

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Tusla I.D.: TU2015LH110

Name of Service Spraoi Wheaton Hall

Address of Service: Unit 7, Wheaton Hall Shop Units, Drogheda Co Louth
A92 FC78

Email Address: cooneychildcare@gmail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Joanne Cooney

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	✓	Part-Time		Sessional	
	Drop-In		Childminding		Temporary	

Proposed change:

- To increase the number of children being accommodated in the service from 63 up to 81 children in total.
- To increase the number of staff employed in the service from 8 to 16 staff members in total.

Proposed Number of Children: 81

Recommended Change Following Inspection:
To increase to 81 children accommodated in the service. (71 children can be accommodated, if all children are attending on a full day care/ part-time basis)
To increase the number of staff employed in the service from 8 to 16.

Registered change:
Change in Number of Children from 63 to 81 (Max 71 Full Day) children
Change in Number of Staff from 8 to 16 staff

Date of Inspection:	2	2	0	8	2	0	2	4
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Inspection undertaken by: S Taaffe

Title: Early years inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Early Years Inspectorate, 181-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside
Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin K67 Y5C6.

Rationale for Inspection: Proposed Change of Circumstance

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Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day Care service for 81 (Max 71 Full Day) children
Date of Registration	29th August 2024

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Spraoi Wheaton Hall is a privately owned full day care service which has been in operation since 2007 and is one of five early years services operated by the registered provider, three of which are located in Co. Louth and two services in east Co Meath. Pre-school children and school-aged children from 1 year up to 12 years of age are accommodated in the service which currently operates from 7.30am to 6.00pm each weekday. Eligible children are facilitated to participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.
Premises	The service is currently conducted from the first floor of a corner unit is a row of commercial properties located near the entrance to a housing estate in Drogheda. There are currently three rooms in operation in the service, namely the Toddler Room, ECCE Room 1 and the Naíonra. The Toddler Room is used to accommodate the youngest children attending the service. Ancillary accommodation on the premises includes a sleep room, a partitioned space adjoining the Toddler room currently used as an office/workspace, a kitchen, a staff room and sanitary accommodation. An enclosed outdoor play area is located to the side and rear of the premises. The registered provider proposes to operate an additional room, ECCE Room 2, to be conducted from a prefabricated unit positioned on the service's enclosed grounds to the side of the main building.
Staffing	In addition to a regional manager who supports all five services in the company including this service when required (and subject to approval by the Inspectorate to increase the numbers of children attending), the registered provider will employ 16 staff members in this service consisting of a service manager, a deputy manager and a further 10 staff members all of whom work with both pre-school and school aged children, 3 staff members who work with school aged children only and a chef.
Methodology	The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes: Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises.

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	The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.
Acknowledgements	The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.

Requirement met:

(1)(a) The requirement has been met.

The service manager is the designated person in charge and the deputy manager deputises in her absence as required.

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.

(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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider is aware of the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in Part 1 of Schedule 6 and would ensure that an adequate number of adults is at all times working directly with the proposed increased number of children in the service.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensures that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times when the service is in operation.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 - Facilities for Rest and Play

- (1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that—
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that—
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

Requirement met:

- (1)(a) The four care rooms including the new room in the prefabricated unit are resourced with an adequate range of play materials and equipment laid out in defined interest areas. The interest areas include home corners, construction areas, arts and crafts area and libraries. Play materials are stored in open-fronted low-level shelving units to facilitate the children to choose and access their preferred items. The outdoor play area, re-surfaced with artificial grass during the week of the fit for purpose inspection, contains a range of play equipment including ride-on toys and an outdoor kitchen.
- (b) A sleep room containing 1 standard cot adjoins the Toddler Room, meeting the needs of the small number of children aged less than 2 years currently attending. The service managers informed the inspector that further cots will be purchased if required once the numbers of children attending the service increases, always ensuring that all children aged less than 2 years have access to a standard cot. The registered provider is aware of national safe sleep best practice guidelines. Stackable beds are also available in the sleep room for pre-school children aged 2 years and older who require or wish to sleep or rest in the service. A rest area is available in each care room with soft matting, cushions and soft toys provided close to the libraries to enable a child to rest and take a break from activities throughout the day if required.
- (3)(a) The outdoor play area is fully enclosed by the service walls and high fencing. The outdoor play area is observed to be suitable and secure, and no safety hazards are noted. A covered locked storage area is available to store a broad range of play materials and outdoor play equipment to facilitate play experiences for the children when outdoors.

