

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2024CE001

**Name of Service:** Little Seedlings Cratloe Preschool and Childcare

**Address of Service:** Ballintlea South, Cratloe, Co. Clare

**Eircode:** V95 TWR2

**Name of Registered Provider:** Kiran Browne

**Service type:** Full Day, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 30/10/2024

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	7	PM	7
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A.McCarthy
<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** Not applicable

### Description of service

Little Seedlings Cratloe Preschool and Childcare is operated by an independent provider located in a rural area in Cratloe, County Clare. The service facilitates a programme of care and education Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00 for children ranging in age from six months to six years on a sessional and full day care service.

The service is located in the owner's private residence. The care of the children takes place predominantly in one large open plan care room on the ground floor. A sleep room and sanitary facilities for the children and adults are located adjacent to the care room. The outdoor area is located at the rear and side of the childcare facility.

### Staffing

On the 30 October 2024, the registered provider and an adult worked alongside seven children in the morning and seven children in the afternoon.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

**Regulation 9** – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

**Regulation 11** - Staffing levels (1) (2) (8)(a)

**Regulation 19** - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

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. 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 provider, the person in charge 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 registered provider was the person in charge and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The registered provider and a named person to deputise was available at all times during the inspection.

(2)

Two files were available in respect of the adults working in the service. The findings included the following:

(a)

Four written and validated references from past employers in respect of the adults working in the service were available.

(b)

Not applicable, as the available references were sourced from past employers.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the adults working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was available in respect of one adult working in the service who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months.

(4)

The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education recognised qualifications deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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)  
An adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.
- (2)  
On the 30 October 2024, the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained in the care room. Two adults cared for the seven children throughout the day.
- (8)(a)  
During the inspection two adults were available on the premises at all times.

### 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)

#### Basic Needs of Children:

The adults treated the children in a caring and respectful manner. Positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults conversed with the children in a sensitive manner, used soft tones of voice, acknowledged the children by their individual names and responded promptly to their cues for assistance. The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings and using the toilet. The adults offered praise and encouragement. The children were respected and supported in their choice of individual and group engagement in activities. The adults worked effectively together to facilitate the programme of care and education in each room. The transitions in the children's activities were completed with ease. The children sat together during mealtime and conversed amicably with their peers and the adults. The parents/guardians provided the children's snacks, and the service provides a hot meal from an external company. Mealtime was observed to be a relaxed and sociable occasion. The transitions in activities were completed in a calm manner and the children were notified in advance of these changes.

#### Physical and Material Environment:

The care room was bright, spacious and well-resourced and was laid out to enable the children to freely move and play. On the inspector's arrival, the children were engaged in sensory play, planting seeds and gross motor skills in the outdoor area. The children transitioned to story time, a group artwork session using a Halloween theme and open-ended play-based activities. The children were offered a range of developmentally challenging play and educational activities and observed to be fully engaged as they transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor environment. Learning aids and creative work were displayed on the walls in the care room. A variety of opportunities for play and learning activities were available and accessible in the indoor and outdoor environments with defined areas of interest. The care room was appropriately resourced with a pretend play wooden house, wooden puppet theatre, a dress up area, a teepee tent with soft furnishings. A couch, an armchair and an area with reading materials were used by the children to rest and relax. Low level shelving units were accessible to the children with a range of manipulative, imaginative and constructive toys and learning materials for the age and level of development of the children. The outdoor play area is located to the side and rear of the service and was accessed by the children during the inspection. The children wore all weather clothing and footwear and had access to a swing, a slide, a climbing frame, a sensory table with pumpkins and utensils, goalposts, a mud kitchen, large tyres and a wheelbarrow. The children were observed to thoroughly enjoy their time in the indoor and outdoor environments.