

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DY069

Name of Service: Fionn Ghlas Early Years Hub

Address of Service: 2A North Road, Finglas, Dublin 11.

Eircode: D11 CP58

Name of Registered Provider: John O'Neill

Service type: Full Day

Date of Inspection: 31/07/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	10
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	C Kerrigan
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

Fionn Ghlas Early Years Hub is a not-for-profit community based childcare service. The service provides full time, part time and sessional care and education to children aged between 1- 6 years old. The service currently operates morning and afternoon sessions, with an additional full time care option. The morning session runs from 9am to 1pm and the afternoon session runs from 1pm to 5pm, Monday to Friday. The service also avails of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme 38 weeks of the years.

The service is located on the ground floor of a converted building, with the service administration offices located on the first floor. On the ground floor there are three care rooms, namely Baby room, Toddler Room and Preschool ECCE room, two sanitary areas, an office and reception area.

A large outdoor area is located to the side of the building with smaller outdoor spaces available to the children off each care room.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 23 adults to work within the service. This includes a child development manager, a service manager, nine early years practitioners, two cooks, an administrator, nine staff employed under the community employment (CE) scheme who work in the service and are undergoing training, these consist of the following: four providing supernumerary support in the care rooms and five adults providing auxiliary support.

The inspection was facilitated by the service manager; eight adults were present on the day providing direct care to the children, along with the child development manager who supported administrative aspects of the inspection.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 16 Record in relation to a preschool child, Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Baby and Toddler rooms.

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 child development manager, the service manager, 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

(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 registered provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The registered provider ensures that the person in charge was present at all times during the inspection.

- (2) The files of twenty-three adults working within the service were reviewed in full on the day of inspection.
- (a) The registered provider ensured that twenty-three written and validated references were available from a previous employer for the adults working within the service.
 - (b) The registered provider ensured that twenty-three written and validated references were available from a person other than a previous employer for the adults working within the service.

- (c) The registered provider ensured that Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the twenty-three adults who work with the children. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) The registered provider ensured that Police vetting was obtained for two adults who had lived in a state other than the state of Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that all references and Garda vetting procedures were completed prior to the twenty-three adults working within the service being allowed access or contact with the child attending the preschool service.
- (4) The registered provider ensured that the eleven adults who work directly with the children whose records were reviewed held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 an adequate number of adults were working with the children in the service at all times throughout the day. Eight early years staff were available in the building to meet the care needs of twenty-two children who were present on the day of inspection.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the adult child ratios were maintained within the service on the day of inspection. This was further evidenced in the staff roster.

(8)

(a) Through a review of the staff, roster and conversation with adults present on the day. The register provider ensured that there were two adults present during the operational hours of the service.

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.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)

(j) Medications are not routinely given within the service, a medication record was available for use when required.

(k) A sample of ten accident and incident forms were reviewed and found to be fully completed with all the necessary details included.

(3)

The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was available for inspection on the premises by the inspector.

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) The registered provider ensured that the children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service in the following ways.

Basic Needs

- The children were provided with regular lunch and snacks throughout their time in the service. Lunch and snacks were freshly prepared in the service. On the day of inspection children were observed to have a hot lunch of meat, vegetables and potatoes, followed by fresh fruit which were prepared to the developmental ability of each child. Children drank from individual cups or water bottles. Alternative food options were available to children. Mealtimes were observed to be social and pleasurable experiences for the children at a pace that best suited the children's developmental stage.
- There was a rest area in the care rooms sampled if children needed to engage in more restful activities.
- Sleep facilities were available to meet the sleep needs of children when required.
- Nappy changing and toileting were undertaken on a scheduled basis and as needed throughout the service. Nappy changing was observed to be a dignified child centred experience. A number of children were observed to be toilet trained in the Toddler room with some children having commenced their toilet training journey, children were observed to have unrestricted access to the toilet with staff promptly picking up on cues for assistance whilst providing positive praise for children's efforts.
- Children were provided with appropriate sun protection for outdoor play. Independence with self-care skills were promoted with children being encouraged to put on hats. This facilitates comfort in the play experience and promotes independence.