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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

A weekly menu is available. The service provides breakfast until 8.30am daily if required by the children and a cooked hot dinner cooked on site by the service's cook, whilst parents provide the children's snacks. Drinking water is made freely available to the children at times of their own choosing.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

The inspector did not identify any hazards that would impact the health, safety or welfare of the children attending the service. It appears that appropriate measures have been undertaken in the service to ensure the safety of the children. Examples of these measures include the premises and outdoor play areas being appropriately secured, the provision of thermostatically controlled warm water in the taps in the service and medication and cleaning agents being stored safely out of the reach of children. The windows and window blind cords are appropriately secured.

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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) The registered provider is aware of the requirement to ensure that a person with in-date first aid response (FAR) training is at all times immediately available to the children attending the service. Training certificates are available to show that 5 staff members hold in-date first aid response (FAR) training and their scheduled attendance in the service's staff roster confirms that a suitably trained first aider is at all times immediately available to the children when the service is in operation.

(2)(a)(b) The first aid boxes available in the service are suitably equipped and stored in conspicuous locations on the premises and are available for the children in attendance, in the event of an emergency.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) A record is maintained of the fire drills conducted in the service on a monthly basis, with the most recent fire drill documented as having taken place on 25/07/2024.

(b) Records are available showing that the firefighting equipment was serviced in May 2024 and the smoke detection system is certified as having been serviced on 01/07/2024.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire are displayed in the premises.

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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

The registered provider has insurance cover in place for 83 pre-school children attending a full day care service. The policy showed that the service was insured until 27/03/2025.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

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

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(a) The premises appears to be in satisfactory condition and appropriately maintained.

(b) The service is appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access. The outdoor play area is secured with a latched gate and fencing.

(c)

Lighting

- The premises is adequately lit by means of natural lighting supplemented by artificial lighting.

Heating

- The service is heated by means of a gas fired central heating system.

Ventilation

- Ventilation is provided by means of openable windows and trickle vents.

(d) The premises is in a clean condition and appears to be in a satisfactory state of repair.

	<p>(e) The service is equipped with adequate sanitary facilities for the increased proposed total number of 81 children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 5 toilets and accompanying wash hand basin provided on the first floor of the premises for use by children in the service. • There are 2 toilets and accompanying wash hand basin provided in the sanitary accommodation in the new prefabricated room, accessed directly from the care room, for use by children in the service. • Three nappy changing stations with accompanying wash hand basins are provided in the service, of which 2 are located on the first floor and one is located in the new room. • Two toilets and accompanying wash hand basins are provided for use by staff members on the first floor whilst a third staff toilet and wash hand basin are provided in the sanitary accommodation off the new room.
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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

Requirement met:	<p>The requirement has been met.</p> <p>(1) There is adequate clear floor space available for the safety, play and movement of the increased number of 81 pre-school children proposed to attend the service.</p> <p>(2) The minimum space regulatory requirement can be met for the increased number of 81 pre-school children proposed to be accommodated in the service. The registered provider is aware of the minimum clear floor space requirements as specified in Schedule 7.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clear floor space in the Toddler Room measures 43.25 square metres. This meets the space requirements for a maximum of 15 pre-school children all aged 1 - 2 years or 18 children all aged 2 – 3 years being accommodated in this room on a part-time or on a full day care basis. • The clear floor space in the Naíonra Room measures 32.42 square metres. This meets the space requirements for a maximum of 13 pre-school children aged 2 - 3 years or 14 children aged 3 – 6 years being
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accommodated in this room on a part-time or on a full day care basis, or 17 children aged 2½ - 6 years attending on a sessional basis.

- The clear floor space in ECCE Room 1 measures 55.8 square metres. This meets the space requirements for a maximum of 23 pre-school children aged 2 - 3 years or 24 children aged 3 – 6 years being accommodated in this room on a part-time or on a full day care basis or 30 children aged 2½ - 6 years attending on a sessional basis, of whom one or more is remaining on the premises to avail of part-time or full day care.
- The clear floor space in ECCE Room 2 (the proposed new prefabricate room on the ground floor) measures 44 square metres. This meets the space requirements for a maximum of 18 pre-school children aged 2 - 6 years being accommodated in this room on a part-time or on a full day care basis or 24 children aged 2½ - 6 years attending on a sessional basis, of whom one or more is remaining on the premises to avail of part-time or full day care.