

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC365
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Name of Service:	Shournagh Childcare
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Address of Service:	Elmgrove, Shournagh Road, Blarney, Co Cork
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Eircode:	T23 W291
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Name of Registered Provider:	Edel Lyons
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	05/08/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	50	PM	46
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, 13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork, P51 DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	N O'Donoghue
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
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Description of service

Shournagh Childcare is a registered privately owned early years service in operation since 1998. Opening hours are from 7:30am to 6:00pm, Monday to Friday and includes children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.

The service operates from a converted domestic house that has been adapted to provide an early years service. There are four care rooms in operation. These include the Yellow room, the Green room, the Blue room and the Red room. The service also includes a sleep room which is located adjacent to the Yellow room, adult and children's sanitary facilities, an office and a sensory room. The outdoor area is located to the rear side of the building and the Yellow room have their own outdoor play area beside the playroom.

Staffing

There are 21 staff in total. There were 16 adults present on the day of inspection. Of these 21 staff, 19 work directly with the children, the registered provider does not work in the care rooms, and there is an onsite chef who prepares the meals.

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 inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 19, 21, 23, and 24; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under all regulations, As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms Yellow room, Green room and Blue room.

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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice was issued on 05 August 2025 for non-compliances with Regulation 9 as the adults working directly with the children did not hold garda vetting disclosures on file.

The registered provider promptly addressed and corrected the issue on the day of inspection which was deemed to satisfactorily address this non-compliance.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.

(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 deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection. In the event the person or deputy person in charge were not on the premises a named person able to deputise was available.

(b) A person in charge or named deputy person in charge were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

(c) There was a clearly identified management structure in the service. This included person in charge, deputy persons in charge, early years educators and relief workers.

(2) There are 21 staff that work in the service; all 21 staff files were open to inspection.

(a) Of the 42 references required, 32 validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Of the 42 references required, 8 validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures has been obtained for 16 staff out of 21 staff. The service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was deemed to be required for 10 adults working in the service and copies of the relevant documents were maintained on file for 8 of the adults.

(4) Eighteen of the 19 staff working directly with children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a)&(b) There were two validated references missing from one staff member's file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were not on file for five staff working directly with children. Not conducting garda vetting disclosures prior to adults working directly with children posed an immediate risk of harm to children in the service.
- (d) There were no police vetting records on file for one adult who had worked outside the jurisdiction for a period longer than six consecutive months. One police vetting was not translated; therefore it was difficult to deem if police vetting was obtained.
- (3) The registered provider did not conduct file checks as mentioned above prior to adults working in the service. This posed a possible risk to the health and safety of both the adult and the child.

(4) One adult held a provisional statement of results on file. The inspector was unable to determine if this adult had achieved a relevant qualification to be working directly with children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (a)&(b) The registered provider filed the validated references on the staff file and will ensure all documents will be stored on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures has been received for all five staff. The registered provider and management team will conduct file checks prior to commencement of any new staff member and ensure garda vetting is available.
- (d) Police vetting for one staff member was obtained, translated and stored on file. The second police vetting was translated and stored on file. The registered provider will ensure to obtain translated police vetting prior to adults working directly with children.
- (3) The registered provider created a checklist of documents required from potential staff members to be obtained prior to any new members starting work in the service. Management staff were made aware of this checklist and will ensure it is followed in the future.
- (4) The registered provider received the final statement of results which ensured a relevant qualification was achieved by the staff member.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)
- (a)&(b) Photographic evidence of the validated references were submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.
- (c) Photographic evidence of the garda vetting disclosures have been received by the Early Years Inspectorate.
- (d) Photographic evidence of the translated police vetting was received by the Early Years Inspectorate.
- (3) The registered provider's statement was accepted by the Early Years Inspectorate.
- (4) Photographic evidence of the final statement of results was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

All correspondence including photographic evidence was examined. The non-compliance has been rectified, and the requirement has been met.

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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(2) On the day of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of the regulation.

- In the Yellow room in the morning, there were 4 staff working with 9 children aged between 9 months and 18 months, all attending full day care. In the afternoon, there were 4 staff working with 7 children.
- In the Green room in the morning, there were 3 staff working with 13 children aged between 1 year and 10 months and 2 years and 6 months, all attending full day care. In the afternoon, there were 3 staff working with 13 children.
- In the Blue room in the morning, there were 3 staff working with 15 children aged between 2 years and 8 months and 3 years and 6 months, all attending full day care. In the afternoon, there were 3 staff working with 14 children.
- In the Red room in the morning, there were 2 staff working with 13 children aged between 3 years and 9 months and 4 years, all attending full day care. In the afternoon, there were 3 staff working with 12 children.

- (8)
- (a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times during the service operation hours. This was evident through the staff rota.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

(1) All records in relation to the service 1 (a-k) were inspected, all required information was available. The information was available through the parents handbook, staff files and the statement of purpose and function.

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) On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through:

- Direct observation and discussion with staff.
- Examination of relevant documentation.

