

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH128			
Name of Service:	Longwood Pre-School on the Green			
Address of Service:	Old National School, Longwood, Co. Meath			
Eircode:	A83 H276			
Name of Registered Provider:	Ann Kerrigan			
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	19/03/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	36	PM	5
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath			
Inspection undertaken by:	D.Murray & AM. Cunningham			
Title:	Early Years Inspectors			
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

Longwood Pre-school on the Green has operated at its present location since 2018. The service provides a sessional/part-time service to children from 2 to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). The service is situated in the old primary school in Longwood village and consists of 4 care rooms with sanitary facilities and an outdoor space which surrounds the service.

The rooms in the service were as follows:

- The **Blue** room provides care for children from 2 years 8 months to 3 years and is registered to operate from 09:15am to 12:15pm
- The **Red** room provides care and education to children from 3 to 5 years and is registered to operate from 9:15am to 1:15pm.
- The **Yellow** room provides care for children from 2 to 3 years and is registered to operate from 09:15am to 12:15pm.
- The **School aged** room.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 6 childcare staff members. On the day of inspection, the registered provider was present with 5 childcare staff. An additional staff member commenced work at 12mid-day.

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.

Additional Information

The inspection was carried out following receipt of feedback and concerns received to the Early Years Inspectorate.

On the 19/03/25 the service was operating outside its registration status as the registered part-time hours were from 09:15am to 13:15pm, the registered provider stated that she was operating from 09:15am to 14:15pm. 24/03/2025. A referral was made to national registration office in relation to operating outside registration status.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) On the morning of the Inspection the service was operating outside the remit of its registration status as the registered part-time hours were from 09:15am to 13:15pm the registered provider stated that she was operating from 09:15am to 14:15pm.
- On 24/03/2025, a referral was made to national registration office in relation to operating outside registration status.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)A change in circumstances form was submitted by the registered provider to change the hours of operation which was approved by the Inspectorate. The new hours of operation have commenced since 28/04/2025. The registered provider will ensure that no changes will be made to the operations of the service without notifying the Inspectorate within the timelines required.

Supporting documentation submitted

Change in circumstances form.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5.*

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.
- Seven staff files were reviewed on the day of the inspection.
- (2) (a)(b) Fourteen validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 7 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Not applicable as no staff member had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.
- (4) Seven childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.
- (6) (a) Two staff members were employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.
- (7) (a) All staff had document that they have read all policies and procedures.

Non-Compliance Information

- (7) (a) The Induction Policy states the following:
- “Every staff member will be provided with an induction training programme when they commence work. The induction will be recorded on the appropriate form”.
- There was no documented induction form or evidence of ongoing supervision available in the staff files.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

An Induction check list is now available and will be placed in all staff files. The registered provider will ensure that all induction training and staff supervision is recorded in the staff file.

Supporting documentation submitted

Induction check list.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

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

1. The registered provider ensured that the following written policies specified in Schedule 5 were comprehensive to ensure the welfare and safety of the children attending the service.

- Inclusion Policy
- Toileting Policy
- Complaints Policy.
- Induction Policy.

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) The registered provider ensured that an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children attending the service.
- (2) On the day of inspection, the correct adult/child ratio was maintained.
- The **Blue** room had 2 staff members (1 staff member providing Aims support) with 9 children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 3 years attending the service on a sessional basis.
 - The **Red** room had 2 staff members with 19 children ranging in age from 3 to 5 years, 17 children attending on a sessional basis with 2 children attending on a part-time basis.
 - The **Yellow** room had 2 staff members (1 staff member providing Aims support) with 8 children ranging in age from 2 to 3 years, 5 children attending on a sessional basis with 3 children attending on a part-time basis.
- (8) (a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- The adult's demonstrated knowledge of the individual care needs of the children especially the children with additional needs. The children with special needs were actively involved in the daily activities in the care rooms. Regular observations were conducted with planning and intervention discussed with the families. Children were comforted when they became upset with the staff adopting behavioural

management strategies such as speaking to them softly, promoting turn taking and sharing and having a change of environment outdoors to support transitions.

