

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY236			
Name of Service:	Spraoi Early Learning Centre NUIG			
Address of Service:	NUIG, 50 Upper Newcastle, Newcastle, Co. Galway.			
Eircode:	H91 A2KE			
Name of Registered Provider:	Theresa Murphy			
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	29/05/2024			
Date 2 of Inspection:	30/05/2024			
No of pre-school children:	AM	97	PM	66
Day 2	AM	79	PM	72

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan and F. Kelly.
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
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Description of service

The preschool service is in a stand-alone premises on the grounds of National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG), in Upper Newcastle, Galway city. This private service offers the options of full day care and part time care provision from 7.45am to 6.30pm and an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care, programme from 9am to 12pm or 9.15am to 12pm, from Monday to Friday. The preschool caters for children aged between 0 months to 6 years of age. There are 9 playrooms over 3 floors. The Chicks, Lambs and Owls playrooms are all on the ground floor, the Hippos, Lions, Giraffes, Elephants playrooms are all on the first floor, the Butterflies and Ladybirds playrooms are on the second floor. The pre-school children have access to secure outdoor play areas to the rear and side of the premises, for children's play activities, exploration and fresh air.

Staffing

The manager is the person in charge and the registered provider does not work on the premises, with the children daily. There is a total of 24 adults currently working in the premises which includes the area manager, manager and an auxiliary staff member.

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 inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16(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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the area 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*

(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) There was a person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection days.

Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available on the premises when the pre-school children were present.

All 24 adult files were reviewed on the days of inspection:

(2)(a)&(b) Forty-eight of the validated references on file in respect of 24 adults were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 24 adults.

(d) Documentary evidence indicated that 19 adults had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years and therefore required police vetting. The police vetting was available for inspection.

(4) The twenty-two adults had evidence of a childcare qualification to at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at a Level 5 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.*
- (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

- (1) The preschool attendance records and roster were reviewed and indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. On both days of inspection, the adult and child ratio were correct and maintained.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to, during the inspection.
- On the morning of day 1 of the inspection, 97 preschools children were being directly cared for by 18 staff.
In the afternoon of day 1 of the inspection 66 preschool children were being directly cared for by 18 staff.
- On the morning of day 2 of the inspection, 79 preschools children were being directly cared for by 18 staff.
In the afternoon of day 2 of the inspection 72 preschool children were being directly cared for by 18 staff.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

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

Compliance Information

- (1)(k) A sample of six accidents, incidents, and injury forms for pre-school children in attendance were reviewed. All six of these forms were completed with a signed parental signature.

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(a)&(b)

BASIC NEEDS

- A healthy eating policy was in place and a menu plan was available and on display. On day 1 of the inspection children had a hot meal of spaghetti bolognese and on day 2 had chicken curry with rice.
- Drinks of milk and water were readily available for pre-school children to help themselves. The children had access to water station area in each of the playrooms.
- Children's dietary and cultural requirements were respected.
- Perishable items from children's snacks were stored in the service fridge.
- Age-appropriate crockery and cutlery were offered to the children for their snack and mealtimes.
- Children who were in the process of being toilet trained were encouraged to be independent at toileting and were supervised by adults.
- Children who were in nappies and had their nappies changed on a regular basis respecting the dignity of each child.
- The adults were observed to supervise children's hand washing before snack times and dinner, following nappy changing, after toileting and after outdoor play.
- In each of the playrooms, the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in designated cosy areas.
- Designated sleep rooms were available for children under 2 years of age. Children were observed to be physically checked every 10 minutes and these were recorded on the childcare application. There were beds and sleep mats available for children over 2 years of age.
- Children's behaviour was consistently managed in a competent, sensitive and positive manner by adults throughout the service.
- There were 3 outdoor play areas to the side and rear of the premises which was sufficiently spacious to accommodate the numbers of children attending 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.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

There was evidence that the accident and incident policy was being implemented in the service.

- Documented evidence was available of risk assessments which were recorded on the childcare application, which were carried out after an accident or incident.
- On speaking with the staff, they had a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in relation to an accident and incident.
- There was evidence that staff were trained and signed off on training provided by the service in relation to accidents or incidents.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that all children were appropriately supervised, when attending the service. On the day of inspection, constant careful supervision by both sight and sound occurred to ensure children's safety. The adults were observed supervising children in the outdoor play areas, at toileting, in the playroom and at sleep time on stackable beds and in standard cots in the designated sleep rooms.