

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC022		
Name of Service:	Angel Guardian Community Pre-School CLG		
Address of Service:	Silverpoint, Ashmount, Mayfield, Co Cork		
Eircode:	T23 VHW7		
Name of Registered Provider:	Cormac O'Connor		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	25/02/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	27	PM 16
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440.		
Inspection undertaken by:	D Prendergast		
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	N/A		

Description of service

Angel Guardian Community Pre-school CLG is registered to provide part time care and education to children aged 2 to 6 years. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme is accommodated over 38 weeks annually, with three sessional services daily: from 8.45am to 11.45am, between 9.00am and 12.00pm and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm. Part time hours operate between 8.45am and 1.45pm and from 9.00am to 2.00pm, each Monday to Friday.

The pre-school facility is situated in a residential area of Mayfield, in Cork city and operates from the ground floor of an apartment complex. The premises is purpose built and consists of an entrance hall, two care rooms, a kitchen, an office and both adult and child sanitary facilities. An enclosed outdoor play space is available at the rear of the building and is accessible from both care rooms.

Staffing

In total, there are 12 adults attached to the service, 11 of whom work directly with the children. This includes two Community Employment (CE) scheme participants. The registered provider is not based at the setting. There were three students undertaking work placements at the time of the 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 unannounced 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.

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, deputy, 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) An adult had been assigned as the person in charge and a second adult was available to deputise, as required.
 - (b) The deputy was present when the inspector arrived at the childcare facility and the person in charge attended within one hour. The staff roster indicated that a person in charge was always available during the service's hours of operation.
 - (c) A written management structure was displayed in the entrance area of the service, with the roles of each adult clearly set out.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that four new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. All of these staff members worked directly with the children. On the day of inspection, three students were present on educational work placement programmes. A total of seven files were reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for three adults, whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal, were requested for review.
- (a) There were 14 written and validated references required in total. Of these, 12 had been provided by past employers.
 - (b) A further two references were from sources other than previous employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were in place for the five adults and had also been obtained for the two students who were under 18 years of age. Garda vetting in respect of an additional three adults had been renewed.

This was in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable. Following a review of the staff files, there was no evidence that international police vetting was required.

(4) The four staff members had attained relevant awards in early childhood care and education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) It was observed that there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance.

(2) The adult child ratio exceeded the requirements of the regulation.

- There were 27 children present at the setting during the morning, with an age range of 3 to 4 ½ years. Eight adults were working directly with these children.
- In the afternoon, 6 adults were responsible for the direct care and education of 16 children, aged 3 to 4 ½ years. The students and CE participants were not included in the adult child ratios.

(8)

(a) At least two adults were present at all times throughout the inspection period. This practice was also evidenced through review of the staff roster.

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)

Programme of activities:

- The inspector was informed that a play-based, emergent curriculum was implemented at the setting.
- At the time of inspection, it was noted that the children had opportunities to engage in free play, with a range of activities on offer. For example, children were observed making jigsaws, reading stories with adults, creating colourful collages with glue and building structures with magnet tiles.
- The room leaders advised the inspector that staff regularly made note of the various topics and themes that arose during conversations with children and through direct observation of the children. This written information was subsequently used to inform the medium and short term curriculum plans for each care room. In this way, staff ensured that the children's interests and developmental needs were reflected and supported within the programme of activities.
- Evidence of this practice was clearly visible in both care rooms. For example, in the Caterpillar room, children's recent interests included modes of transport, roads and colours. In the Butterfly room, the plan for February referred to fine motor and gross motor based activities, stories, cooking and spring themed activities.
- Children who chose not to join in structured activities, such as circle time, were supported and supervised by adults, as they engaged in other activities within the care room.
- Language development was encouraged during free play activities, mealtimes and circle time, through informal conversation and the incorporation of songs, rhymes and storytelling.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- Age and stage appropriate furniture, in the form of child sized tables and chairs, were available to and utilised by the children.
- The layout and presentation of the care rooms allowed the children to initiate their chosen activities with ease. Materials were accessible on low set display units, or at floor level and items of similar use were stored together. For example, home corners were equipped with kitchen units, play food and utensils and cosy areas were furnished with vinyl sofas, soft toys and books.
- Other age and stage appropriate play resources included dress up clothes rails, dolls and accessories, plastic bricks, animal figures, hand-held vehicles, jigsaws, connectable shapes, puppets, art and craft materials and an ice cream cart.
- Care rooms were decorated with birthday displays, family photographs and artwork.
- Two adjoining outdoor environments were available at the service; one accessible from each of the care rooms. These play spaces comprised a variety of surfaces and included equipment such as a wooden pirate ship, a climbing frame, building blocks, a covered sand tray and a selection of ride on toys.

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.

Compliance Information

General safety:

- Unauthorised entry to the childcare facility and the unsupervised exit of a child were prevented through the security of the main entrance door.
- Key fob entry was in place at the entrance to the care rooms.
- High-level fencing, walls and a gate provided a secure enclosure of the outdoor play area.
- The safe storage of cleaning agents and first aid boxes was ensured.

- Glass panelling at child height was fitted with visibility strips, which reduced the risk of a child sustaining a collision injury.

Infection control:

- Dispensable liquid soap and paper towels, along with thermostatically controlled warm water were provided at the wash hand basins. This facilitated the practice of hygienic hand washing and drying, which was observed to be carried out by children before mealtimes.
- Lidded, pedal operated bins were in use throughout the service.
- Single use aprons and gloves were available for nappy changing procedures.
- Labelled containers were used to organise the children's nappies, wipes and barrier creams.
- The children's perishable snacks were stored in a refrigerator until the mid-morning snack was accommodated. This ensured that such foods were maintained within the safe range of 0°C to 5°C, as required.
- The care rooms and adjoining sanitary facilities appeared clean and well maintained. Up to date cleaning records were displayed.

Fire safety:

- Emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- Fire exit signs were illuminated and clearly visible.
- Wall mounted storage was provided for fire extinguishers.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) Review of the First Aid Response (FAR) certificates on file, in conjunction with the staff roster, demonstrated that an adult with current FAR training was available to the children at all times, during the service's hours of operation. Five adults had completed this training.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The available insurance certificate demonstrated that adequate cover was in place for up to 44 children to attend the service at any one time. The policy was valid from 28 March 2025 until 27 March 2026.