

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC028				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ash's Angels Preschool				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Lower Quartertown, Quartertown, Mallow, Co. Cork				
<b>Eircode:</b>	P51 V3FY				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Asha O'Boyle				
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	27/11/2024				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>8</td> <td>PM</td> <td>8</td> </tr> </table>	AM	8	PM	8
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	13 Market Square, Mallow, Cork. P51 DD5Y.				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E. Friel				
<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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Ash's Angels Pre-school is a play based sessional service, which has been operating from its current location since 2018. While registered to accommodate children aged from 2 – 6 years the service currently caters for children aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years of age. A morning session is available from 8:30 to 11:30 and an afternoon session from 12 noon to 15:00, both of which incorporate the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The service is open from Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year.

It operates from a purpose-built extension of the registered provider's home, located near the urban town of Mallow in North Cork. The service has its own separate entrance door which leads to a cloakroom, children's sanitary area and the care room. A secure outdoor play area is located to the front and side of the building and car parking is available to the front of the service.

### Staffing

There are currently two adults employed in the service including the registered provider and an adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

### 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 and safety. 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 registered provider, deputy 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 register provider was the designated person in charge and a named person was available to deputise, as required.
- (b) Both the registered provider and the deputy were observed working in the service while the pre-school children were present.
- (2) Recruitment files of both adults were reviewed;
- (a) (b) There were four validated references available; three from past employers and one from sources other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for both adults which evidenced compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) International police vetting disclosure was available for one staff member who had lived outside of Ireland for a period of six consecutive months or longer as an adult.
- (4) There was evidence that both adults working directly with the children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### Compliance Information

The following policies, specified under Schedule 5, were found to contain the required information:

- (1) The Infection Control Policy
- (2) Healthy Eating known as the Food Policy

### 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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the morning and afternoon sessions.
- (3) The adult/child ratios were met. There were two adults working directly with eight children in both the morning and afternoon sessions.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*  
*(c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of twelve children's pre-school records were reviewed, all twelve were noted to include the information listed from (a) to (i) above.

(3)

(c) The children's pre-school records, furnished to the inspector, were available on the premises.

### 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.

#### Compliance Information

##### BASIC NEEDS:

- The service promoted healthy eating. Children were observed eating nutritious food at 10:30 which had been prepared by the parents/guardians. Examples included crackers, yogurt, prunes, carrots and raspberries.
- Staff sat with the children in line with the service's food policy and the atmosphere was noted to be happy and relaxed. They engaged the children in social conversation and the children chatted with their friends.
- Water was easily accessible from individual water bottles which were placed in a basket on top of the fridge.
- Children were observed accessing the sanitary area on their own and staff were on hand to provide reminders to flush the toilet and to wash hands.
- Staff were observed assisting children who required help with pull-ups after snack time. In conversation, the staff member stated that they have designated changing times in both the morning and afternoon with children in the morning being changed at 8:30, 10:30 and before going home.
- Children were observed playing in the rest/quiet area in both the morning and afternoon sessions. There was a mat available where the children sit/rest and a basket with age and stage appropriate books was located nearby, should a child wish to read while resting.
- Self-help skills were encouraged by the adults who praised each child's efforts. Examples included children observed bringing their snack from the fridge, returning it to their bags for home and zipping up their coats and putting on their outdoor footwear. Staff were nearby to help those who required assistance.

##### SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS:

- Staff were observed sitting at the children's level on both the floor and at tables, listening intently to their conversations and using strategies to extend their thinking and learning. These included using open ended questions, explanations and providing feedback.

- All children were welcomed to participate in activities with staff observed inviting children, sitting on their own, to participate in imaginary play with the other children in the home corner.
- Children’s behaviour was consistently managed in a positive manner by staff, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement.
- Turn taking and sharing was promoted; the inspector heard a staff member praising a child who was heard offering another child a turn of a toy they were playing.
- Various methods of communication were stated as being in use to communicate and exchange information with parents/guardians. Examples observed included an electronic application which included photographs of the children and emails sent noted to include topics such as appropriate clothing. Staff were observed talking to parents at drop off and collection times.
- Staff were noted to support each other with the routines of the day. Informal meetings were stated as taking place on a daily basis with such topics as curriculum, concerns about the children and training being discussed. Certification of recent staff training, which was linked to Aistear and had been arranged with the local County Childcare Committee in November 2024, was furnished to the inspector.

#### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The walls of the care room were decorated with visual charts, pictorial school rules, colours, letters, numbers, and artwork.
- The care room was laid out in clearly defined areas with equipment and toys providing play and learning opportunities to enhance the learning needs of the children across all developmental areas.
- Children’s toys and equipment, which were stored in low-level baskets and drawers, offered ease of access, promoted choice and encouraged independence.
- Children were observed carrying out activities throughout the morning on suitable age-appropriate tables and chairs. Adult chairs were also available in the care room for the adults caring for the children.
- Resources and artwork in the cloakroom, including a welcome poster in various languages and each child’s individual photograph and handprint, helped create a sense of identity and belonging. Further examples included each child’s name associated with a symbol/animal. This theme carried through to other areas in the service where the children were able to associate their symbol/animal with an activity. An example included the visual daily register where children placed their picture on the list which indicated they were in the service on that day.
- Children were able to practice their gross motor skills of climbing, sliding and cycling from a variety of physical equipment in the outdoor play area including a climbing ladder, slide, cars, tractors and tricycles.

A wooden pirate ship, playhouse and mud kitchen provided opportunities for imaginary play and a pirate trough with sand further allowed the children to explore and use their senses.

#### PLANNING OF ACTIVITIES:

- Observations in learning journals were documented for each child which helped create a complete, well-rounded picture of each child's progress and development. These observations informed the planning for the curriculum which also included seasonal related activities.
- Children's language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection. Examples included a staff member reading stories such as "We are going on a bear hunt" during circle time and action songs including "Row, row, row your boat," "If you are happy and you know it" and "My little teddy bear."

### 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:

- All doors in the service were observed to be secured preventing unauthorised adults from entering and children leaving the service unsupervised.
- Low level windows at the main entrance doors were identified with frosting and stickers helping to prevent accidents from occurring.
- A ramp was available from the entrance door to the outside exit and play area facilitating all children to enter and exit the service safely.
- All toys and equipment in the indoor and outdoor areas appeared to be well maintained and in good working order.
- Heavy equipment and furniture, including the individual cubby houses, were anchored to prevent them from tipping on top of the children.
- Electrical flexes from the printer and laptop were stored on a work top, out of reach of the children.
- All indoor waste was stored in pedal operated bins in both the care room and in the sanitary areas.
- Cleaning agents were placed out of reach on a high shelf in the children's sanitary area.

- A secure, dedicated, outdoor play area was located within the grounds of the registered providers home with direct access from the entrance of the service. It consisted of concrete and artificial grass and was secured by a wooden fence, concrete wall, high wire fencing and metal gate. These safety measures ensured that no child could leave the area unsupervised.

### Infection Control:

- Perishable food was stored in a fridge in the service, preventing the food from spoiling.
- Children were observed to change into indoor shoes on arrival, keeping the service floors clean and hygienic.
- Personal belongings including coats and bags were stored in individual cubby houses, off the cloakroom floor area.
- Child friendly handwashing pictures, with words, were visible at the sink in the children's sanitary area providing a visual reminder of the steps for hygienic health practices.
- The wash hand basins in the sanitary areas were supplied with thermostatically controlled hot water, dispensing soap and dispensing paper towels. Pedal operated bins were available for the disposal of paper waste.
- Tissues were available and placed at the children's height helping to prevent the spread of infection.
- Staff were observed sanitising the tables in the morning and afternoon, before and after the serving of food, and sweeping the floor ensuring the areas were kept clean and hygienic.
- Single use gloves and aprons were available for changing children in pull-ups, helping to prevent cross infection.

### Administration of Medication:

- Temperature reducing medication, available in its original container, was stored on a high shelf in the care room which was inaccessible by the children.
- Medication was available in the event of an emergency for a child with a chronic illness.

### Safe Sleep:

- No children were observed sleeping on the day of inspection.

### Fire Safety:

- Firefighting equipment was observed to be secured by brackets to the walls in the care room.
- The fire assembly point was located in the carpark, a safe distance from the service.
- The main fire exit door was fitted with a thumb twist cylinder and was unobstructed aiding the quick evacuation of the adults and children in the event of an emergency.

### Outing:

- While the service is insured for outings, the registered provider stated that no outings take place with the 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*

*(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A certificate was available to evidence that a staff member had First Aid Responder (FAR) training completed.

The staff roster indicated that the staff member was available at all times, while the pre-school children were on the premises.

- (2)
- (a) (b) Two well-stocked first aid boxes, easily accessible to the adults at all times, were available from a high shelf above the worktop in the care room.

### 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

*(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*

*(c) an authorised person.*

*(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

## Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) Written records of the fire drills that took place in the service were furnished to the inspector. The last date recorded was noted as 4 November 2024 with previous monthly drills recorded as 10 October and 12 September 2024.
- (b) Written records were available of the servicing of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms. The firefighting certificate was dated 25 June 2024, and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 20 December 2023.
- (2)
- (c) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were available on the premises for review by the inspector.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedure was displayed on the notice board in the care room.

## 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 the service was insured. Written records of insurance documents were furnished to the inspector which included the following details;

- Contact details of the insurance company
- Name and address of the service
- Number of children for whom the service is insured: 11
- Type of service: Sessional
- Expiry date of the certificate which was recorded as 27 March 2025.