

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC374
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Name of Service:	Spraoi Pre-school
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Address of Service:	9 The Paddocks, West Village, Ballincollig, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P31 WD63
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Name of Registered Provider:	Susan Murphy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	11/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick, V94 XT5F
Inspection undertaken by:	S O'Brien
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

Spraoui Pre-school is a privately owned service in operation since 2015. The service operates in a single storey building attached to the registered providers residence based in Ballincollig, Co Cork. The service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years and offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. The service operates from 9am to 12pm, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. The service operates from one care room with a sanitary facility for children and an outdoor area to the rear of the building. Staff have access to sanitary accommodation in the adjoining residence.

Staffing

There are 3 staff members employed in the service, including the registered provider, who is based in the service. On the day of inspection, three 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 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.*

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge and a named deputy was available to deputise if needed.
- (b) The registered provider and the named deputy were on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service and all staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Three staff files were reviewed including the file of the registered provider.
- (a) One of the six references were from a past employer and were validated.
- (b) Five of the six references were from a reputable source and were validated.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) A Police vetting disclosure was available for one staff member who had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) All three staff members held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 on the national framework or a qualification deemed equivalent by the minister.

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) There was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children during the inspection.
- (3) On arrival to the service, there were 15 children aged from 3 to 5 years being cared for by 3 staff members, therefore, the minimum adult to child ratios were being adhered to.

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 records were reviewed and all forms were completed and contained the relevant information outlined from (a) to (i).

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:

(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

The following records were reviewed:

(j) There were no completed medication administration records available for review. The service did have the capacity to complete medication administration records in the event of medicine being administered to a child. Staff were aware of the procedures to follow and outlined this to the inspector.

(k) A sample of four accident and incident records were assessed, and all forms were completed and contained the relevant information required.

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

Basic Needs:

- The children were observed freely moving around the care room during the inspection.
- Each child had an individual water bottle and were stored on a child height shelf allowing the children to access water when needed.
- Snacks were provided by the parents and guardians of the children. Meat sandwiches, fruit, crackers, yogurts, cheese and cereals were observed in the lunch boxes.

- The staff were available to support the children while washing hands and during toileting, while also encouraging independence.
- The staff were observed comforting the children when needed. The staff were aware of the needs of the children and listened to the children's voices.
- Individual care plans were available for children that they were required for. The registered provider stated that the children's development had grown since they started attending the service with the support of the staff members.

Supporting Relationships:

- The staff were observed sitting with the children during activity and snack times and made the environment relaxed for the children to learn and play.
- The registered provider stated the importance of forming a link with the local community. The local fire brigade and a doctor had visited the service and photographs of the visits were on display.
- The service had a 'Everywhere Bear' who went home with the children on a weekly basis and the children told a story of their time with the teddy bear. The staff outlined that the children enjoyed this experience and gave the children a sense of ownership and responsibility. This also promoted identity and belonging as photos of the children's families were on display with the teddy bear.
- The service also gave each child's family a monthly newsletter to communicate information with the parents and guardians. The registered provider outlined the importance of partnership with parents.

Programme of Activities:

- On arrival to the service, the children were observed partaking in free play.
- Children were playing a card game based on the theme of the week 'A Tiger comes to Tea'. This promoted the children's concentration skills.
- Other children were observed colouring and drawing handprints.
- Children were observed completing their Father's Day art and crafts.
- The children were observed playing with small world animals and cars while others used a doctors set to partake in role play.
- The children sang graduation songs before snack as the children were preparing for their graduation at the end of the school term.

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 gate to the service was appropriately secured when the inspector arrived at the service. This prevented any child from exiting unsupervised or any unauthorised access to the service.
- Internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from accessing unsafe areas.
- The outdoor area was observed as a safe and secure area for the children which was secured by high boundary walls and a gate.
- Blind cords were observed to be secured and out of reach to children during the inspection.
- Windows were appropriately secured and prevented children from exiting or falling, during the inspection.
- Toys and equipment were observed to be in good condition, on inspection.
- During the inspection, heavy furniture such as shelving units were secured and prevented injury to a child.
- Flexes and cables accessed were observed to be in good condition, on inspection.
- On inspection, cleaning products were observed to be stored on a shelf in the care room that was out of reach to the children.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, hand soap and paper towels were available in the sanitary area. Water temperatures for handwashing were recorded between 22.5°C and 31.4°C in the hand basins in the care room and sanitary area. Children were observed washing their hands before snack time.
- Pedal operated, lidded bins were observed in the care room and sanitary area for the appropriate disposal of waste.
- Perishable items were observed to be stored in a refrigerator to prevent food spoilage.
- The care room and sanitary area were observed to be naturally ventilated during the inspection.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exits were observed to be clear and unobstructed during the inspection.

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 preschool child was checked in and out of the service daily.

(3)

(a) The registered provider requested the inspector to check in and out on arrival and departure to the service.

(b) There was a written record kept of the entry of persons to the service.