

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC257
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Maria Assumpta Pre-School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Pearse Road, Ballyphehane, Cork, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	T12 HY44
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	John Walsh
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	05/09/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	31	PM	14
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick V94 XT5F
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S O'Brien
<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

Maria Assumpta preschool is a long established not for profit service directly linked to Maria Assumpta National School, where it is co-located in Cork city. The service caters for children aged from 2 to 6 years. The service offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme from 8:40am to 11:40am and from 12:30m to 3:30pm, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from two adjacent rooms in a prefabricated structure with both rooms having independent access and sanitary facilities. It has its own private and fully enclosed outdoor area.

### Staffing

There are eight staff members employed in the service. The registered provider is not based in the service. On the day of inspection, six staff members were present.

### 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. 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, 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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person who were able to deputise as required.
  - (b) The designated person in charge and the named person were in the service for the duration of the inspection.
  - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service, and the staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Eight staff files were reviewed including the file of the registered provider.
- (a) Nine of the references available were from a past employer and were validated.
  - (b) Seven of the references available were from a reputable source and were validated.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all eight staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) Police vetting disclosures were available for two staff members who had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) Seven staff members worked directly with the children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 6 to level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent. One staff member did not require a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or a qualification deemed relevant, as they did not work directly with children.

### 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 was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection.

(3) The adult to child ratios were observed to meet the minimum requirements over the duration of the inspection.

In the morning:

- In Room 1, there were 21 children aged between 2 and 4 years being cared for by 3 staff members.
- In Room 2, there were 10 children aged between 3 and 4 years being cared for by 3 staff members.

In the afternoon:

- In Room 1, there were 14 children aged between 2 and 4 years being cared for by 3 adults. The designated person in charge was also available to support the staff if need.
- Room 2 was not in operation in the afternoon.

### 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 12 children's record were reviewed. The records were observed to be completed and contained the relevant information as outlined from (a) to (i).

## 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

- Water was available to the children on a child height shelf during the inspection.
- The service provided the children with breakfast and snack. Snack contained crackers, cheese, ham, and fruit. Milk and water were also available to the children. Real crockery was available to the children and children were observed pouring their own drinks and choosing what they would like to eat at snack time.
- All children had an opportunity to play in the outdoor area.

- Children were supported with toileting when needed. The staff promoted self-help skills and independence. This was observed during hand washing.
- The children in the care rooms were observed to freely move around and participate in activities of their choice.
- Individual care plans were available for the children who required them. The staff outline how the care plans guided their care practices with the children and in developing the children's skills.

### Supporting relationships

- The staff were available to support the children with transitions and settling into the service. Some children were displaying signs of emotion in Room 2 and staff comforted the children and supported their emotional development. This was also observed with some children having a shorter day at preschool to support their transition into the service.
- Alternative activities were available to the children if they would like to partake in an activity away from the larger group. The staff outlined the importance of having alternative activities and always listening to the children's voice.
- The staff were observed speaking with the children in a respectful manner and ensured they were at the children's level when communicating with them.
- Snack time was observed to be a relaxed environment. It was observed that the group was divided at snack time to make it a comfortable experience for the children. The children were observed chatting to their friends and the staff. The children were given the time to sit and enjoy their food.
- It was observed that there was a sense of teamwork and collaboration between the staff during the inspection.
- There was a family wall on display in the care rooms and this supported the children's sense of identity and belonging.

### Programme of activities

- The children were observed reading a story and some children partook with puppets in Room 1.
- The children were observed partaking in free play and were observed playing with the kitchen and role play area, tabletop activities such as plastic blocks and toy cars.
- The children were observed playing with the sand box in the care room.
- The children were observed partaking in circle time and recalling their favourite activity since starting back at school.
- Children in Room 2 were observed playing with playdough.

- The children were observed playing with the construction corner.
- Children were observed sitting and reading a story in the quiet area.
- The children played with the mud kitchens, in the sand box, on the roll-on toys and in the outdoor classroom area in the outdoor area.

### 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 main entrance to the service was secured. The outdoor area was secured with a fence and a gate that was secured. This prevented any child from exiting the service unsupervised and prevented any unauthorised access.
- All internal doors to unsafe areas were appropriately secured during the inspection.
- Medicines were observed to be stored in their original container, clearly labelled and out of reach to children.
- All toys and equipment observed were in good condition on the day of inspection in both care rooms.
- Cleaning agents were observed to be stored out of reach to children in the care rooms during the inspection.

##### Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available to the children and staff in the sanitary areas.
- The appropriate bins were available throughout the care rooms and sanitary areas.
- Perishable food items for the children's lunches were observed to be stored in a refrigerator to prevent food spoilage.
- The care rooms were naturally ventilated.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed to be administered on the day of inspection. Staff were aware of the procedures in place in the event of medicine needing to be administered to a child.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were observed to be clear and free from obstruction.

### 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) There were two staff members that held an in-date certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training in the service. There was at least one trained staff member in the premises while the service was in operation.

- (2)
- (a) There were fully stocked first aid boxes in the care rooms during the inspection. These first aid boxes were carried to the outdoor area when the children were partaking in outdoor play. The staff were aware of its location if needed.
- (b) The first aid boxes were stored out of reach to the children and were available at all times if needed.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) There was a written record available for review of fire drills that had taken place with the children and staff in the service. The last fire drill that had taken place in the service was 11 June 2025. The designated person in

charge outlined that a fire drill was to take place in the coming week as the service had reopened after the summer period that week.

(b) There was a record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. The firefighting equipment had been maintained and serviced in October 2024, and the smoke alarms had been maintained and serviced in May 2025.

(4) The fire procedure notice for the service was clearly displayed in the care rooms and at entrance and exits points to the service.

### 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 that the service was adequately insured. The insurance policy commenced on 01 February 2025 and expired on 31 January 2026.