Basic needs:

- Children in the Yellow room were observed to move freely indoors and outdoors throughout the day.
- Children were given opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills. This included making puzzles, running and climbing steps on the slide.
- Children had access to their individual labelled water bottles.
- Additional cups with jugs of water were also available for children throughout the day.
- Sensory play opportunities were observed through sand play and bubbles.
- Children in each care room had access to a rest area which included a couch, cushions and blankets.
- Children's toileting needs were supported regularly. Children were supervised during toileting and nappy changing was observed to be a wholesome and fun opportunity.
- Children were provided with a hot meal at 12pm. This was observed to be a relaxed environment and staff were sitting with children and supporting children with eating. Children spoke among each other and staff spoke with a soft tone to the children.
- Weather appropriate clothing was stored in the service, this included boots and coats for wet weather and sun hats for warm weather.
- Staff were observed to put sun cream regularly on the children when playing outdoors.

Supporting relationships:

- A staff member in the Yellow room was observed outdoors singing songs with children as they played, freely moving outdoors to indoors.

- Staff were observed to be sitting on the floor with the children engaging in play including play in the ball pit, with farm animals and wooden toys.
- Staff were observant of children’s needs and were seen to comfort children when they were upset.
- Staff and parents were observed to be communicating on collection about the child’s daily activities. Communication with parents is also facilitated through the service’s software application. Parents receive a daily sheet automatically at the end of each day.
- The Green room, Blue room and Red room were given opportunities to play with each other outdoors. Children could play with their siblings and friends from different classes.

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 ensured there was adequate equipment and materials available for the number of children attending the service. The service had a store room with additional toys and materials. The equipment provided in the rooms encouraged various forms of play including imaginative play, table top activities and free play. The rooms observed on the day contained materials such as cars, trucks, train tracks, puzzles, wooden toys, baby dolls, dress-up, books and farm and zoo animals. Equipment was child sized and maintained in good condition. Children in all rooms had access to equipment that suited their age and development.

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:

- Cleaning materials were stored out of sight and reach of children.
- All emergency exits were clear of obstruction.
- The outdoor area was secured to ensure no unsupervised exit of a child.

- Water temperatures were thermostatically controlled and did not exceed 43°C.

Infection control:

- Staff supervised handwashing and ensured children used clean hand towels to dry their hands. A supply of clean hand towels were available in each care room, the hand towels were washed and dried daily in the service.
- Pedal operated bins were observed in each room and sanitary facilities.
- Windows were open for natural air ventilation.
- Perishable foods were stored in the refrigerators.

Administration of medication:

- No administration of medication was observed on the day of inspection. Discussion with staff ensured staff were aware of the correct process for administering medication in the event it was required.

Safe sleep:

- Staff in the Yellow room were observed conducting 10-minute sleep checks throughout the day. These checks included position of the child, breathing pattern of the child and colour of the child.

Fire safety:

- Fire exits were clear of any obstruction and were clearly identified in the room.
- Fire equipment was available in the event they were required.

Non-Compliance Information

General safety:

1. It was observed that two low laying cables were hanging into a cot in the sleep room adjacent to the Yellow room. This posed a risk of injury to a child if using the cot unsupervised.
2. Garda vetting was available for 15 staff members. However, one vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Infection control:

3. Staff were observed on two separate occasions to not wear a disposable apron when changing children's nappies. Staff not wearing aprons during nappy changing posed a risk of cross infection to the child and staff.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General safety:

1. The registered provider removed the cables from the sleep room. A wireless device was purchased to prevent this from occurring in the future.
2. Garda vetting disclosures were received and put on staff members files. The management team are aware of the renewal every 3 years of garda vetting and will conduct regular file checks.

Infection control:

3. Aprons were purchased for nappy changing and the nappy changing policy has been updated.

Supporting documentation submitted

General safety:

1. Photographic evidence of the removed low laying cables was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.
2. Photographic evidence of garda vetting disclosures have been submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Infection control:

3. Photographic evidence of aprons were received by the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

All correspondence including photographic evidence was examined. The non-compliance has been rectified, and the requirement has been met.

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 registered provider ensured that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by a staff member in each room. On discussion with staff, each staff member was diligent of ensuring the child attendance records were maintained throughout the day.

(3) The registered provider and deputy person in charge ensured that no person other than a pre-school child, parent or guardian of pre-school child or staff member can enter the service without being approved by an employee.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)
(b) On discussion with the registered provider, it was evident that no visitor record was in place in the service. The service not recording visitors entering the premises posed a risk of safety towards staff and children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider purchased a visitor log book and will continue to document visitor access to the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the visitor log book was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

All correspondence including photographic evidence was examined. The non-compliance has been rectified, and the requirement has been met.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (b) safe and secure,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required*

Compliance Information

(b) The premises was secure and safe. The entrance to the service was adequately secured and prevented the unsupervised exit of a child or unauthorised entry of an adult. Regular risk assessments were conducted to ensure the premises remained safe and secure at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) The tap in the outdoor sink was not working. On discussion with the registered provider, they were aware of the tap not working and had contacted the maintenance worker to correct the issue.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider fixed the broken sink tap outdoors and will monitor the sink going forward to ensure it is working.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the working sink was received by the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

All correspondence including photographic evidence was examined. The non-compliance has been rectified, and the requirement has been met.