

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC141
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Eden Childcare Early Years Ltd
-------------------------	--------------------------------

Address of Service:	Knockbarry, Buttevant, Co. Cork
----------------------------	---------------------------------

Eircode:	P51 CD96
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Siobhan O'Connor
-------------------------------------	------------------

Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

Date(s) of Inspection:	08/09/2025
-------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	52	PM	33
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Second Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
---	--

Inspection undertaken by:	F Collins & J Ryan
----------------------------------	--------------------

Title:	Early Years Inspectors
---------------	------------------------

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

Eden Childcare Early Years Limited, is a privately run early years service registered to provide full day, part time and sessional care for children aged from 1-6 years. The service is also registered to provide school aged childcare. The service operates from 07.30 to 18.00 daily.

The service operates from a dedicated part of the registered providers home with two additional care and education rooms outside comprising in total of four care rooms.

There is a spacious outdoor playground available to the children. Parents/guardians have access to a car park with a marked path to facilitate the safe drop off and collection of the children.

Staffing

The service employs 12 adults and there were 10 adults present on the day of inspection of which 8 were working directly with the children, inclusive of the registered provider and the person in charge.

The additional staff present on the day of inspection was the cook and cleaner.

The nine staff who work in the service providing care to pre-school children held a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care & Education.

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.

The following regulations were inspected on the day:

Regulation 9 (1) (2) (3) (4)

Regulation 10,

Regulation 11 (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 15 (1) (3)

Regulation 19 (1)(a)

Regulation 20 (1) (b)

Regulation 21,

Regulation 22,

Regulation 23,

Regulation 24 (1) (3)(a)

Regulation 25 (1),

Regulation 26 (1) (2) (4) and

Regulation 28.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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

(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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection.
 - (b) The person in charge or a named deputy person in charge were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service as verified at inspection and by review of the roster given to the inspectors at inspection.

(2)

Twelve adults work in the service, of these four had started in the service since the last inspection and their staff files were reviewed. Along with this, one staff file was reviewed for their Garda vetting to assess compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

- (a) Of the eight references required, seven references were available from past employers, five of which were validated.
- (b) Of the eight references required, no reference was on file available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were on file for the five staff who were assessed for same. The service also adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice for all staff, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (4) The two additional staff that had been employed since the last inspection to work directly with the children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the national qualifications framework. The remaining two staff that commenced work since the last inspection did not require a qualification as they were not providing care to the pre-school children. These staff were employed in administration and cleaning/school aged care roles.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
 - (a) One reference was not available on file for one adult and two references available on file for staff from a past employer were not validated.
 - (d) Police vetting was not available for the one staff member that required same.

Not adequately obtaining references and checking them and not obtaining police vetting staff may allow staff that are not suitable have access to the children. This is at variance with the services policy on recruitment which outlined that these processes would be completed before staff commenced in the service.

- (3) The Garda vetting process had not been completed for two staff whose files were assessed prior to them commencing work in the service. Not Garda vetting staff prior to them commencing in the service and having access to children may allow for staff that are not suitable have access to children. This is at variance with the services policy on recruitment which outlined that these checks would be completed before staff commenced in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (a) One reference has been obtained and three references have been validated. This will be completed before staff commence in the service.

(d) Police vetting for the adult that required same has been obtained. All staff will be assessed if they require police vetting prior to them commencing in the service.

(3) The staff that commenced in the service prior to Garda vetting being completed commenced with paperwork prior to them having access to the children. The registered provider has committed to ensuring that no staff commence in the service without the Garda vetting process being completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2) (a) Three references and three validations have been received.

(d) The police vetting for the one adult that required same has been received.

(3) Assurances for staff not commencing before they are Garda vetted has been received.

Summary Comment

The requirements as assessed within this regulation have been completed.

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 were inspected and contained the required information to guide staff in their care practices with children.

