruit and yogurts served at 16:00pm before leaving for home. Water and milk were the drinks of choice at mealtimes.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 66 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 02/10/2023 to the 27/03/2024.