

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015KE194

Name of Service: Jonix Educational Services

Address of Service: C/O Punchestown Racecourse, Naas, Co. Kildare

Eircode: W91 VCX4

Name of Registered Provider: Nicola Hansen

Service type: Part Time

Date of Inspection: 08/04/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	3	PM	3

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency Suite 7 Vista Primary Care Centre Ballymore Eustace Road Naas Co. Kildare W91 X38W
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Maher
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.
---------------------------------	-----------------

Description of service

Jonix educational services is one of a number of services operated by the registered provider in counties Kildare, Meath and Dublin and provides part time care and education for children with autism. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09:00am-13:00hrs for 38 weeks of the pre-school year. The age range of children attending is from 2-6 years old. The service is located in a single storey building on the grounds of Punchestown racecourse. One preschool room, an office and kitchen are provided; a second room is available for sensory and gross motor activities as required. An outdoor play area is available to the side of the pre-school.

Staffing

There were three adults present in the service, this included two adults employed to work directly with the children and the area manager who arrived at the service at 10:10am and stayed for the duration of the inspection. The registered provider was not present and does not work directly with the children.

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 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)(b)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

Four staff records were reviewed and included the staff members present, area manager and the file of a visiting professional that attends the service weekly.

(2)(a)(b)

Eight written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source, in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of five adults whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all employed staff members.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for two staff members who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

One member of staff employed and who was working directly with the children whose records were reviewed held a major award at Level 5 or higher in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(4)

One staff member present and working directly with the children did not hold a major award or equivalent qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education as recognised on the National Qualifications Framework.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All our staff are registered with the teaching council in accordance with Department of Education criteria.

The minister for Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth is aware of our current situation with regards to our dual qualification criteria. Our HR department continues to favour and screen for those with a qualification in Early Child Care and Education and recognition from the teaching council.

Supporting documentation submitted

None submitted.

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 9(4) has not been met.

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)

There were three children attending the service being supervised directly by two adults.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the Inspection. This was confirmed following review of the staff roster for the service.

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:

(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

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

Compliance Information

(1)(h)

The attendance record for the service was reviewed and children’s attendance in the morning and on leaving the service at the end of the session were recorded in real time.

(j)

One medicine administration record was reviewed and was completed with the relevant information to ensure the medicine administered had been correctly recorded.

(k)

The accident and incident record book was reviewed.

A sample of six recorded incidents, between 4 October 2023 - 2 April 2025 were inspected and contained the relevant information and details.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

There was a wide variety of age and developmentally appropriate toys, materials and equipment available in the pre-school room for the children to use and play with throughout the morning. Low level open shelving units displaying the pre-school materials and equipment ensured the resources were easily accessible to the children at all times.

Child sized tables and chairs were maintained in good condition and provided areas for the children to sit comfortably for individual tabletop work and when eating their snack. There was art and craft materials, props for the interest areas and specialised equipment to support the children’s gross and fine motor skills development. The children were observed engaged, active and involved throughout the morning as they chose their play and learning materials and used the various interest areas.

The outside play area had sand, push/pull equipment and a small climbing frame.

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:

The main entrance door to the service was secure and controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school service.

No hazards were observed indoors or in the outdoor area.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towel were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying and handwashing routines were well established and observed. Nappy changing facilities were available as required.

The pre-school and its environs were observed maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. During conversations with the staff members, they advised they were aware of the procedures to be followed to administer medicine safely to a child if required while attending the service.

Fire Safety:

All fire exits on the premises were easily recognisable and unobstructed; staff were familiar with the evacuation routes to exit the building in the event of an emergency occurring.

Outing:

Outings do not take place from the service; this was confirmed by the person in charge.

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)

Two staff members present were trained in in first aid response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)

The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the pre-school.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending 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 fire fighting 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 of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last recorded fire drill was dated 1 April 2025.

(b) There were records available detailing the maintenance of the firefighting equipment and the smoke/fire detection system in the service dated April 2025 and 20 March 2025 respectively.

(4)

A notice was displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

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 children were observed to be supervised by the staff members at all times during the inspection and included when using the bathroom/handwashing, during activities and when taken for and during outdoor play.