

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY061				
Name of Service:	Laugh & Learn Pre-school				
Address of Service:	c/o CBS Primary School, Clounalour, Tralee, Co. Kerry				
Eircode:	V92 FD62				
Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Scanlon, Sandra Bunyan				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	23/01/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>13</td> <td>PM</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	AM	13	PM	0
AM	13	PM	0		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry				
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy				
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	N/A
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Description of service

Laugh & Learn Pre-school is a privately operated facility that is registered to provide sessional care for children aged between 2 years and 6 years. Currently the service is catering for children from 2 years 8 months to 6 years. The premise consists of 1 playroom on the ground floor in the primary school. The service offers 2 sessions, the 1st between the hour of 08:45 am and 11:45 am and the 2nd session between the hours of 12:15pm and 3:15pm Monday to Friday inclusive. The registered providers developed and resourced a spacious fully enclosed designated outdoor play area for the children attending the service since the last inspection took place.

Staffing

There are 6 staff employed in the service that includes the 2 registered providers who both work directly with the children. There are 2 adults employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme and in addition, there is 1 student on placement in the service.

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 inspections 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 providers, 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 providers are the designated persons in charge, they both work each day on the premise.
- (b) At all times during the period when the Pre-school service is being carried on, the registered providers are on the premise.
- (2)
- The registered providers confirmed that 6 adults were employed in the service and 1 student was on placement in the service.
- The recruitment records in respect of these 7 adults were the subject of the inspection.
- (a)
- Seven written references and validations were on file from a past employer.
- (b)
- Seven written references and validations were on file from a source other than a past employer.
- (c)
- Garda vetting was on file for each of the 7 adults.
- The service had demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)
- Police vetting was on file for 2 adults who lived outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The adults working directly with the children had attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training at Level 5 and above.

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.*

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1) Throughout the period of inspection, the registered providers did ensure that there was an adequate number of adults caring for the children attending the service.

(3) There were 4 adults caring for 13 children aged between 3 years to 5 years attending the service on a sessional basis. The adult child ratio was correct and maintained.

(8)(c) Not applicable as the service does not operate single-handedly.

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

- Healthy eating is promoted in the service. On speaking with the staff members, they stated they work with the parents to provide healthy, nutritious snacks for their children.
- The meal observed on inspection was during the mid-morning, it was served to the children in the playroom. The children choose where they wanted to sit on the low-level chairs at the low-level tables.
- Each of the children were given ample time to eat and enjoy their food without being rushed.
- The atmosphere during the mealtime was relaxed, with each of the 4 staff members sitting at the tables with the children.
- Circle time took place after the mealtime, children who had not finished eating were invited to join the group when they had finished.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets located in the playroom.

- The staff were observed to be sensitive and responsive to the children’s individual toiletry needs, encouraging them to independently use the toilet in an unhurried manner whilst checking in on them to see if they needed any help.
- The service had a rest/relaxation area located near the book display, it consisted of a low-level couch, matting and a selection of cushions on the floor.
- The rest area was observed in use during the inspection, for example an adult sat with the children reading a story, children were browsing through books and some children took time away there from playing.
- The inspector observed the children had free movement within the playroom. They independently accessed the various toys and play materials they wanted to play with from the low-level open shelving.
- The children happily and participated in various activities during the session. There were tabletop activities and following on from the story “We are going on a bear hunt” the children participated in the obstacle course set up in the playroom. Each child had an adult guide them through the obstacles in a calm unhurried manner.
- The staff were kind, caring and attentive to the children’s need. They listened to the children as they communicated their needs, they were active in the children’s play and supported the children in their interactions with other children.
- The staff sat children on their laps and provided comfort and reassurance for them as was needed during the session.
- Since the last inspection the service developed and resourced a fully enclosed outdoor play area that is designated for the children attending the service each day.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The parents of the children attending provide all food served to the children in the service.
- The food observed at the mealtime that was morning snack included for example: -a selection of fruit, cheese, sandwiches and yogurt.

- The inspector observed some children helped themselves to their drink's bottles in the playroom during the session.
- The children's perishable food items were individually labelled and stored in the fridge in the playroom.

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 internal door was appropriately secured to prevent children exiting unsupervised.
- Entry to the service was via the main primary school entrance that was secured with a buzzer system, entry was via the school receptionist who escorted visitors to the service.

Infection Control:

- The children were observed washing their hands prior to the mid- morning meal and after using the toilet with the adults supervising and providing assistance as needed.

Fire Safety:

- The service conducted a fire drill each month as evidenced in the records maintained on file.
- A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in the playroom.

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 providers ensured that there were staff available at all times with first aid responder (FAR) training. There were 4 with completed FAR certifications on file.
- (2) (a) There was a suitably equipped first aid bag stored out of the reach of the children in the playroom that was available to the children attending.
- (b) The first aid equipment was available to the children at all times

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certification for the service was displayed in the playroom.

The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- the contact details for the insurance provider
- the name and address of the service insured
- the categories of insurance cover for the service that is sessional care.
- the number of children covered by the insurance was for 22 children.
- The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27/03/'25.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (c)
 - Within the playroom and sanitary accommodation, natural lighting was provided through windows, and this was supplemented with artificial lighting.

- Adequate heating was ensured in the playroom and sanitary facilities to ensure the room temperature was maintained within the range of 18-22 degrees Celsius.
 - The playroom and the sanitary facilities were supplied with natural ventilation, through open windows.
- (e)
- The children had access to toilet facilities located within the playroom.
 - There were 2 toilets and 2s wash hand basin with warm running water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and a lidded pedal-operated bin.