

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH083
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Name of Service:	Jonix Educational Services
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Address of Service:	Bangla Therapy Centre, Flemington, Balrath, Kentstown, Co. Meath
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Eircode:	C15 K0FV
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nicola Hansen
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date(s) of Inspection:	27/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	3	PM	3
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive Airside Business Park Swords Co Dublin
Inspection undertaken by:	M. McDonnell
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
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Description of service

Jonix Educational Services is one of seven privately owned services providing autism spectrum disorder specific care to children. The service operates from two rooms based in a support service complex in County Meath. The service is registered to provide part time care to children aged 3-6 years old from 9.00 am to 1.00pm. There are sanitary facilities available, and an outdoor area is accessible from the main entrance.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. The registered provider employs eight staff members with various roles in the service. There are two regional managers available and a person in charge. Five staff members, including a person in charge work directly with the children and there is a behaviour support staff member available.

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 Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 10 Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 19 Health,

Welfare & Development of Child, a Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials, Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child Regulation 25 First Aid, Regulation 27 Supervision and Regulation 28 Insurance. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations in this report.

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 regional manager, 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) The registered provider had a designated person in charge of the service, and a there was a named person to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the regional manager, and a review of the staff roster it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation the designated person in charge or the named person in charge were on the premises.

(c) On discussion with staff members and the regional manager, there was a clearly defined person and deputy person in charge to ensure lines of accountability.

(2) The recruitment files of the registered provider and eight staff members were reviewed.

- (a)(b) There registered provider had a written reference available for themselves and 16 written and validated references were available for the eight staff members.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available for all staff members, owner and the registered provider. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years following a review of staff members previous employment in the service as updated Garda Vetting disclosures were available.
- (d) International police vetting was not required for the registered provider or three staff members following a review of documentation available. The police vetting required for four staff members was available.
- (4) There was evidence that five staff members who worked directly with the pre-school children in the service held a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent to a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(d) International police vetting required for one staff member, to ensure suitability for their role, was not available.
- (4) There were three staff members who worked directly with the children who did not hold a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent to a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 - 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications. It is acknowledged that the service had applied to the Department of Education and Youth regarding these three staff members qualifications, however the response indicated that they did not hold an equivalent qualification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(d) The registered provider submitted evidence that an application for the international police vetting had been applied for. However, this had not yet been obtained, and the staff member is not actively working in the service. As a preventive action the registered provider stated that the issue was immediately addressed in a management meeting, and they will ensure that they do not have any new staff on the premises whilst awaiting vetting.
- (4) The registered provider stated that the Department of Education and Youth is aware of the current situation with regards to the service's dual qualification criteria and are engaging with the departments in finding a fair solution. The service is engaged with a training provider regarding qualifications which meet the Level 5 criteria.

All staff are registered with the teaching council in accordance with Department of Education criteria, and are qualified to teach in primary schools including preschool classes

Summary Comment

The actions submitted by the registered provider demonstrate that the service is actively engaged in addressing the non-compliances and their responsibility to achieve compliance with regulation 9(2)(d) and 9(4). However, at this time the criteria for compliance had not been met and regulation 9 (2)(d) and 9 (4) remain non-compliant and an update will be requested from the registered provider following publication.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider had available the managing behaviour policy, outings and missing child procedure available in the service and accessible to staff members.

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) On the inspectors' unannounced arrival, the adult child ratio was observed to be correct and remained so throughout the inspection. There were three adults working with three children aged 3 years old to 6 years old.

(8) (a) Following discussions with staff members and the registered provider and a review of records, the inspector could confirm that two staff members were on the premises at all times when the children were attendance 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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

Supporting relationships around children

At the inspector's arrival a parental interaction with staff was observed. The child was observed to be happy entering the service and staff members were attentive to the parent whilst they discussed how their child was and gave the staff information. All the children were observed to be happily engaged in their activities throughout the session with positive reinforcement and praise given by staff members. A staff member discussed with the inspector the individual plans that were available for each of the children. The plans focused on specific tasks that were relevant for each child and had defined procedures in place. The inspector observed that each child was given time to work through their own plans with the support of a staff member. Whilst completing the individual work another staff member completed free choice activities with the other children. The children were observed to be fully engaged in activities and enjoying them. Staff members interacted calmly with all the children and were

aware of individual needs and preferences. This was reflected in both indoor and outdoor play, with children being supported in their choice of activities in the outdoor area.

Basic Needs

Water was accessible to the children within their rooms. Children were provided with meals from the home and staff members sat with children whilst they ate and chatted with them about their interests and families. Children were provided with support as required and those who wore nappies and pullups being changed in a timely manner.

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

The children had access to two rooms, the 'Centre table 'room and the Work room. There were clearly defined workstations for each child within the room and individual visual schedules were available. The activities for individual children were set up to ensure that a staff member could work effectively with each child on a one-to-one basis, with a quiet space provided. Other children then had the opportunity to access tabletop or floor-based activities of their choosing. The equipment was stored at low level and accessible to the children. The staff members discussed new activities that had been implemented, and children were observed enjoying these. This included sensory 'snow 'material which was also reflective of the theme. There was a cosy area available for the children, which included a small low cocoon chair.

In the outdoor area there was a long-paved area and a covered area with a soft safety surface. In the covered area there was a swing, climbing structure, rocker and trikes. There was also a low table and small toys available for the children to play with. The children were observed enjoying playing with large bubbles.

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 service had a secure entrance to the service with a buzzer system in place. This prevented any unauthorised access to the service and exit from the service by children.
- The swing was anchored to the ground in the outdoor area therefore the preventive action for the previous inspection was maintained prevent injury to a child.
- The route through the service was clear to support safe evacuation.
- Hazardous liquids were not stored in low level units that were accessible to children.
- No children were observed with popcorn on the day of inspection.
- There were no sharp corners observed which would cause injury to a child.

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 provider ensured that a person trained in a First Aid Responder (FAR) course was available. There were four staff members with FAR and other staff members had paediatric first aid.
- (2) (a) (b) The first aid equipment was available in the kitchen which was conspicuous and easily accessible to staff members. The first aid equipment available provided adequate resources in the event of a first aid emergency.

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 inspector observed staff supervising children primarily by sight throughout the period of inspection. The layout of the rooms supported staff in being able to maintain sight of the children. This was evidenced as staff members were responsive to children's cues in relation to their engagement with activities. When children moved between rooms for individual activities there was a system in place to ensure staff knew where children were.

The staff members were observed watching and engaging with the children whilst they played in the outdoor area. Children could be observed in the open and the covered area by sight by the staff members. Whilst supervising the children were given the opportunity to engage in play of their choice, with staff members playing games such as blowing bubbles as required.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider provided evidence that the service was adequately insured. The policy showed that the service was insured from 26 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.