

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DY380		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	St. Matthew's Primary School		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Cranfield Place, Sandymount, Dublin 4, Co. Dublin		
<b>Eircode:</b>	D04 FK11		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Clíodhna O'Reilly		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	05/03/2026		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM Not Applicable
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate - Tusla Child and Family Agency Brunel Building, Floor 7 Heuston South Quarter Dublin 8, D08 X01F		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A Byrne and M Bermingham		
<b>Title:</b>	Inspection and Registration Manager and 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).

### Description of service

Saint Matthew's Primary School is registered to provide sessional care to a maximum of 11 children aged 3-5 years, from 09:30 to 12:30 during school term. The service operates in a room on the first floor of a primary school, and the pre-school children have access to an outdoor play area on the premises.

### Staffing

There is a dedicated person employed to operate the service who works directly with the children and a second person provides cover on a relief basis if required. The registered provider and the relief person occupy roles in the primary school, and both were onsite in the school on the day of inspection; the registered provider does not work directly with the children.

### 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, and safety.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.*

*(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 named person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge was rostered to be on the premises for the duration of the opening hours.

(c) A clear management structure was in place, as evidenced by discussion with the registered provider and on observation of the operation of the service on the day of inspection.

(2)

The complete files of two staff members were reviewed, along with the Garda vetting of a contractor. Evidence of vetting considerations include:

(a)(b) Consideration was given to four written and validated references as required.

(c) Three renewals of Garda vetting disclosures were considered in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate's regulatory notice requiring three-year renewals.

(d) A review of the available documentation demonstrated that international police vetting was not required.

(3)

Consideration was given to four written and validated references and three renewals of Garda vetting disclosures prior to the persons having access to children.

(4)

Two staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualifications.

### 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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection; there was one adult working with ten children.
- (8)(c) A second person familiar with the operation of the service and who is in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge, was available to attend to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

### 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) Ten child records were reviewed. Seven out of ten records contained the complete set of required information as follows:

- (a) The name and date of birth of the child.
- (b) The date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) Provision for recording the date when the child would cease to attend the service.
- (d) The names, addresses and telephone number of parents and an alternative contact, and information of how a parent or an alternative contact, can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service.
- (e) Authorisation for the collection of the child.
- (f) Provision for the recording of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, and relevant information to support the provision of special care or attention.
- (g) The name and telephone number of the child's medical practitioner.
- (h) Record of immunisations, if any, received by the child.
- (i) Written consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

## Non-Compliance Information

(1) Three of the ten records under review did not contain the complete set of required information and was missing one piece of information each, as follows:

- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child.
- (h) record of immunisations received by the child.
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that:

- Three parents were contacted and that the relevant forms were received by the service to include authorisation for collection, record of immunisation and written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment.
- A checklist was created for the person in charge to ensure that all forms are collected at the start of term.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence was submitted.

## Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 15 was adequately addressed.

### 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*

*(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

The following observations demonstrated that children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service, and that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place:

Children were engaged in multiple learning activities and play such as imaginary role play with animals and dolls house materials, engaging with the Montessori towers and stairs, making a den, playing restaurant and shop, playing with blocks, painting, cutting, gluing, mark-making and drawing. The person in charge described the aim of the service's practice was to support children's agency and self-expression. This aim was evident as the children were observed to be deeply involved and expressive during their play and activities. The displays in the room reflected children's learning such as plans and evidence of current topics to include rainbows, hibernation and spiders.

The physical environment was laid out in clearly defined areas and supplied with a wide range of materials and resources on offer to children. For example, a creative area contained open ended art materials such as pencils, crayons, markers, paint, sponges, paper, and glue. An imaginary role play area contained different settings such as family, kitchen, restaurant, shop and a workbench. Other defined areas were amply resourced to promote children's learning and development and included Montessori materials, wooden and plastic blocks, rice, and books. In addition, the environment was print and image rich and reflective of the children attending to include their names, pictures, creative expressions and cubbies for personal items.

Interactions were playful, kind and supportive among adults and children. Children led their own play and resolved issues using strategies that were also modelled by the adult. Children were familiar with and appeared content transitioning through the morning routine. The adult supported the children's transitions using verbal

prompts, dedicated music, visual displays, and the allocation of jobs to children. Children's independence was supported in a calm and unhurried manner leading to cooperative working together and smooth running of the session.

