

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015DY369

**Name of Service:** Saoirse Waldorf School T/A Dublin Steiner School

**Address of Service:** 92 Meath St, Dublin 8

**Eircode:** D08 YN15

**Name of Registered Provider:** Micheal Freeman

**Service type:** Full Day

**Date of Inspection:** 17/11/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	29	PM	8
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15   D15 CF9K
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L Jameson
<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).

**Conditions if applicable** | Not applicable

### Description of service

The Dublin Steiner School is located in an urban area on the south side of Dublin City, operating from the ground floor of a building which has been adapted to facilitate the pre-school service. A school aged service is accommodated upstairs. The pre-school service consists of a reception hallway, an office, two pre-school care rooms with kitchens off both rooms and sanitary facilities. The service provides part-time and full-time care to a maximum of 32 children aged 3 to 6 years from 08:50am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9:00am – 12:00pm. There is an enclosed outdoor area located to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs six staff members, including the designated person in charge, the deputy person in charge and four early years practitioners who work directly with the children. On the day of the inspection, the designated person in charge, the deputy person in charge, four early years practitioners and two students were present when the inspector arrived unannounced in the service. The registered provider does not work in the service.

### 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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15(1) Record of a Pre-School Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Back 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 to the designated person in charge on the 17 November 2025 under Regulation 9, in relation to a non-compliance identified under Regulation 9. A response was received from the registered provider which mitigated the risk identified on the 27 August 2025. See body of report for details.

### 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, and*

*© 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,*

*© 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 a named person to deputise as needed.
  - (b) The designated person in charge was rostered to be present all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on and when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.
  - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.

- (2) The full staff files of three adults who had been employed since the last inspection, dated 24 May 2023, were reviewed along with the full files of two students. Garda vetting disclosure of all staff members currently employed in the service were also reviewed.
- (a) Five written and verified references were available from past employers.
  - (b) One written and verified reference was available from a source other than a past employer.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for six adults employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
  - (d) International police vetting was available for five adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six consecutive months or more as an adult.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the three adults who worked directly with the children held 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.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a)(b) The following was observed on the day of inspection:
- Two written and validated references were not available for one adult working in the service.
  - One written reference was available from a past employer for one adult; however, documentary evidence was not available to confirm that a validation check had been completed.
  - One written reference was available from a source other than a past employer for one adult; however, documentary evidence was not available to confirm that a validation check had been completed.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were not available for review by the inspector for two adults who had direct access to the children attending the service. An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the designated person in charge in relation to this.
- (3) On review of documentation available for three adults working in the service, it demonstrated that they had not been fully considered prior to commencement within the service.
- Two written and validated references were not available for one adult.
  - One written reference from a previous employer was available for one adult, however, a validation record was not available for review by the inspector.

- One written reference from a source other than a previous employer was available for one adult, however, a validation record was not available for review by the inspector.
  - One reference validation check was dated after commencement within the service for one adult.
  - Garda vetting disclosures were not available for review by the inspector for two adults who had direct access to children attending the service.
  - A Garda vetting disclosure for one adult was dated after commencement within the service.
  - International police vetting for one adult was dated after commencement within the service.
- Full checks must be completed on references or vetting for adults working in the service prior to them commencing in a position in order to establish they are appropriate to have access to children.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- (a)(b)
- Two adults with outstanding references and reference validations no longer work in the service. Management have implemented a recruitment checklist to ensure all documentation is on file for all new staff members prior to commencement in the service.
- (c) Two adults who did not have Garda vetting disclosures no longer work in the service. Management will ensure that all relevant checks are completed prior to commencement in the service.
- (3) Management have implemented a recruitment checklist to ensure all documentation is on file for all new staff members prior to commencement in the service.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)
- (a)(b)
- Recruitment Checklist.
- (c) No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.
- (3) Recruitment checklist.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 9.

### 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) There were a sufficient number of adults working directly with the children on the day of inspection. There were four staff members working with twenty-nine children in the morning and one staff member working with eight children in the afternoon. The registered provider and two students were available in a supernumerary position to provide support in rooms as needed throughout the day.

(2) The adult child ratios were maintained for the duration of the inspection.

### 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.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*  
*(c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) A sampling process was used in relation to the children's records. All of the 12 sampled registration forms were appropriately completed with the required information as specified in sub-sections (a) to (i) in this regulation.

(3)

(c) The children's records were available and open for review by the inspector as an authorised person.

### 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-*

*(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

### Compliance Information

(1)

(b) The following practices were observed on the day of inspection which supported the health, welfare and development of the children attending:

- Staff members were attentive to children's individual needs. On the day of inspection, a child was observed to be upset. Staff members interacted warmly and kindly, offering comfort using gentle and reassuring tones of voice, to support the child. A staff member was observed to sit with the child and talk about why they were upset and join them in play, providing a caring and supportive environment for the child.
- The children were supported to follow their own interests, explore their environment and given freedom of choice, while being offered support during activities and transitions.
- Mealtimes were observed to be a sociable and pleasant event, with staff members sitting alongside the children, engaging in meaningful conversations and offering support and encouragement to the children. Water was readily available to the children in the care room and the outdoor play area.
- Staff members were observed to tend to children's individual personal needs promptly, offering discreet supervision for toileting, assisting with hand washing and dressing for the outdoor area.
- Designated rest areas and facilities were available to the children in the event they wished to rest or nap.

### 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 agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Flexes and cords were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Radiator covers were in place throughout the service.

##### Infection Control:

- The sanitary areas were equipped with warm water, liquid soap and hand paper towels. Staff members were observed to support children with handwashing at regular intervals throughout the day, before mealtimes and after activities and toileting.
- Foot operated pedal bins were in use in the service to hygienically dispose of waste.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Emergency and anti-febrile medication was observed to be in date, stored in the correct packaging and out of the children's reach. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

##### Safe Sleep:

- No children were observed to sleep on the day of the inspection, however, there was documentary evidence available that sleep checks were maintained for children who slept, recording their colour, breathing, position and the temperature of the room.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.
- Emergency evacuation routes were displayed throughout the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Fire Safety:

1. Children's attendance records in the Front room were completed ahead of time. Upon review of the attendance record at 01:26pm, one child was marked out at 01:30pm and ten children were marked out at 02:30pm. This may impede the safe evacuation of the children in the event of an emergency.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Fire Safety:

1. Management discussed and explained the reason for and seriousness of maintaining accurate attendance records with staff members. Staff members were invited to read the fire safety policy and contact the manager if in doubts. Management will monitor attendance records daily.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Fire Safety:

1. Photographs of children's attendance records.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

### 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) One staff member who was observed to work directly with the children on the day of inspection held in-date certification for First Aid Response (FAR) training which ensured that a person with FAR training was immediately available to the children attending the service at all times. In addition, four staff members held in-date Paediatric First Aid training.

(2)

- (a) The first aid boxes were suitably equipped and easily accessible to the staff
- (b) The first aid boxes were available for the children attending the service at all times.

### 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,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (b) The premises was observed to be safe and secure, evidenced by the following:
  - The main entrance leading to the service was appropriately secured on the day of inspection. A buzzer system was in place which was managed and monitored by staff members, preventing unauthorised access and exit of children.
  - The outdoor play area was securely walled and gated reducing the risk of children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to this area.
- (c) The premises was observed to be kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated. Windows were opened throughout the service for ventilation and an ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained.
- (d) The premises was clean, maintained and in a good state of repair.