

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Initial Inspection of Proposed New Service



Tusla I.D:	TU2024MO003
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Name of Service:	Stepping Stones Cuilmore
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Address of Service:	Cuilmore National School, Newport, Co Mayo F28 VF68
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Email Address:	steppingstonesnewport@yahoo.ie.
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Name of Proposed Registered Provider:	Catherine Sheridan
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Type of Proposed Service:	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Full Day Car	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed service type:	Sessional and Part time
Proposed Number of Children:	22
Registered service:	Sessional service from 09.00hrs to 12.00hrs Part time service from 09:00hrs to 14:00hrs 22 preschool children Children aged between 2 and 6 years of age

Date of Inspection:	1	5	0	8	2	0	2	4
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Inspection Undertaken by:	A.Kennedy
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address:	TUSLA - Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Government buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co Roscommon
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Rationale for Inspection
Proposed New Service

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

Registration Status:	Registered Part time, Sessional Service 22 children.
Date of Registration:	22 nd August 2024

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	This proposed new pre-school service will be based in a primary school classroom, within a 3Km distance of the town of Newport, Co Mayo. An Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school sessional and parttime care programme will be offered from 9.00hrs to 12.00hrs and a part time service from 09:00hrs to 14:00hrs. It is proposed that the pre-school will cater for a maximum of 22 children at any one time, for children aged between 2 and 6 years of age. A play-based pre-school curriculum focusing on emerging interests is proposed to be provided.
Premises	This pre-school service proposes to operate from a designated classroom. A quiet rest area is available for children to rest and relax. There is a designated secure outdoor play area located at the rear and side of the primary school.
Staffing	The registered provider proposes to work between this service and her second pre-school service in Newport. There is a named designated person in charge and a person able to deputise. There are three staff (including the registered provider) who will be working directly with children who have at least a major award Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. The staff have documentary evidence of on-going training and education.
Methodology	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 two themes: Governance, and Safety. The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented

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	in the Inspection report and presented to the Registration Panel for consideration of a decision in relation to the service receiving continued registration. 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.
Acknowledgement	The Inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the Registered Provider, and the Principal of the Primary school 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.

Requirement met:	(1)(a) The requirement was met. There will be a proposed designated person in charge and a proposed named person available to deputise in the service.
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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.

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Requirement met:	<p>The requirement was met.</p> <p>(1)</p> <p>It is proposed that there will be an adequate number of staff working directly with the pre-school children. The proposed three staff hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of a Level 5, in Early Childhood Care and Education.</p> <p>It is proposed that there will be two staff, working directly with the proposed children.</p> <p>It is proposed that the registered provider will be available as childcare relief.</p> <p>It is proposed that there will be a maximum of 22 children at any one time.</p>
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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.*
- (3)(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.*

Requirement met:	<p>(1)(a)</p> <p>The design, organisation, and resourcing of the indoor and outdoor environment will be able to support each child’s wellbeing, learning and development, within the ethos and philosophy of the service.</p> <p>The playroom was designed and arranged to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain a space that was clean, organised, and free of clutter, • divided into areas that were supplied with materials organised in a way to support proposed children’s play, development, and learning, • give all proposed children access to the same facilities, activities and play opportunities, to promote their welfare and development. <p>The equipment was stored on low-level shelving and was thereby readily accessible to the proposed pre-school children.</p> <p>The play equipment and materials were age and stage appropriate, and designed to offer a child manipulative activity, to encourage hand eye co-ordination, to develop fine motor skills and logical thinking.</p>
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There were opportunities for

- Imaginary play with dress up clothing, role play, construction and kitchen/home areas. There were messy water and sand play areas. There was a selection of transport vehicles, mark making, reading materials.
- Creative play with art and craft materials, paper, paint, glue, glitter, pencils, crayons and stencils.
- Language and literacy play with visual aids, books, matching games,
- Gross motor play with footballs, tractors, and push cars in the outdoor play areas.
- Sensory play with sand, water, play dough, sensory toys, and jigsaws and puzzles.
- Fine motor play with pegs, pins, stickers, pinches, scissors, magnets, threading, stacking, mix and match, insets, puzzles, jigsaws, and blocks.
- Risk taking opportunities allowing children play ball games, and during group game activities.

Displayed on the walls was a notice board for children’s art and craft work.

There was a store area adjacent to the playroom which was inaccessible to the preschool children.

The registered provider advised that toys, materials, and equipment would be rotated on a seasonal theme basis.

(1)(b)

A rest quiet area was provided in the form of soft seating couches, and two stackable beds to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he or she chose too.

(3)(a)

Outdoor area

The registered provider advised that the outdoor area was an extension of the indoor environment and linked with the learning that goes on inside.

The registered provider advised that the children would have the opportunity to be outside as often as possible, in all weather conditions.

The children attending would wear sunscreen and or suitable all-weather clothing.