- Children were observed being allowed to self-direct their own play. Staff supported children’s learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. The curriculum was child led incorporating the themes of the week/month which was “Spring” with children’s artwork and both indoor and outdoor planting displayed to reflect this theme.
- All children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play with adequate assistance and supervision provided.
- The service embraces outdoor play and learning. The children were observed enjoying imaginative, energetic outdoor play with both their peers and staff members.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The children all sat around in groups at snack time which created a positive atmosphere where children had the opportunity to interact and developing relationships. There was lots of conversation regarding the recent “St Patricks Day” parade.
- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed in the care rooms which gave a sense of identity and belonging. The staff members communicated with parents through a messaging service and verbally on a daily basis regarding activities pertaining to their children. Children and parents were greeted at drop off and collection with friendly conversation overheard.

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-

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) Cosy areas consisting of mats and cushions were available in all rooms should a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. There were no children requiring a sleep attending the service however a sleep mat was available if required.

(3)(a) The outdoor space was divided into 3 areas consisting of artificial grass, soft mats, cement and tarmac surfaces enclosed by walls with secure gates. A partially sheltered area permitted outdoor play in all types of weather.

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

- All care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books. All play materials and equipment were easily accessible on open shelving at the children’s height which encouraged active engagement and involvement.
- The equipment in the outdoor area provided the children with the opportunity to avail of physical, challenging experiences involving gross and fine motor skills. Equipment included climbing frames, toy cars and tractors, rockers, slides, climbing tunnel, plastic kitchen with play equipment and planting boxes. Additional equipment for use was stored in a shed.

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 children brought their own healthy lunch from home with additional snacks available in the service for the children staying until 1pm.

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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- The door to the service was secured and the outdoor areas were enclosed with walls and the gates were secured. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and the 3 outdoor spaces.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.
- An indoor risk assessment was conducted on a daily basis.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times. Liquid soap and hand paper towels were available in the sanitary facilities.
- Items of food in children's lunch boxes which required refrigeration were stored in a fridge. This reduced the risk of bacterial growth in these food items.
- The premises was in a clean condition with up-to-date documented cleaning schedules available.
- Pedal bin were available in the care rooms.

- The sanitary areas were ventilated.
- Tables were cleaned prior to and after meals.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

The following safety measures were not in place on the day of inspection:

1. There was no outdoor risk assessment conducted on a daily basis. As the service is located in Longwood village with a public field to the rear of the premises, a daily outdoor risk assessment would be required to ensure no hazardous items were thrown into the outdoor areas.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were not observed on the day of inspection:

2. A foot operated nappy bin was not available in the nappy changing area. Staff members were observed repeatedly handling the bin while placing the nappies inside which posed an infection control risk.
3. Aprons were not worn to protect the staff members clothing at nappy changing times which posed a cross-contamination risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A daily outdoor risk assessment form is now available for the service. The registered provider will ensure that the outdoor risk assessment is completed on a daily basis.

Infection Control:

2. A foot operated nappy bin is now available in the nappy changing area.
3. Aprons are now worn to protect the staff members clothing during nappy changing.

The registered provider will ensure that all appropriate equipment is available and that the nappy changing policy is implemented in practice on a daily basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Outdoor risk assessment form.
2. Photographic evidence of a foot operated pedal bin.
3. No evidence needed as aprons were available on the day of the inspection.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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

(a) A record of the fire drills that took place was available. The most recent fire drill was recorded on 04 /03/2025.

(b) The annual maintenance certificate for the fire extinguishers and the smoke alarms were dated 28/08/2024.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 45 pre-school children and 20 school aged children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 27/03/2024 to the 28/03/2025. A new insurance certificate was also submitted which provided insurance from 28/03/2025 to 27/03/2026.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

(e)The service was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities. Additional aids i.e. steps for the toilets were also available if required.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and*
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)&(c) A Complaints Policy was available for the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)&(b) The Complaints Policy stated the following:

“The written record of a complaint is available on the premises for inspection by the Early Years Inspectorate”.

There were no records maintained by the registered provider of recent Feedback and Concerns reported to the Inspectorate regarding issues pertaining to the operations of the service as is required by the service policy.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)&(b) A record will be maintained of all Feedback and Concerns reported to the registered provider. A feedback and concern record book is now available and will be used to log and follow through on all complaints.

Supporting documentation submitted

A feedback and concern record book.

Complaints Policy.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.