

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024SO001		
Name of Service:	Spraioi Community Childcare Keash Preschool		
Address of Service:	Eastern Harps GAA Club, Knockoconor, Keash, Ballymote, Co. Sligo		
Eircode:	F56 KR97		
Name of Registered Provider:	Margaret Cryan		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	11/03/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM N/A
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84		
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello		
Title:	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
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Description of service

The service is situated on the first floor of the Eastern Harps GAA club. The service consists of one large open care room. Utilities include a Kitchen and children and adult sanitary facilities. For outdoor play, the service has sole use of the community owned football pitch during the service operating times.

Staffing

Three adults are employed to work in the sessional service, two adults work daily with the children and an additional adult is employed to provide cover for leave. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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 may also focus on other areas as required.

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

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, 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.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) (b)

There was a person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(1) (c)

The adults employed in the service were aware of their roles and responsibilities and their reporting structures.

(2) (a) (b)

Three adults are employed in the service. The registered provider ensured that two written and verified past employer references and four written and verified references from an other source in the absence of a past employer were available for all three adults employed in the service.

(2) (c)

Garda vetting was available for the three adults employed in the service.

(2) (d)

International police vetting was not required as none of the three adults resided outside of the state for a period of six consecutive months.

(4)

All three adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied..

Compliance Information

(1)
There was an adequate number of staff working directly with the preschool children on the inspector's arrival to the service.

(3)
The minimum ratio of adults to children ratio were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service. Two adults provided care to eight preschool children aged from three to four years of age.

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*
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a pre-school child shall not be-

- (a) permitted access to the internet,*
- (b) photographed, or*
- (c) recorded*

while attending the pre-school service other than in accordance with the terms of the consent of a parent or guardian given in the form specified in the service's policy on the use of the internet and photographic and recording devices.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) (b)

BASIC NEEDS:

- Children are provided with lunches from home in line with the service healthy eating policy. On the day of inspection children were observed to have lunches of sandwiches with a variety of fillings, yoghurts and fruit. Drinking water was also provided.
- Snack times were relaxed and not rushed. As children finished their snack they were allowed to play in another area of the room. The children who required additional time to finish their snack were given time with no pressure to finish until they were ready.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours for example adults were observed to encourage sharing and turn taking and modelled this behaviour.
- The children attending the preschool were all toilet trained, and independence was promoted in toileting, adults were observed to remain in the vicinity of the bathroom prompting if required.
- A rest area equipped with soft cushions and matting and a library, provided the children with a space to rest and relax or opt out of an activity.

SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:

- At snack time the adults sat with the children engaging in conversation and having their own snack. On discussion with the adults in the service, the inspector was informed that this was on response to the children's request that everybody sat and had their snack together including the adults in the service.
- Staff and parents work in partnership within the service. The use of a child profile at enrolment 'all about me' form gave staff members valuable information about the child's likes, dislikes, daily routine, interests, and family.
- There was evidence of good communication between the parents and adults in the service, with important information exchanged at collection and drop offs and a record of same was available in the service.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The indoor area was laid out to facilitate sensory experiences through arts and crafts and with a sand table. Fine motor development was supported with the use of jigsaws, shape sorters, crayons, and paper to draw on. Gross motor development was supported with rocking horse and slide in the indoors. Opportunities for imaginative and role play were available in the home corner, dress up and construction areas.
- The outdoor area is a community football field. A risk assessment is completed prior to use to ensure the area has no hazards for the preschool child. This area provides opportunity for gross motor skill development and access to nature.
- A range of books were available in the reading area which supported children's language and development.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

- Ongoing observations and assessments were documented, which helped create a complete, well-rounded picture of each individual child. These observations informed the planning for the curriculum for example introduction of dinosaurs and arts and crafts. The curriculum was observed to be flexible in accordance with the emerging interests of the children, their needs, and preferences.
- The service made efforts to ensure the children were aware of important events in their locality. In the month of march the curriculum included arts and crafts in relation to pancake Tuesday and Mother's Day. International woman's day allowed for learning on important women in Ireland and the world.
- Children were encouraged to choose and direct their own sense of play. Children were observed moving freely around the room, playing in groups and individually.

(2) (3)

The service has a policy on managing behaviour and outlines practices that are prohibited such as corporal punishment or neglectful practices. On the day adults were observed to be kind and respectful in their interactions and children appeared happy and content in the company of the adults supporting them.

(4)

On enrolment the service outlines the process in place for taking photographs within the service and parents have the choice to consent to the process or not. On the day photographs of the children were observed in their individual observation folders. These photographs were in line with the service guidance and only included the named child and the tasks they completed.