- The Policy on administration of medication specified the following:
 - Procedures for the safe storage of children's prescription medication and over the counter medication.
 - Procedures for administering medication in routine and emergency situations.
 - The requirement of seeking parental consent to administer medication.
 - It detailed information in relation to two staff signing when medication has been checked and administered.
 - The requirement for individual care plans in relation to nut allergies and the use of auto injectors.

2. The Policy on safe sleep specified the following:

The sudden infant death prevention guidance for children under 12 months.

The procedures in place to ensure a safe supervised sleep environment for sleeping children.

The sleep facilities for all age groups and the prohibited equipment in cots.

The procedures in place to manage a sleep related emergency.

3. The policy on infection control specified the following:

The procedures for hand and respiratory hygiene.

The procedures for preventing the spread of infection.

The exclusion criteria for the service and the procedures to be followed for nappy changing.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) All four care rooms were in operation on the day of inspection. There were adequate staff available to the children in attendance with the registered provider providing additional support and covering for breaks.

(2)

- The Bluebell room: This care room had four children in attendance. All four children were two years of age. The adult child ratios were correct in the care room as observed throughout the day. There was one qualified adult caring for the four children. The adult was also able to seek additional help if needed. This room was used for school aged childcare in the afternoon with the pre-school children moving to the Poppy room.
- The Daisy room: This care room had 21 children in attendance. The children were aged between three- four years and were being cared for by two adults. In the afternoon there were nine children in attendance being care for by one adult.
- The Sunflower room: this room had eight children in attendance. The children were aged between one and two years and were being cared for by two adults. In the afternoon there were eight children in attendance being cared for by two adults.

- The Poppy room: There were 19 children in attendance aged between two-three years being cared for by three adults in the morning. In the afternoon there were 16 children being cared for by two adults with the registered provider providing assistance as needed.

(8)(a) The roster provided to the inspector by the registered provider identified that a minimum of two staff were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

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

A sample of ten children's records from the Daisy and Bluebell rooms were reviewed,

- (1) The requirements as identified in (1) (a) –(i) above were met in all ten records reviewed.
- (3)(c) The children's records as required were made available to the inspector at inspection.

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

A Healthy Eating policy was in place in the service, and a two-week menu plan was shared with parents. A variety of nutritious meals were prepared on site and served to each individual room. A mid-morning snack supplied by parents was served at 10am. Dinner was served at midday; jugs of water and beakers/cups were accessible to all children in each of the rooms. The children in the Daisy room were observed to hand out plates at snack time to their peers for their snack, supporting a homely environment. In the sunflower room two staff sat at the tables and closely supervised a group of six children aged 1 – 2 years while having their dinner. Each of these children were self-feeding, appeared to enjoy their dinner and two children who were asleep in the sleep room had their dinner following their nap.

The room temperatures were suitable with the Daisy room heated to 21.1°C at 11.50am and the Bluebell room heated to 20.7°C at 11.35am, ensuring the comfort of the children in attendance.

Children who were toilet trained toileted independently, with assistance given to those who needed it. Children in nappies were changed regularly.

Children were encouraged and assisted to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day, such as after toileting, on return from outdoor play and before eating. Staff were also observed to wash their hands regularly.

Children were observed to rest and relax as desired during the day in each room in the quiet areas. These areas were inviting, cosy and comfortable spaces as they contained child sized couches, cushions, blankets, cuddly toys and lots of reading material.

Messy and sensorial play activities were observed in the sunflower room where the group of children had been painting on blank sheets of paper. Sand play was available indoors and in the outdoor play area.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within each room and in the outdoor play area. Advance notice was given by staff to support children to tidy up their play equipment before snack time. This supported smooth transitions from one activity to the next. Childrens artwork was displayed and a 'Family Wall' with pictures of children's families supported children's sense of identity and belonging. Self-care skills and supporting children to become independent were evident as children were aware of where to hang their coats and bags. Childrens pictures and names had been placed above the coat hooks to identify each child's personal space.