Supporting Relationships

- A key worker system was in place in the service; key groups were displayed within the classrooms. A key worker system allows staff to develop in depth knowledge about the children in their group and fosters nurturing relationships, helping children feel confident.
- The adults in the service were observed to interact with the children in a responsive, warm, respectful manner.
- Staff were observed to speak to each other in a respectful, familiar and warm manner.
- Staff reported that information such as toileting, food and sleep is shared with parents daily through conversation at drop off and collection.

Physical and Material Environment

- The furniture provided in the care rooms sampled where low level and appropriate for the children attending, with equipment and play materials easily accessible and visible to the children on low level units which nurtured independence and facilitated choice.
- There was a range of equipment available to suit the developmental needs of each child in the care rooms sampled. These included, sensory tables, sand trays, arts and crafts, home corners with associated props to facilitate imaginative play experiences, stacking, building, connecting, threading toys, costumes to facilitate creative play, cars and tracks for transporting, and books to facilitate language and early literacy development. Children in the younger care rooms had access to internal ball pits and sensory mats, allowing for the development of gross motor and sensory play.
- All children had access to an outdoor play environment throughout the day. This is scheduled but also available to the children if and when needed. The larger outdoor area had a large climbing frame, slide, see saw, scooters, toy cars, a toy house and rest areas. Artificial grass and mulch were in use underfoot giving a selection of textures to traverse. Smaller outdoor areas were located off each care room sampled, these were used as an extension of the care room, providing an alternative to indoor play.

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 upon the Inspectors unannounced arrival at the service. Access was granted via doorbell system in which a staff member answered therefore preventing access to the children from unauthorised persons. This also prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to children on the day of inspection.
- Children were observed to be adequately supervised during activities and mealtimes.
- Hazardous materials, such as cleaning agents, were placed on high shelving away from the children's reach.
- Daily risk assessments were completed and displayed in each care room sampled.
- The outdoor area was fully secured and enclosed with a high wall and fence.

Infection Control:

- Toilet roll was hygienically stored and in easy reach to the children, preventing potential cross contamination.
- Pedal bins were in use in the room sampled, ensuring appropriate disposal of waste.
- Soothers were stored in individual containers and sterilised when required.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed to be given on the day of inspection, however staff demonstrated knowledge on the procedure for medication administration if required.

Safe Sleep:

- On the day of inspection no child required sleep, however there was a suitable number of appropriate cots to meet the needs of children if required.

Fire Safety:

- Fire escape routes were unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

- The registered provider did not ensure that hand washing practises were consistent across the service and in line with the handwashing policy within the service. The following was observed.
 - Children in the Baby room were observed to have their hands washed with single use cloths and a shared bowl of water. This was not an effective handwashing technique and exposes the children to potentially harmful bacteria.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The service has stated that all staff have been instructed to immediately cease the use of single use cloths in a shared basin of water. The creche supervisor is monitoring this. A new hand/ face washing protocol has been drawn up for hand and face washing in the creche and all staff have been acquainted with the new procedures.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Documentation has been submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the service have been adequate to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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) The registered provider ensured that a record was kept in writing of fire drills within the service. The last recorded fire drill was dated the 27 of July 2025.
 - (b) A record was available indicating the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment, with records demonstrating it was last serviced on 30 May 2025, and the number, type and maintenance of the mains powered smoke alarms throughout the service these were last serviced on the 1 August 2024.
- (2)
- (c) The registered provider ensured that the fire drill maintenance records were available for review by the Inspector.
- (4) A notice of procedures was displayed throughout the service indicating the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

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 premises was adequately insured as a full day care service for the maximum number of children registered. The certificate reviewed had an expiry date of 27 March 2026.