

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL127
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Name of Service:	Jonix Educational Services
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Address of Service:	St. Luke's National School, Hollywood Rd, Tyrrellstown, Dublin 15
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nicola Hansen
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	01/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	4	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Area 1 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	T Nelson
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

Jonix Educational Centre is a part-time day care service located in Dublin 15. The service is one of seven services operated by the registered provider and provides early childhood care and education to children who are diagnosed with autism. The service is registered for a maximum of 12 children aged 2 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 1.30pm.

Jonix Educational Centre operates from two rooms within St. Lukes National School; however, one room is currently not in operation. There are sanitary facilities available for children and staff and an office. A fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the front of the premises.

Staffing

There are currently four staff employed by the service including the person in charge. These, along with the regional manager were present on the day of the inspection. 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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 (1)(h)(i)(k).

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 regional manager, 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 designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place which was outlined in the service policy book.
- (2) The staff roster was reviewed and discussed with the service manager. A total of five staff files were reviewed which included the regional manager and four core staff members who cared for the children.
- The registered provider had completed the following checks:
- (a) Seven validated written references were available from recent past employers

- (b) Three validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all five staff files reviewed. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Two adults who had lived in a state other than Ireland for more than six months as an adult had international police vetting from that state available for inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider did not ensure the following:

- (3) The review of documentation available demonstrated that one adult commenced employment in the service prior to consideration of their references. Checks on adults must be completed prior to them having access to the children in order to establish they are appropriate to have access to children.
- (4) There was no documentary evidence available that the four adults working directly with the children held the required qualifications or documentary evidence of a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (3) The service report that all staff files were thoroughly reviewed to ensure that each contains the necessary documentation and all required records. This matter was brought to the attention of the management team responsible for maintaining accurate staff documentation. Additionally, the tracking system has been enhanced to ensure similar oversights are prevented moving forward.
- (4) The service report the Department is aware of the current situation with regards to the dual qualification criteria. They report they are also engaging the Department of Education on this matter. The service ensures all their staff are registered with the teaching council in accordance with Department of Education criteria and are qualified to teach in primary schools including preschool classes.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(3) has been adequately addressed, regulatory compliance for Regulation 9(4) remains outstanding.

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

The registered provider ensured the following:

- (1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service to meet their care needs. There were four staff available to four children present on the morning of the inspection.
- (2) The adults to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection.

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:*
- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
 - (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
 - (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
 - (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
 - (e) the facilities available;*
 - (f) the opening hours and fees;*
 - (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
 - (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;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured the following:

- (a) Details of the name, position, qualifications, and experience of all staff were maintained within the staff files and in the service folder.
- (b) The service Tusla certificate detailed the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services. This was displayed on the door of the office.
- (c) The adult: child ratios were outlined in the policy document.
- (d) The policy document outlined the type of care or programme provided.
- (e) The policy document outlined the facilities available within the service.
- (f) The policy document outlined the opening hours and fees of the service.
- (g) The registered provider maintained all the policies required in accordance with Regulation 10.
- (h) Attendance records detailing the daily arrival and departure of the children were maintained.
- (i) A record was maintained of the staff roster which was reflective of the staff present on the day.
- (j) A method of recording the administration of medication was available, however staff reported that no medication had been administered in the service.
- (k) Following a review of a sample of ten records, the registered provider ensured a full record in writing was maintained for accident and incidents

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the following:

- There was defined areas of interest in the care room and an adequate supply of props and other resources were available to extend the play and learning opportunities of these interest areas. Areas of interest included art, home area, mark making, books, small world and transporting.
- A range of individual, specialised equipment was available to meet the specific care needs of the children in the room.
- Furniture in the rooms was suitable for the age and stage of development of the children.
- Toys and equipment were stored on high and low-level shelving some accessible to the children, with other materials which required one to one support visible to the children.
- Labelling using text and imagery was used extensively and effectively throughout the room.

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 in place to safeguard children:

General Safety:

- Entry to the premises was secured on arrival to the main school building, which was supervised by reception staff. The internal door to the care room was secured for the duration of the inspection. This restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access and prevented children from exiting unsupervised.
- All cleaning agents and hazardous equipment was stored out of reach of the children in locked presses or on high shelves.
- Window restrictors were in place on all windows.
- Blind cords were secured.

- There was plan available which clearly detailed the steps to support a child who had a particular care need and staff were aware of these steps.
- A checklist was available for outdoor play, detailing items such as roll book, phone and other relevant items to be taken to support safe outdoor play.

Infection Control:

- Although no nappy changes were observed on the day, protective equipment such as disposal gloves and aprons were available to support effective infection control practice.
- The premises appeared to be in a clean and hygienic condition and documented up to date cleaning records were available and displayed in the premises.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and single use hand towels were available in the wash hand basin used by the children and the staff members.
- Appropriate waste disposal units were in place in the care room and sanitary accommodation.
- A box was available for the appropriate cleaning of mouthed toys, and children's individual toys were stored in labelled boxes.
- The care room was adequately ventilated and within the recommended ambient temperature range of 18-22 °C. A temperature of 19°C was recorded by the inspector at 10.15am.

Administration of Medication:

- Fever reducing medication was available for use in the service and stored in line with safe practice.

Fire Safety:

- Fire drills were carried out on a monthly basis, and there was clear guidance on the evacuation of the care room in collaboration with the school fire safety procedures.

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 service provided evidence that a person trained in First Aid Responder training was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.

(2) (a) A first box with was suitably equipped and sufficient for the number of children was stored in the office

(b) The first aid box was easily accessible and available.

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

The registered provider ensured the following:

(1) (a) A record of fire drills was available on the premises with the last drill dated as having been carried out on the 3 April 2025.

(b) An up-to-date maintenance record was available for the Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers were serviced in February 2025 and the smoke alarms were maintained on the 11 March 2025.

(4) A procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was on display in the care room.