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	<p>The designated outdoor play area was to the rear and side of the national school. The area was securely fenced and covered with tarmacadam and concrete. Play equipment and materials provided in the outdoor area would support a range of physically energetic activities and play experiences. There were push cars, bikes and trikes, scooters, rockers, tractors, sand and water play, two playhouses and a selection of ball games.</p>
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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:	<p>The service had a healthy eating policy.</p> <p>It is proposed that parents and guardians will provide food for their child’s snack and break times.</p> <p>The staff would ensure that each snack will have two food groups. The registered provider advised there will be a supply of food in the service for any child requiring additional food.</p> <p>A drinks table will be available in the playroom and in the outdoor areas during play to allow the children the opportunity to ‘self-serve’ their drinks.</p> <p>There was a selection of cutlery, plates, and cups available.</p> <p>Perishables items from children’s lunch boxes will be stored in a designated fridge in the playroom.</p>
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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:

General Safety

- The designated entrance was secure to prevent unauthorised entry and prevent unsupervised children leaving the pre-school.
- The staff only and storage area adjacent to the playroom, were secure and thereby inaccessible to a pre-school child.
- The external play area was secure so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area.
- The fire door was unobstructed.
- All cleaning agents were stored in a locked press inaccessible to the children.
- The playroom temperature was maintained between 18°C to 22°C.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water not exceeding 43°C to facilitate hand washing without risk of scalding the children, was available to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
- Heavy equipment and furnishings were anchored appropriately.
- The openable windows were high and thereby inaccessible to a child.
- Each of the blind cords were secured by a fastener safety system.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- There were no pits or ponds in the designated outdoor area to cause any risk of danger to the proposed pre-school children.
- The service had a risk assessment system for checking that toys and equipment were not broken, in a clean condition and maintained in a good state of repair.
- The registered provider clearly identified to the early years inspector, the drop off and collection procedures for children.

Infection Control

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- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and a roll towel dispenser.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The registered provider advised that the outdoor play equipment would be cleaned prior to/ after a child's use, with documented records maintained.
- A refrigerator was provided in the playroom for the storage of perishable foods.
- The playroom was observed to be kept adequately ventilated whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels.
- There was a cleaning schedule template and cleaning records for the materials, equipment, and furnishings.
- Waste would be disposed of in the sanitary area and playroom in foot pedalled lidded bins and thereby inaccessible to the pre-school children.

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 is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Two staff who will be working in the proposed pre-school service have a current first aid responder qualification.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and in an easily accessible conspicuous position, with content items within date.

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 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:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a)

Arrangements were in place to record monthly fire drills.

(b)

A record of the number, type, and maintenance record of firefighting equipment in the service was on file. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated 14th of August 2024. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance certificate for the smoke and fire detection system was dated 14th of August 2024

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the wall in a conspicuous position in the playroom.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

The insurance policy was submitted to the registration office and adequately covers up to 26 children until January 2025.

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:

The requirements have been met.

(a)

From a visual inspection the indoor playroom was of sound and stable, structure and there were no observable indications of defects.

(b)

The indoor playroom and the outdoor play areas were safe and secure. The main entrance door to the premises has a securing mechanism in place.

The internal entrance area to the proposed playroom has a lock fitted to prevent children from leaving the playroom unnoticed.

(c)

There was natural lighting in the playroom from the eight high openable windows on the two outer walls.

There were windows in the sanitary area.

The indoor playroom was well ventilated by means of the openable windows and doors.

The proposed pre-school service was adequately lit with natural light provided from eight windows in addition to artificial lights on the playroom ceiling. The tube light fittings in the playrooms and the light fittings in the sanitary area had protective covers in place.

The radiators were connected to an oil heating system and were fitted with radiator covers to allow the recommended room temperature of between 18°C and 22°C for the playroom. On the day of inspection, the indoor room temperature was maintained between 20 and 21.3°C.

The warm water in the sanitary areas was maintained at a safe temperature of 38.1°C and the registered provider advised it would be no greater than 43°C.

(d)

In the proposed indoor playroom classroom, the play and work equipment were clean and in good repair.

Cleaning equipment was safely stored away from / inaccessible to the pre-school children.

From observation, the furnished playroom was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

There was evidence that regular checks would be carried out by the registered provider on rodent proofing.

(e)

Adequate and suitable sanitary facilities were provided.

There were two designated children’s toilets with two designated children’s wash hand basins.

Proof of purchase of a wall mounted nappy changing unit and a nappy disposal bin was provided to the inspector and these are due to be delivered to the service on 19/08/2024.

A dedicated sink for handwashing after nappy changing was provided in the sanitary accommodation.

There was a designated adult only toilet with a designated wash hand basin, in the main primary school.

Liquid soap dispensers and paper hand towels in designated dispensers were within easy access to a pre-school child.

Foot pedal lidded bins were provided in the sanitary areas.

The service uses a public water supply and sewage system.

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.*
- (3) A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space is available for each child attending the service.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)

Adequate floor space was provided for the free movement of children to work and play.

The registered provider will ensure that the minimum clear floor space is adhered to for pre-school children.

(3)

The measurement of the proposed playroom floor space was 59.67 square meters, thus, ensuring a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space will be available for each child proposing to attend the sessional service.

A minimum of 2.35 square metres of clear floor space for children aged 2-3 years and 2.3 square metres for children aged 3-6 years proposing to attend on a part time basis.

A registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are no more than 22 children in a room in the service at any time.