### 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

The following measures were taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children and provide a safe environment, as evidenced by observation of practice, a review of the environment and relevant documentation, and through discussion with staff:

##### General Safety:

- External doors were appropriately secured with a buzzer system to restrict unauthorised access and to prevent children from exiting unsupervised.
- Windows on the first floor were made safe with restrictors to prevent children exiting or falling.
- Handrails on the staircase were at children's level and the staircase was adequately lit.
- Play equipment, materials and resources were suitable for the age group and in good condition.

##### Infection Control:

- An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. The environment, equipment and materials appeared clean and were maintained in a hygienic condition.
- Lunch boxes that included perishable food items were stored in fridge in line with national nutritional standards for preschool children.

##### Administration of Medication:

- The person in charge demonstrated, through discussion, that they were familiar with the practice and procedures for the administration and storage of medication in line with the service's medication policy.
- There was written evidence of prior parental consent for the administration of medication if required.
- The person in charge was familiar with the procedures in place to safely administer medication and document same, including in the case of an emergency.
- Medication on the premises was appropriately labelled, within its expiry date, and was stored out of reach of children.

### Fire Safety:

- Emergency escape routes and exits were unobstructed and clearly signposted.
- The person in charge outlined the procedure to evacuate children in the event of an emergency and knew the location of the assembly point, in line with the written procedures that were on display.

### Non-Compliance Information

The service did not ensure adequate measures were taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children and to provide of a safe environment, as follows:

#### General Safety:

1. Two children were observed eating whole grapes from their lunchboxes. This was at variance with the service healthy eating policy which stated that grapes must be chopped. Eating whole grapes poses a risk of choking to children.

#### Infection Control:

2. Provision for effective handwashing was not adequately facilitated in the service, posing an infection control risk, evidenced as follows:
  - Warm running water was not provided; the temperature of water in both taps in the children's sanitary area measured at 13.3°C and 12.8°C at 10:20.
  - The soap dispenser did not work which prevented the dispensing of soap when the button was pushed.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

The registered provider stated that:

- A letter went home to explain to parents the danger of whole grapes and to request that parents cut grapes before sending in their children's lunch box.
- The person in charge will oversee each lunchbox daily and cut grapes if necessary.
- A reminder note will be sent out each term to parents noting the danger of choking.

##### Infection Control:

The registered provider stated that:

- The hand dispensers were fixed and the service is waiting for a plumber to install a hot water system.
- A checklist is in place to ensure that dispensers are full at all times.

## Supporting documentation submitted

### General Safety:

Evidence was submitted.

### Infection Control:

Evidence was submitted

## Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 at point 1 was adequately addressed. The non-compliance identified at point 2 was partly addressed and the outstanding item will be assessed at the next inspection.

## 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)

The registered provider ensured that a person trained as a first aid responder was available to children at all times; one staff member had a current First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificate available.

(2) (a)(b)

A first aid box, which was suitably equipped, was safely stored in a conspicuous location on a labelled first aid shelf and was easily accessible.

## 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.
- (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) Fire drills were completed monthly, as evidenced through discussion with the person in charge and a review of written records. The last fire drill was recorded to have taken place on 17 February 2026.
  - (b) A record was available of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. Records showed that the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were serviced on 4 December 2025.
- (4)
- A notice of the evacuation procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of an emergency were displayed in a conspicuous location on a noticeboard in the hallway outside the room.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service had a valid certificate of insurance for full day care for eleven children; expiry date 5 October 2026.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-  
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

### Non-Compliance Information

(d)  
The wooden skirting board in the children's sanitary area was not maintained and repaired as required. The top part of the board was damaged where the wood was falling off the wall in places. In addition, paint had peeled off causing exposed wood to soften to a sponge like material.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The registered providers stated that:

- The skirting board will be repaired on completion of the installation of a hot water system.
- A monthly maintenance checklist is created to ensure that maintenance in all areas of the preschool is checked regularly.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Evidence was submitted.

### Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 29 remains outstanding and will be assessed on the next inspection.