

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY409
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Name of Service:	Young Explorer's Club
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Address of Service:	Unit F1 Bymac Centre, Northwest Business Park, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Co. Dublin
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Name of Registered Provider:	Iwona Siniarska
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	18/08/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	14
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	E Hosford
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

Young Explorers Club is an early year's childcare service located in Northwest Business Park, Dublin 15, one of two services operated by the registered provider. The service provides full day care, Monday to Friday from 6.30am-6pm, to children aged from 1 to 6 years of age.

There are two care rooms in the service, the Toddler Room on the ground floor for children aged 1 to 3 years of age and the ECCE room on the first floor for 3- to 6-year-olds. The service also has a designated cot room and service kitchen on the ground floor, and sanitary facilities on the two floors. An outdoor play area is available to the side of the service.

The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and can cater for a maximum of 22 children.

Staffing

The service employs eight staff to include the registered provider, person in charge, deputy person in charge, administrative assistant and four childcare staff. 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,16,19,23 and 25.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16.

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 deputy 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) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The deputy person in charge was present on the arrival of the inspector to the service and was present for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place within the service.

(2) Three staff files were reviewed during the inspection for two new staff employed in the service since the last inspection and one staff member from another of the registered providers services who provided break cover for staff during the inspection.

(a) Four validated written references were available from a past employer.

(b) One validated written reference was available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for eight staff members. However, the service did not demonstrate compliance with 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 available from three countries in respect of three staff members who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) On review of documentation available three staff members working with the children had evidence to demonstrate that they held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) One written reference for one staff member was not accepted as it was not translated.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) In response to the non-compliance the service has stated that reference in question was translated by a sworn translator, and the certified translation has been added to the staff member's file. Evidence of this translation has been provided to TUSLA. Going forward, all staff references submitted in a language other than English will be translated by a sworn translator prior to acceptance. This will be discussed in the next meeting.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b) Translated reference.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 9(2)(a)(b) has been adequately addressed.

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) On the day of inspection, there were four adults working with 14 children aged between 1-5 years of age in the morning and afternoon.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection.

- **Toddler room** – 2 adults caring for 5 children aged 1-3 years of age.
- **ECCE room**- 2 adults caring for 9 children aged 3-5 years.

(8)(a) On discussion with staff and on review of the information available it was confirmed that two adults were always present on the premises.

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

(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)

- (h) Details of attendance by each child was recorded accurately daily.
 - (i) Details of staff rosters daily were available on the day of inspection.
 - (k) Seven accident and incident forms were reviewed and were completed in full.
- (3) The records required during the inspection was available to 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)

Basic Needs:

- The staff members were observed to be kind and attentive in their interactions with the children and

the atmosphere in the service was warm and child centred.

- The service provided a breakfast of cereal and toast, a hot meal at lunch time and a snack in the afternoon. A morning snack was provided by parents with staff working with parents and children to encourage healthy packed lunches. Drinking water was freely available to the children throughout the session. The staff members sat with the children at snack time encouraging conversations and extending interactions.
- The children were observed using the toilet under supervision, with assistance provided by the staff member when necessary.
- Children were observed moving freely within the care rooms and taking a break from activities and relaxing in a cosy corner in the care rooms which were equipped with soft matting and child size chairs.
- The children spent time in the outdoor area while enjoying the opportunity to explore and develop their gross motor skills of climbing and balancing.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The staff members demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's individual needs, likes and preferences, and frequently initiated conversations with the children, responded meaningfully to their verbal and non-verbal cues and provided regular praise and encouragement using a gentle tone of voice.
- The children were encouraged to take turns with each other and share.
- Parents and guardians were communicated with at drop off and collection and via an electronic application, which the staff members could also use to share information about the children and the activities undertaken during the day.
- Staff were observed working well together in supporting the children and transitioning from activities such as outdoor play and snack time.

Physical and material environment:

- The care rooms were bright and inviting spaces for the children which created an atmosphere that was welcoming and engaging. Areas within the rooms were available and accessible which enabled the children to develop their skills and interests and become independent and confident learners. Materials available included a home area, construction space, small world, tabletop games and puzzles, arts and crafts and a rest area with a library. Each area was well equipped with supporting equipment displayed

on low shelving which assisted the children in making choices in their play. All equipment and materials in the care rooms were appropriate to the age and development of the children.

- The children had access to an enclosed outdoor area to the side of the premises. The garden was surfaced with soft matting and artificial grass. A climbing frame with a slide, swings, a wooden kitchen with pots and pans, and activity trays with sand were available to the children along with a table and chairs with pencils and paper.

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 closely monitored by staff who granted access by a lock which was out of the reach of the children.
- The care rooms were observed to be suitable and safe with all cleaning agents, sharp implements and blind cords out of children's reach.
- The premises and outdoor play area was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- The water temperature in the sanitary accommodation in the service did not exceed the recommended maximum water temperature of 43°C. This reduced the risk of scalding for the children in attendance.

Infection Control:

- Adequate hand washing facilities were available in the sanitary facilities used by the children, these included thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid soap, paper towels and pedal operated bins. Children were observed to wash their hands before lunch and after using the toilet.
- Children's perishable food from home was refrigerated on arrival to the service and staff were observed cleaning the tables before and after lunch.
- The service was observed to be clean and well maintained with cleaning schedules in operation within the care rooms and sanitary facilities. The sanitary facilities had active mechanical ventilation to extract any stale air.

- Children's sheets and blankets for sleep were laundered weekly or more frequently if needed. Each cot and bed were positioned with the minimum space of 50cm apart to reduce the potential risk of cross infection. Soothers for sleep time were stored in individually named boxes.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff were familiar with the service medication administration policy and records were maintained when medication was required to be given to a child while in the service. No medication was administered to a child during the inspection

Safe Sleep:

- Staff maintained ten-minute sleep checks on all sleeping children to include colour, breathing and position. The temperature of the sleep room was recorded by staff and documented to ensure it was maintained between the recommended temperature of 18-22°C while children slept. The temperature of the room was recorded as 21.1°C at 11.05am and 21.9°C at 12.15pm. Children were suitably dressed at sleep time with any excess clothing removed.
- Children under the age of two were provided with standard cots for sleep while older children slept on low beds.

Fire Safety:

- Designated fire exits were illuminated and clear of any obstructions throughout the inspection.
- Procedures to follow in the event of a fire were visible to staff in the care rooms to ensure the safe evacuation of staff and children in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

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

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. In response the registered provider has stated that up to-date Garda vetting certificates were obtained and submitted for both staff members. The renewed disclosures have been filed and are available for inspection. A Garda vetting monitoring log has been introduced to track renewal dates for all staff members. Renewal reminders will be generated six months in advance to ensure that all certificates

remain valid and in line with EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting. The recruitment and HR procedures have been updated to include a three-year vetting review cycle for all staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Updated Garda vetting for two staff members.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 23 has 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

(2)

(a) and (b) First aid boxes were available in the service and suitably equipped and accessible to the adults responsible for caring for the children attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that a staff member was trained in First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and available to the children attending the service. It is acknowledged that a staff member with first aid was available to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) In response to the non-compliance the service has stated that staff members have now obtained and submitted valid First Aid Responder (FAR) certificates. The staff roster has been redesigned to ensure that at least one FAR-certified person is always present and available to the children. Additional FAR training has been

scheduled for October to expand the number of staff with certification. A system has been implemented to monitor FAR certification expiry dates, with reminders set in advance. Rostering procedures have been updated to ensure continuous FAR coverage at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) FAR certificate for one staff member with an expiry date of 9 January 2026.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 25 has been adequately addressed.