

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY236
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Name of Service:	Spraoi Early Learning Centre NUIG
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Address of Service:	NUIG, 50 Upper Newcastle, Newcastle, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 A2KE
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Name of Registered Provider:	Theresa Murphy
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Dates of Inspection: Day 1	19/08/2025
Day 2	20/08/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	72	PM	72
		61		61

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child & Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - 1st Floor, Merlin Park University Hospital, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan and E. Friel.
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

This full day care service is in a purpose-built premises on the grounds of the University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG), in upper Newcastle, Galway city. This private service offers the options of full day care and part time care from 7.45am to 6.30pm and an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care and sessional care programme from 9am to 12.30 pm, from Monday to Friday. The preschool caters for children aged between 0 months and 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 and fresh air.

Staffing

The manager is the person in charge and there was a named deputy manager to deputies as required. The area manager was based in the service on both days of inspection. The registered provider does not work on the premises with the children daily.

There is a total of 24 adults currently working on the premises which includes the area manager, manager, kitchen staff member and 3 school aged childcare staff.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

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.

Additional Information

The inspection was triggered by information received to the Early Years Inspectorate on the 10 July 2025.

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
- (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.

(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 on both 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.

(c) A clear management structure was in place, each adult's roles and responsibilities were displayed in the service.

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

(2) (a) Thirty-seven of the 48 validated references on file in respect of 24 adults were from a past employer.

(b) Eleven of the 48 validated references were from a source other than a past employer.

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

- (d) Documentary evidence indicated that 14 of 15 adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years required police vetting. The police vetting was available for inspection.
- (4) There was evidence that 20 adults working directly with the children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent. Three adults who did not have the required qualification had letters of eligibility to practice from the Department of Children, Disability & Equality.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (d) Documentary evidence indicated that 1 of 15 adults who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years required police vetting however this was not on file.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service will ensure that all vetting procedures and official translations will be carried out prior to any adult having access to a preschool child.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the out of jurisdiction police vetting and official translation was submitted to the Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The action taken by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation.

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) An adequate number of adults were working with the children on the day of inspection.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to.
- There were 16 adults working directly with 72 children on the day 1 of inspection in the morning and afternoon.
- There were 16 adults working directly with 61 children on the day 2 of inspection in the morning and afternoon.
- (8)(a) Documentary evidence on the roster indicated that at least 2 adults were on the premises when the pre-school was operating.

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

Compliance Information

- (1) (i) The inspectors were furnished with a staff roster, which included all staff working in the service on a daily basis.
- (k) There was one accident, incident and injury form recorded for the month of July 2025. This was reviewed and the form was completed and signed by the parent.

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

- On day 1 and 2 of the inspection the food was observed to be healthy and nutritious. Parents supplied the snacks, and the service supplied the hot meal of the day. The service supplied an alternative hot meal based on the dietary requirements of the children.
- The children's drinks bottles and beakers of water were available in the playrooms and outdoor area to allow a child to self-serve.
- The atmosphere during mealtimes was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and adults.
- Appropriate crockery and plates were provided for children based on their age and stage of development at meal and snack times to enhance the social experience for the children.
- Children had their nappies changed in a designated nappy changing area as required throughout the day. Adults were observed to interact with children in a positive way, engaging in conversation and singing nursery rhymes.
- Older children who were toilet trained, either toileted independently or with some assistance as required by the adults.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating on the child size wipeable couches, matting and cushions in designated cosy areas in each of the playrooms.
- There was 2 designated sleeprooms for children under 2 years of age. Floor beds were available in the playrooms. There was also stackable beds for children over 2 years of age which were in use in the playrooms after lunch. Children were supervised by adults who remained in the designated sleep rooms and in the playrooms while the children were asleep.
- Children's behaviour was consistently managed in a competent and positive manner by the adults. Adults were observed helping children to find positive solutions to minor issues in the lamb's playroom.

- The children could move about freely in their playrooms. All children had the opportunity to go outside for fresh air and play activities.

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

Infection Control:

- Hand washing facilities were provided with a supply of warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels. Thermostatically controlled water was available for use by the children to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
- The sanitary areas were observed to be kept in a clean and hygienic state.
- The children were observed washing their hands before eating their morning snack, dinner and after nappy changing, toileting, after messy play and outdoor play. Hand washing was supervised by the staff.
- Airtight self-sealing, leak proof pedal bins were available for the disposal of used nappies in the nappy changing areas.
- The children's belongings for nappy changing were individually labelled and in designated storage containers.
- The children's barrier creams were clearly individually labelled and stored within the nappy changing area.
- Younger children's soothers were sterilised in accordance with best practice guidance.
- The children's perishable items were stored in the fridges, which were observed to be clean.
- Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with disposable paper towels and disinfectant spray.
- The playrooms were observed to be kept adequately ventilated with the windows left open whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playrooms.

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 had a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training and the staff roster indicated that an adult with First Aid Responder (FAR) training was available during the operation of the service.
- (2) (a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were easily accessible by adults in the service.
- (b) The first aid boxes were available in the service for use by the adults during the operational hours of the 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.*
- (2) *The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (c) *an authorised person.*
- (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) Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out by the service. The last monthly fire drill was recorded on 16 July 2025.
- (b) Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment dated the 18 June 2025 and the smoke alarm system was dated the 22 July 2025.
- (2) (c) The records were furnished to the inspectors on the premises.
- (4) Fire action notices were displayed at the fire exit points demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service documented evidence of insurance for 119 preschool children valid until the 27/03/2026.