

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK138
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace Pre School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace National School, Janesboro, Co. Limerick
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V94 T9C8
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Eamonn O'Connell
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/11/2024
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	13	PM	12
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate Offices, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M Riordan
<b>Title:</b>	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).	

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Our Lady Queen of Peace Pre-School is a community-based sessional pre-school service located within Our Lady Queen of Peace National School in Limerick city.

The service provides a morning and an afternoon sessional programme and is open Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 12.00pm and 12.30pm to 3.30pm. There are a total of 36 preschool children registered to attend the preschool. The school operates from 2 well-resourced preschool rooms in the school. A well-designed outdoor area with an outdoor classroom and gardens are accessible to the children each day.

### Staffing

The registered provider is the principal of Our Lady Queen of Peace school. There is a designated person in charge who has responsibility for managing the service each day. There are 5 additional staff employed to work at the service.

Each staff employed at the school have achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. Staff engage regularly in ongoing and continuous professional development training.

### 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 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) The registered provider had appointed a designated person in charge who has responsibility each day for the operations of the preschool service. This person was available on the day of the inspection and there was a named person who could deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a) There were written references available in respect of each staff working at the service and each reference was adequately validated.

(b) All references furnished by staff were from either their previous employers or from reputable sources such as previous college and schools attended.

(c) Vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána were available in respect of each staff working at the service. All disclosures were dated within the last three years.

(d) Not applicable to this service as none of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction.

(4) All staff employed at the service had completed their studies to achieve a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5, 6, and 7 on the National Qualification framework.

### 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 service operates a morning session from 9.00am to 12.00pm and an afternoon session from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. On the day of the inspection there were 13 pre-school children present with 6 staff members for the morning session and 12 preschool children, and 5 staff members present for the afternoon session. The adult child ratio was compliant with the requirements of Regulation 11.

(3) At all times the registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to in the service.

### 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

##### **BASIC NEEDS:**

The preschool service emphasises healthy eating with a policy encouraging nutritious snacks, such as sandwiches, yogurt, cheese, crackers, and fruit. A refrigerator is available for perishable foods, and mealtimes are social occasions where staff interact with children. Children have access to drinks throughout the morning, and hygiene is supported with easy access to toilets, low-level sinks, soap, and hand towels.

Nappy changing facilities are hygienic and well-equipped, with safe storage for used nappies in foot pedal operated lidded bins. Each child has a designated coat hook, fostering independence.

Children have ample opportunities for movement, both inside and outside, with well-resourced outdoor areas and lots of well-developed interest areas indoors. Outdoor play is facilitated by lots of availability of appropriate gear for all weather conditions. Parents are actively involved, including participation in activities like visits from speech and language therapists. A large library area supports reading and community engagement.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

The physical environment is well-organized with low-level furniture and shelves to support children's independence. Educational posters, photos, and displays of children's work and family images create a sense of belonging. The outdoor classroom includes a sheltered space for year-round outdoor play, with a mud kitchen, sandbox, sensory garden, climbing structures, and gardening opportunities, helping children explore nature and the environment. A monkey pole, a climbing wall and a foot bridge all made from natural materials richly enhanced the outdoor space.

## 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:

A safety statement was available for the premises, and a documented risk assessment identified potential hazards both indoors and outdoors. It included control measures and the names of staff responsible for conducting safety checks. Upon arrival at the service, the Preschool door was secured, and access to the building was controlled by a staff member to prevent unauthorized entry and unsupervised exits of children. The outdoor play areas were safely enclosed with high walls and hedges, ensuring children were supervised at all times while outside.

#### Infection Control:

A high standard of operational hygiene was noted in all areas of the service. A written cleaning record was available showing that all areas internally and externally were cleaned on a regular basis.

Regular handwashing took place at the school with children reminded to wash hands after using the toilet, before snacks and after returning from outdoor play time.

**Administration of Medication:**

Staff had a clear knowledge of the procedures to follow in relation to the services policy on administration of medication. Consent in writing was received from parents and all medicines were checked by 2 staff prior to being administered. Written consent to administer all medicines was given by parents or guardians.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The building appeared to be of sound and stable structure both internally and externally and no obvious defects were noted on inspection.
- (b) The premises appeared safe and secured. The doors to the service were locked and all who entered the building were checked in by a member of staff. The outdoor area was well secured preventing any unauthorised access to or exit from this area of the service.
- (c) All areas were well lit by natural light and by artificial light when needed. There was no evidence of mould, mildew, stale smells, stuffiness or condensation.
- (d) The areas outside were all well maintained and routine cleaning schedules were in place for all internal and external areas.
- (e) There were an adequate number of toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing areas available in the service.