

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CW018
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Holy Angels Day Care Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Strawhall Industrial Estate, Carlow, Co. Carlow
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<b>Eircode:</b>	R93 AO99
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Geraldine Connell
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	28/11/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	11	PM	N/A
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child & Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Norma Thornton
<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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Holy Angels Day Care Centre is a registered preschool service which was established in 1979 and provides child centred therapeutic care and education to children aged 18 months to 6 years, who have a diagnosis of an intellectual disability and or additional complex medical needs.

The service moved to its current premises in 1983, a prefabricated building at the edge of the Strawhall Industrial estate in Carlow town. The building consists of three designated classrooms, Busy Bees, Tiny Tots and ABC Land, a nurse's / clinical room, parents/meeting room, soft playroom, therapy rooms for physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech & language therapy, a hydrotherapy swimming pool and a recently established "Magical Room" which is a designated sensory room. There is an onsite outdoor play area onsite.

### Staffing

There are 24 staff members employed in the service including the registered provider, three qualified Registered Nurses in Intellectual Disabilities (RNID), a business manager, a business administrator, a pool attendant, two bus drivers, one bus escort and 14 staff members who as part of their role in the service work directly with the children in the classroom. All staff working directly with the children in the classroom held at least Level 5 ranging to Level 8 qualifications in early childhood care and education (ECCE) or equivalent on the national Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) framework.

### 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 assessment of compliance under regulations 9, 10, 11, 15, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28.

A sampling process was used under regulations 10, 15 and 24. The scope of the inspection included a classroom and observation of the outdoor area.

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 designated 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) There was a designated person in charge in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(b) The staff roster demonstrated that registered provider, the designated person in charge or a named deputy designated person in charge, was always onsite while the service was in operation.

(c) A clear outline of the management of the structure was demonstrated in the service, staff were aware of the lines of authority, accountability, their roles and responsibilities in the service.

(2) Staff files for 24 staff members employed in the service were reviewed by the inspector.

(a)(b) Two validated references were available on file for each of the 24 staff members, from either a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting certificates were available on file, for each of the 24 staff member. The registered provider demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff member employed in the service had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

(4) Certificates of qualifications were available for inspection, for each of the 14 staff members who as part of their role were working directly with the children, demonstrating that each staff member held at least a minimum Level 5 to Level 8 qualification in early childhood care and education on the national QQI Framework.

### 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

On review of the service's policies and procedures, the inspector was assured that the registered provider and designated person in charge, ensured that all required documents specified in Schedule 5, were available in the service, were communicated to the staff as part of their induction process, on commencing employment in the service and revised with the staff annually.

### 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) The inspector observed throughout the inspection that there were an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children. Additional staff members were supernumerary and available to provide support in any of the three classrooms in operation, to provide relief in classrooms while children went for therapy sessions or to use the soft play or sensory rooms or hydrotherapy pool and to provide relief for staff breaks.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed in each of the four classrooms on the morning and afternoon of the inspection.

In the Busy Bees Room there were 2 children aged 3 to 4 years directly cared for by 1 registered nurse for intellectual disabilities (RNID) and 3 staff members.

In the Tiny Tots Room, there were 4 children aged 2 to 3 years directly cared for by 1 RNID and 3 staff members.

In ABC Land classroom there were 5 children aged 3 to 5 years directly cared for by 1 RNID and 4 staff members.

(8)(a) On review of the staff roster and in discussion with the staff the inspector was assured that there were always at least 2 adults on the premises while children were in attendance in 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.*

## Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (i) On review of a sample of 12 records of the pre-school children registered to attend the service, the inspector observed that records of the particulars (a) to (i) were maintained for each preschool child. The inspector also observed that the service maintained of record of consent from each child's registered medical practitioner stating that each child was medically fit to avail of use of the service's hydrotherapy swimming pool.

## 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 inspector observed that in each classroom there was appropriate and suitable furniture and play materials and equipment provided to meet the needs of each child attending the service. Specific prescribed seating was available to individual children who required specialised seating. Each classroom had interest areas such as kitchen areas, art and creativity areas and tables for messy play.

Children transitioned from their classrooms for speech and language therapy or occupational therapy and physiotherapy which the service sourced with funding provided. The children also had a rota for opportunities to go and enjoy the soft playroom and hydrotherapy pool but also for "The Magical Room" which had recently been created to provided relaxing and sensory experiences for the children.

## 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) On review of children's attendance records to the service, the inspector was assured that the staff recorded the checking in and out of each child attending the service daily, detailing each child's time of entry and exit daily.

(3)(a) The staff assured the inspector that no other person apart from children attending the service, parents/guardians dropping or collecting children, or staff members could enter the premises without being approved by a staff member.

(b) The inspector observed that a daily visitor record was maintained of any authorised visitors permitted entry to the service which was located at the entrance to the service. The inspector was requested to record their entry to the service, which included the date, name, contact number, reason for entry, who approved the access and time of entry and departure.

## 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 ten staff members employed in the service with current certification in the required first aid responder (FAR) training for children.

At all times while the service was operating, there were six staff members with FAR training in attendance.

On review of the staff roster the inspector was assured that there was always at least four staff members with FAR training onsite while children attended the service.

(2) (a)(b) A first aid box was available in each classroom. A first aid cabinet was available in the nurse's treatment / clinical room. Records demonstrated that the contents were checked monthly and replaced if necessary.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-

- (a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and
- (b) the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(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) A record of monthly fire drills carried out in the service was maintained by the registered provider. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place on the 21 November 2024.

(b) Records of the annual maintenance checks of the service's firefighting equipment and fire alarm system were maintained. The last maintenance check for the firefighting equipment was recorded as having taken place in February 2024 and for the fire alarm was recorded as having taken place in December 2024.

(4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed inside the entrance door. A fire assembly point was clearly signed in the outdoor play area and in front of the building.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

An insurance certificate displaying adequate insurance for a day care centre for preschool children for up to 24 preschool children was displayed on the notice board in the entrance hall.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School

The insurance certificate provided cover from 22 June 2024 to the 21 June 2025.