

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL055
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Name of Service:	Ionad Curam Paistí t/a Spraio Le Chéile
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Address of Service:	Carnmore Road, Dungloe, Co. Donegal
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Eircode:	F94 Y657
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Name of Registered Provider:	Suzanne Nic Géidí
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	24/04/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	46	PM	39
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F92 TD92
Inspection undertaken by:	L Mc Glynn
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

Spraoi le Cheile is a not for profit, community run service located in the town of Dungloe in west Donegal. The service offers full day, part time and sessional preschool to children aged 0-6 years and operates from 8.00am-6.00pm each weekday. The service is also registered to provide school age care. The premises consists of a two-story purpose-built premises. There are four playrooms in total, the baby and toddler rooms are on the ground floor and there are two preschool rooms on the first floor. There are two designated sleep rooms adjoined to both the baby and toddler rooms. The premises has its own kitchen, where children's main meals are prepared, cooked, and stored on site. An office, sanitary accommodation and storage facilities are also on the ground floor. A fully enclosed outdoor play area surrounds the front and side of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider is not on the premises on a daily basis. There is a named person in charge and there is a named designated deputy. There are a total of 30 staff members currently working in the service. This includes 24 staff members working directly with preschool children, 3 staff who work solely with school age children, a designated manager and two kitchen staff.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities*. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 23 and 29. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the baby and toddler rooms, the outdoor play area and the general purpose areas.

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,*

(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 to deputise as required.
 - (b) The person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived unannounced at the service on the day of inspection. A review of the roster demonstrated that the person in charge or named deputy were on the premises during the hours of operation.
- (2) The person in charge confirmed that there were 30 staff members working in the service. The employment records for all 30 staff members working in the service were reviewed on this inspection.
- (a) (b) Two references from past employers or a source other than a past employer in cases where there no past employers were on file for 18 staff members. One past employer reference was on file for five staff members.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 30 adults. However, 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) International police vetting was on file for four adults.
- (4) Relevant documentation evidencing a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework was on file for 21 adults.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (a) (b)
- There were no references on file for seven staff members and a second reference was required for five staff members. Three of the references were not validated.

- (d)
1. The requirement for international police vetting could not be determined for two staff members.
 2. International police vetting from the relevant state was not on file for two staff members whose employment record indicated that they had lived outside of the jurisdiction for a period greater than six months.
- (4) Documentation evidencing a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework was not available for five staff members.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (a) (b) References have now been obtained for the seven staff members and the second reference for the five staff members. All references have now been verified. We will ensure that all new staff have two references, and they will be verified before their starting date.

- (d)
1. No response submitted.
 2. We are in the process of getting the police vetting for the two staff.
- (4) The five staff have sent on the information to the DCEDIY to confirm their qualification level. We will review all staff records monthly. We will ensure all staff have a record to show their qualification.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2) (a) (b) A number of references were submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 (2) (a) (b). The findings documented at Regulation 9 (d) 1. 2. and (4) remain non-compliant as the information and evidence submitted did not provide adequate assurance that the non-compliance had been rectified. These files will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.
- (2) On the morning of inspection there were 46 children being cared for by 13 adults in three care rooms.
 - In the baby room, there were 11 children aged 0-3 years being cared for by four adults.
 - In the toddler room, 20 children aged 1-3 years being cared for by four adults.
 - In the preschool room, five adults cared for 15 children aged 3-4 years.
 - In the afternoon, 39 children were cared for by 10 adults in three care rooms.

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 gate to the service and boundary fence was secured with a keypad entry system for staff and parents. It was discussed that the system was newly installed and a buzzer system to alert staff to the arrival of visitors was planned to be installed.
- The main entrance to the building was secured to prevent children from exiting the building unsupervised.
- All cleaning products and hazardous items were stored out of reach of children.
- The kitchen was not accessible to children.
- Highchairs used on the day were fitted with a five-point harness and were maintained in good condition.
- Window blind cords were appropriately secured.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap and paper towels were available at each of the wash hand basins used by children to support good hand washing practices. Children were observed washing their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the day.

