

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY082
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Name of Service:	Dunmore Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Scoil Nicolas Naofa Dunmore, Dunmore, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H54 PD32
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Name of Registered Provider:	Claire Finnegan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	19/06/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A, 1st Floor- Green Corridor, Merlin Park, Galway.
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Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan.
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Title:	Early Years Inspector.
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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

The pre-school service is located on the grounds of the primary school known as Scoil Nicolas Naofa, east county Galway. An Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme and sessional care programme is offered from 9 am to 12:30pm, Monday to Friday for children aged between 2 years to 6 years. The preschool operates from a prefabricated building to the side of the national school. There is one large playroom an entrance hall and sanitary facilities. A quiet rest area is available for the children to rest and relax in the playroom if they choose. The preschool children have access to an outdoor play area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider is the person in charge and there is a named deputy if required. The registered provider and 2 additional staff member were on the premises. There were three staff working in the premises, who hold a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 to a Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. The staff have documentary evidence of on-going training and education.

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.

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 registered provider, 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.*

(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 is supernumerary and is not on the premises daily. There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person able to deputise.
- (b) Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.
Three staff files were reviewed.
- (2)(a) & (b) Six written validated references, on file for the 3 adults were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the three adults.
- (d) Not applicable, as neither of the 3 adults had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 months, while over the age of 18 years, and therefore did not require police vetting.
- (4) The three staff working directly and caring for the children had at least a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 6 to Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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)-*
- (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 pre-school attendance records for the previous 3 weeks indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children
- (3) The adult to child ratio was correct and maintained on the day of inspection. There were 3 staff working directly with and caring for 14 children.
- (8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 staff were on the premises during the operating hours of the service.

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

(19)(1)(a)

Basic Needs

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and a healthy eating policy was available on request to review. The children ate their snacks provided by their parents and guardians. The atmosphere during snack time was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and staff.
- The staff encouraged and supported the children to be independent while they had free play, tabletop activities, pretend play, artwork, outdoor play and imaginative play.
- The children had unrestricted access to the designated toilets and toileted independently or supervised where required.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills for e.g. washing their hands, taking the lead and being the assigned little helper at snack time.
- All the children had opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment, both indoors and outdoors.
- There was a cosy area within the playroom with child sized couches provided which could be adapted as a rest area for the children to rest or opt out of activities if they so wished.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The environment was comfortable, inviting and laid out to accommodate the needs of all children and staff in the pre-school.
- The playroom was bright, spacious, and well laid out with a variety of equipment and interest areas.
- Appropriately child sized tables and chairs were provided in the playroom and the children had the option of both tabletop activities and floor play.
- The tables and chairs were low size to suit the age range of children attending the service.
- Interest areas included a dress up area, a home corner with household utensils and crockery, a tuff table, library with a selection of books, small world area, dolls and buggies, arts and crafts area, a black board, construction area, jigsaws and puzzles. There was age-appropriate tables and chairs for table top activities.
- Displays on the walls included family photographs, happy birthday, numbers, colours, emotions, curriculum planning, little helper system and the children's art work.

The Outdoor play area.

- The play area was secure and surrounded with boundary walls, fencing and gates. It was covered with, tarmacadam, concrete and a grass area. The service also had a sheltered area for inclement weather with a variety of special interest areas. Children were observed playing outdoors during the session.

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) Three adults working in the pre-school service had evidence of an up to date first aid responder qualification.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and in an easily accessible conspicuous position in the playroom.

(b) The first aid box was readily available, with content items within date.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had insurance for a sessional service with a max of 22 preschool children with an expiry date of 27/03/2025.