

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY115
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Sonas Early Learning Centre
-------------------------	-----------------------------

Address of Service:	61 Tirellan Hts, Headford Road, Galway, Co. Galway.
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	H91 C977
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Theresa Murphy
-------------------------------------	----------------

Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

Date of Inspection:	24/07/2023
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	38	PM	38
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Regulations Directorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor),Merlin Park Hospital, Galway City.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan and F Mc Donagh.
Title:	Early Years Inspectors.

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

This purpose-built private premises is under the present management since August 2020, in a housing development in an urban area of Galway city on the Headford road called Tirellan. The service operating hours are 07.45 am to 06.00 pm, from Monday to Friday. The age range of children is 1 to 6 years of age, with a maximum number of 60 pre-school children at any one time. The service caters for full day-care, part-time care, Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) and sessional pre-school care programmes from 09.00 am to 12.00 pm. The service also offers a breakfast club from 7.45 am to 8.45 am and an afterschool programme for school aged children from 1.40 pm to 06.00 pm.

This ground floor and first floor premises has a total of 7 playrooms, the Daisy room (1-2 years), the Sweet Peas room (1-3 years), Sun Flowers (2-4 years), the Poppy room - ECCE (3-5 years), the Buttercups (1-3 years) and the Daffodil and Roses rooms. There is 1 designated sleep room which is located on the ground floor for children aged 1 to 2 years of age. The service has a designated kitchen. To the front and side of the premise's children have access to soft surface outdoor area with various interest areas.

Staffing

There is a total of 13 adults working directly with preschool children in the service which includes the manager, cook, a school aged adult and 10 adults working directly with children. The registered provider is not on the premises daily. There was documentary evidence that adults have 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 and safety. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19,25, 26 and 28.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 records of a preschool child.

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 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*

(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 ensured that there was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise.

(b) The registered provider had a manager in place who was the person in charge and was on the premises when the inspection team arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that the designated person or deputy were available on the premises during the operational hours of the service.

(2)(a)(b) There were twenty-six validated references on file in respect of the 13 adults, from a past employer or a source other than a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 13 adults.

(d) Police vetting disclosures were available for 8 adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years.

(4) Copies of Child Care Qualifications were available on file for 11 adults with childcare interest and expertise working directly with and care for the children.

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 morning and afternoon of the inspection there were 38 pre-school children present with 9 adults which included the manager working directly with, caring, and supervising these children.
In addition, there was a cook and a school aged adult.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was complied with in the service for the respective age group in a full day care service.
- (8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were on the premises during the operation of the preschool service.

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.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) and (i).

There was a total of 64 children's records and a sample of 15 children's records were reviewed by the Early Years Inspectors.

The entries reviewed were factual, consistent, and accurate.

The 15 random records of children contain the following:

- The name and date of birth of the child.
- The date on which the child first attended the service.
- The date on which the child stopped attending the service (where relevant).
- The name and address of the child's parent or guardian, and a telephone number where that parent or guardian (or a relative or friend of the parent or child) can be contacted during the hours of operation.

- Written authorisation / permissions for collecting the child.
- Details are recorded of any illness, allergy, or additional need(s) the child had, together with all the information relevant to the provision of specific care or attention.
- The name and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner.
- A record of any immunisations the child has had.
- Written parental or guardian consent was included to allow the child to have appropriate medical treatment if there was / is an emergency.

(4) The registered provider advised and documentary evidence from file review indicated, that all relevant children’s records were kept for 2 years from the date a child stops attending 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

(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

19 (1)(a)(b)

BASIC NEEDS:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service. The children sat together and ate their snacks provided by their parents and guardians. The snacks observed was healthy and nutritious consisted of a selection of sandwiches, brown bread, bread rolls, wraps, cheese, ham, rice cakes, yogurts, crackers and various pieces of fruit. The main hot meal of the day was a beef keema curry with rice. At 4:30pm children were given a selection of ham, chicken, cheese and tuna wraps.
- The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their snack in a relaxed and unhurried environment. The adults sat and engaged with children during mealtimes.
- Children had access to their own individually labelled water containers in a designated area in each of the playroom and while playing in the outdoor area.

- The children had the opportunity to use crockery and plates during their snack time and at dinner time.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence. All the children were toilet trained and either toileted independently or with some assistance as required.
- Fourteen children were in nappies and their nappies were changed throughout the day as required by adults.
- The children had the opportunity to select which activities they choose to engage in. Children could move about freely, exploring their environment, and improving their emerging skills such as coordination and balance. The theme of the week was movement and dance.
- All children had access to the outdoor play areas which provided a variety of play equipment for children to enjoy. When outside, the children were appropriately dressed wearing sun hats and it was observed on the day that sun cream which was individually labelled was applied to each child prior to playing outside.

Non-Compliance Information

Physical and Material Environment: The Daisy, Sunflower and Daffodil rooms did not have an adequate area for children to rest and relax during the day. There was no age-appropriate soft seating available for preschool children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response that:

Physical and Material Environment:

Corrective and Preventive Action

Age appropriate soft- seating was purchased for the care rooms and we will ensure that soft seating is provided in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted of the newly purchased soft seating.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years inspector and has deemed to have met the requirements of this part of the Regulation.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled hot water was not available in the nappy changing and sanitary areas on the ground floor of the service on the day of inspection the water temperature read at 17.6 °C which may pose a risk of cross infection for a preschool child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

A plumber was contacted to fix and restore warm water and this has now been rectified. A check is carried out twice daily to ensure we have warm water.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence of the warm water was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and it has met the requirements of this part of the Regulation.

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 2 adults trained in first aid responder for children and were available to the children attending the pre-school service. There were 5 staff member who had a current training in first aid for children.
- (2)(a) There were two first aid boxes which were easily accessible in a conspicuous position on the ground floor office and Daffodil room on the first floor.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 firefighting 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) A record in writing was kept and maintained in the service of the monthly fire drills. The last monthly fire drill was recorded to have taken place on the 17 July 2023.
- (b) A record was maintained of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment with the last annual service dated the 08 June 2023.

A record was maintained of the smoke and fire detection system with the last annual service was dated the 08 June 2023.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the pre-school rooms and throughout the building.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had up to date insurance for a full day care for a maximum of 68 preschool children and was valid until the 27 March 2024.