The outdoor play space was used at regular intervals throughout the day and supported children's physical development and social interaction.

'Our country kitchen', 'Our village shop', 'Our buddy bench', 'Our loved place playhouse' and 'Eden construction area' supported children to choose where and what they wanted to play with while outdoors and promoted imaginary play.

Supporting Relationships around children

Staff spoke to children in soft tones of voice, allowed children chose their play activities and allowed them time to complete their tasks at their own pace which ensured a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Staff were seated at the tables to support good communication skills with the children assisting them with play and had conversations with them at their eye level.

The Daisy room has an emotions corner set up where a child could sit and look at various pictures demonstrating how they might feel. Staff stated this supported the children to deal with their emotions by being able to identify them on the pictures.

Circle time in the Daisy room was observed to promote social relationships among the children and the staff working with them with conversations being had about activities of the weekend and plans for the week.

Positive reinforcement was given to children by staff when tasks were completed. Children were comforted by staff if they became upset such as the younger children being lifted in the staff members arms, hugged and listened to and staff observed to kneel on the ground to settle a disagreement between children. Staff were timely in reading children's cues, gestures and body language particularly when children became sleepy or hungry.

Siblings who attended the service spent a period of planned time together playing in the sunflower room.

Teamwork among staff was evident in the service as breaks and lunches were covered by staff in a timely manner. Staff were clear on their roles and responsibilities in each room at times such nappy changing, checking sleeping children and ensuring all children were supervised.

Staff maintained regular contact with parents/guardians through the childcare app and at drop off and collection times.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) Children from the sunflower room had a separate designated outdoor space to ensure their safety as they were the youngest children in attendance.
- A separate outdoor play space was available for school aged children there by maintaining the safety of all children who attended.
- The outdoor had both concrete and all-weather surfaces and the area had been further developed since the last inspection with the inclusion of a 'workman' area for builders, a painted racetrack where bicycles could be ridden on the track and where it was observed the children riding on push toys or pushing wheeled toys around. There were tables, chairs, swings, a tunnel, balance beams and a sand box in the area.
- (b) There were adequate facilities for sleep available within the service, children under the age of 2 years had access to standard cots. The children from the Poppy and Daisy rooms slept at scheduled times in the Poppy room and the children slept on floor mats.
- Floor beds were available for the children who needed to sleep on a bed before the age of 2 years.

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

The service had adequate and suitable equipment and play materials for the children to engage and play with both indoors and outdoors. The toys in each of the care rooms were age appropriate. Dress up clothes were available in each of the care rooms.

Equipment for use with a child who required specialist equipment was suitable, was at a height that was similar to their peers and allowed the child to participate with activities in the care room.

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.

Compliance Information

The snacks within the service were provided by the parents/guardians with foods such as yogurts, sandwiches, crackers and cheese, fruit and chopped vegetables were observed to be provided.

Dinner on the day of inspection was Shepard's pie with additional mashed potatoes and vegetables offered to the children. Portion sizes were good, and all children ate the same meal. The provision of food for children with allergies was discussed with the cook and special food provision was taken into account for these children.

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:

- The internal doors were secure to areas such as the adult toilets, storeroom (Daisy room) and the staff areas were inaccessible to the children.
- External doors were secured to the front of the building by electromagnetic locks.
- The fire exit doors were not blocked by any restrictive opening device.
- The toys and play equipment were suitable for the age group using them. The toys assessed were in good condition and were free from pinch and crush points.
- No baby walkers were observed to be used in the service.
- All flexes and cables observed, appeared to be in good condition and were not lose or hanging down.
- All waste was inaccessible in lidded bins that were pedal operated.
- Cleaning agents were stored on high shelves in the care rooms so staff could have easy access, but they were out of reach of the children.
- Hot drinks were not consumed near the children, and the kettle was stored in the kitchen and in the staff room with both areas inaccessible to the children.
- The outdoor area was fenced to ensure no child could gain access to the car parking area or to the road.
- There were no ponds, pits or other hazards noted on the day of inspection.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap and paper towels were available at each sink and used by staff and children for hand washing.
- Hands were washed upon arrival to the service in the morning as observed in the Daisy room, before snack and dinner time as observed in all care rooms, after nappy changing and going to the toilet and after coming in from outside in the Daisy room.
- Tables were cleaned before and after mealtimes with suitable sanitiser.
- The care rooms appeared clean.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- The physical checks were recorded every 10 minutes on the childcare applications and signed by the person who completed the check in line with the safe sleep policy for the service. Children in the sunflower room were observed to sleep on mats in their room with staff supervising the group while they slept.
- The standard cots used for the younger children were suitable and had appropriate blankets and sheets.
- The sleep room temperature was recorded at: 18°C while children were sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- The fire doors were observed to be free from obstruction and the pathway to the rear of the Poppy room was clear and would allow for easy evacuation.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Thermostatically controlled hot water was not available at the wash hand basin in the nappy changing area in the sunflower room. The temperature of the water was recorded at 17.7°C where the recommended temperature must be up to 43°C. There were two additional wash hand basins in this area of the service, one in the soft play playroom and one in the kitchen however the temperature of the water recorded in both areas was 17.8°C and 18°C.

There is an increased risk of cross infection in the service when hot water is not available to facilitate effective handwashing for both adults and children.
2. Staff were observed wearing gloves and aprons while caring out nappy changing, however, on one occasion where two children were being changed, the staff member did not change their gloves or clean the nappy changing unit between these children being changed. This is at variance with the nappy changing procedure as part of the infection control policy. Not changing aprons or cleaning the nappy changing mat may increase the potential risk of cross infection between children.

Administration of Medication:

3. Medication that had been prescribed by a doctor had been administered, signed for by staff and by the parents acknowledging that it had been administered however no written request for this medication to be administered was available. This was at variance with the services policy on administration of medication. Not having the correct request forms allows for medication to be administered that may not be correct, be the correct dose or at the correct time.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The hot water system in the Sunflower room has been rectified by the plumber. This has been included on the checklist and will be reported to management immediately.
2. Staff have renewed their training on appropriate nappy changing practices.

Administration of Medication:

3. The written request forms for medication administration are now completed and training on the administration of medication has been renewed by all staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. A receipt from the plumber has been received indicating the hot water has been fixed has been received. Photographs of the hot water being tested have also been received.
2. Training certificates have been received to indicate that all staff have renewed their training on infection control and nappy changing.

Administration of Medication:

3. A copy of a completed medication administration request form has been received.

Summary Comment

The requirements for this regulation have been met following the completion of the corrective and preventive action process.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The children in the Bluebell and Daisy rooms were signed in by the staff with times of arrival and departure recorded.

(3) (a) The inspectors were asked to sign in and out of the service on a visitor book which was approved by the person in charge on arrival to and departure from the service.

(b) The records of all visitors to the service were maintained in the front hall.

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) The registered provider ensured that staff trained in first aid responder (FAR) were available to the children with three staff having FAR training and this was adequate to ensure one staff member was onsite at all times to provide care to children in the event they required same.

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.
- (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) The records for fire drill completion were reviewed and drills took place on a monthly basis since the last inspection. The last fire drill was completed in August 2025.
- (b) The firefighting equipment was last serviced on 28/08/2025 and the smoke alarms were last serviced on 27/05/2025.
- (2) (c) The records pertaining to fire drills and servicing for the fire alarms and firefighting equipment were available in the fire register for inspection.
- (4) The procedures to follow in the event of a fire were detailed in each care room with relevant fire exits identified.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The insurance certificate was displayed in the front hall on the notice board; the service was insured as a full day care service to cater for up to 62 children at any one time. The insurance was due to expire on 27/03/2026.