- The pre-school rooms and adjoining sanitary facilities were in a clean and hygienic condition. Up to date cleaning schedules outlining appropriate cleaning methods and the various areas to be cleaned within the playrooms and sanitary accommodation were available. Staff members were observed cleaning play areas and frequently touched surfaces after children's use.
- A procedure was in place for regular cleaning cots between use when shared by two or more children. Clean and dirty linen was stored separately to prevent cross contamination.
- Staff were observed to be vigilant to children's need for support with cleaning their nose and this was provided in a sensitive and efficient manner. A supply of disposable tissues was available and accessible in each room to support children in developing good hygiene practices.
- Staff were observed to adhere to infection control guidance when nappy changing.

Administration of Medication:

- The service had a policy on the safe administration of medication and records of medication administered in the service were maintained. Records were noted to have all required information recorded including parental consent.

Safe Sleep:

- The service has two designated sleep rooms with a total of nine cots. Stackable beds were available for older children if required. There was a thermometer in each of the sleep rooms to record the room temperature and staff maintained a record of the sleep room temperatures at various points throughout the day. The inspector noted the sleep room temperature was within normal recommended guidelines between 16°- 20°C with sleeping children present. All linen provided for the cots were clean, dry, stored in individual labelled boxes and well-fitting with no footholds. Records of physical checks on sleeping children were maintained and included the colour, position, and breathing pattern of the sleeping child and were observed to occur at intervals of no more than 10 minutes.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exit routes were free from obstruction on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for three staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

- The sausages that were served with the main were cut horizontally creating a cylindrical shape which posed a choking risk to children.

Infection Control:

- The waste bin used for the disposal of nappies was not foot pedal operated as required.
- Three of the cot mattresses were not fitted with a waterproof covering to prevent cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- All vetting is now in date. Monthly checks will be carried out to check staff files and ensure all vetting is in date.
- The chef is now aware of how to cut the sausages to prevent a possible choking risk to children. The chef has put up a sign about the potential foods that can cause choking.

Infection Control:

- We have purchased three waste bins for the disposal of nappies which are foot pedal operated. We will carry out monthly checks on the bins and make sure any damage is reported.
- We have purchased waterproof mattress coverings for the mattresses. Our safety officer will do a regular check on bins and cots and record the checks.

Supporting documentation submitted

Images, vetting and purchase receipts were submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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 a number of staff employed in the service with up-to-date training in first aid for children at least one of which was rostered to be on the premises at all times.

(2)(a) There was a first aid box clearly visible to staff in the care rooms.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (b) The first aid boxes did not contain a sufficient quantity of in date recommended contents for the numbers of children registered to attend each room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (b) All first aid boxes have been restocked and have a sufficient quantity of contents for the amount of children and staff in the rooms. Monthly checks will be carried out to ensure all contents are in date.

Supporting documentation submitted

An image was submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 25 (2) (b) has been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service was adequately insured to provide full day care for up to 90 children. The expiry date on the insurance certificate was 27 March 2026.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

(a) of sound and stable structure,

- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(a) On visual assessment, the pre-school rooms and wider premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure. The premises was well maintained and in a good state of repair with no obvious visible defects. Potable water supply was provided from the public water supply, and the premises was linked to the public sewerage system. Toilets, wash-hand basins and drainage systems all appeared to be functioning correctly on the day of the inspection.

(b) The boundary of the premises and outdoor play area was secured with fencing and keypad entry on all gates. All entrance points to the building were fitted with a security mechanism which enabled staff to safely control access.

(c) There was ceiling mounted fluorescent light fittings in each of the care rooms that were covered with shatter proof diffusers. There were openable windows and glass panelled doors in the baby and toddler rooms providing natural light. The preschool rooms and sanitary accommodation were ventilated via openable windows. There was no evidence of condensation or mould growth noted during the inspection. The premises was heated by oil fired central heating and the air temperature in both the care rooms and sleep rooms was maintained within safe limits.

(d) The premises, its play equipment and materials were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. Documented cleaning procedures and schedules were maintained and up to date. Foot pedal operated bins provided for the hygienic disposal of waste within the care rooms. Central waste storage was fenced off and inaccessible to children.

Non-Compliance Information

- (e) On the day of the inspection, there was an inadequate number of nappy changing units for the number of children attending. The regulatory requirement specifies one nappy-changing unit and one wash hand basin for every 11 children in nappies. On the day of inspection, there were 31 children in attendance that were not yet toilet trained and two nappy-changing units in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(e) We have removed a toilet and put another nappy changing station in its place. Continue to monitor the number of children in nappies.

Supporting documentation submitted

An image was submitted to evidence compliance.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 29 (e) has been adequately addressed.