

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY195
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Name of Service:	New Adventures Pre-school
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Address of Service:	Bawnmore, Woodford, Loughrea, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H62 E008
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Name of Registered Provider:	Geraldine Fahy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	No.
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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.
Inspection undertaken by:	F Kelly.
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

This sessional service is in a rural area, in the townland of Bawnmore, Woodford, county Galway. This designated outdoor pre-school is adjacent to the registered provider's home. The service was open from Monday to Friday between 09.30 and 12.30 and offers an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care programme.

Staffing

The registered provider was a sole operator and there was a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge of the service in the event of an emergency.

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.

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 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.*

(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 was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspection, the registered provider was in charge was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.
- Following a review of the service files and discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that there were 3 members of staff employed in the service, which included the registered provider, the emergency person in the event of an emergency and a relief staff member.
- The 3 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.
- (2)(a) There were 2 of the required 6 written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer for the adults working in the service.
- (b) There were 4 of the required 6 written and appropriately validated references available from a reputable source other than the most recent employer for the adults working in the service
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 3 staff working in the service. The service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting for staff members every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) A police vetting disclosure was available for 1 adult working in the service as they had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) All adults working directly with children have obtained an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at least a level 5 or equivalent on the National Qualifications Framework.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider was the sole operator and the designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in case of emergency. During the period of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.
- (3) On the morning of inspection, there was 1 adult caring for the 8 pre-school children attending the session.

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

- Children were independent with their toileting needs and they have unrestricted access to the toilet that was conveniently location to the main play area. Assistance was offered to the children when required, but children were able to also use this area on their own.
- Children were observed washing their hands prior to lunch and after toileting. On the day of inspection children were observed walking to the sanitary area after an activity to wash their hands before lunch. One child that was just finishing an activity, didn't go with the rest of the group but they were observed to go on their own to wash his hands without any prompt from the staff member.
- The children had access to relaxation area and soft seating in the playroom, if they required rest. On the day of inspection, the children were observed sitting in various area of the play areas, there was a large toy jeep that the least 4 children could sit and relax or play in, which was used on numerous occasions throughout the session. Other seats both children sized and adult sized were available to the children and were used on numerous occasions.
- The staff members were observed to deal with disagreements between the children in a sensitive and calm manner. This was observed during the session, when 2 children had an issue with sharing the swing. One child became very upset. The staff member spoke to the 2 children involved and the issue was quickly resolved. The staff got the 2 children to agree to share. One child got to push the child using the swing and

they had to wait to use it and then the roles would be reversed, the 2 children played on the swing without any further issues.

- The children were encouraged to be independent in caring for themselves. The children were encouraged to put on their jackets and get their lunch bags from the cabin. The staff members offered assistance but let the children do as much as they could prior to intervening.
- The children used the outdoor play area at all times throughout the session. The children had suitable outdoor footwear and jackets to wear in inclement weather. This was observed on the day when some children wore rainproof boots when they were playing in the outdoor area. Here they were observed digging and playing in the outdoor kitchen, riding the selection of ride on toys, climbing on the play equipment and balancing on the beams and tyres on the floor. The children appeared happy and content exploring the different areas of the space, which included a sensory space, construction area and a water feature along a fence; this was evident from the laughter while playing and the upset when they were told it was time to tidy up as it was “going home time”.
- Healthy eating was promoted within the service. Snacks and children’s drinks were available to the children when they required them. Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snack without being rushed. The children were observed eating their lunch on low tables and chairs in the outdoor area. The children were celebrating two birthdays on the day of inspection after their snack; the registered provider divided a birthday cake between all the children much to the excitement of the children. The children tidied away their lunch boxes and returned their bags to the gate way that opened out into the wing and grassed area. The children were able to feed their leftover sandwiches and fruit to the chickens that were housed in an area adjacent to the swing area.
- The registered provider had established networks within the local community. On the day of inspection, two local Gardai visited the service and spoke and interacted with the children. The children were very excited to see the Gardai and the patrol car and they all got an opportunity to sit in the car and hear the sirens.

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 was trained in first aid for children and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) There was a first aid box with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.
- (b) The first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service in area in the indoor space called “ The Cabin”.

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) Written records of the fire drills undertaken in the service were kept by the registered provider, with the last fire drill recorded as having been undertaken on the 28/05/2025.
- (1)(b) A certificate of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms was dated for the September 2024 and was available for inspection.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service.

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

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for 3 adults, however, 2 of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous 3 years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice “EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting” posing a potential safety risk for children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

One staff member left the service and the out-of-date garda vetting disclosure was obtained and will be reviewed yearly.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

A copy of the updated garda vetting was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate on the 07/07/25.

Summary Comment

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