

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY039
Name of Service:	Durrow Pre-School No 2
Address of Service:	Ballybought, Durrow, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Eircode:	R35 H5H0
Name of Registered Provider:	Susan O'Brien
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
Date of Inspection:	05/02/2026
Regulatory Compliance Meeting:	12/03/2026
No of pre-school children:	AM 43 PM 23

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan, F. Maher.
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.
 <p>An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency</p>	<p>Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</p> <p>QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2015OY039</p>
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Description of service

Durrow Pre-School No 2 is based in a purpose-built premises in the rural location of Durrow beside the local primary school. It operates a full day care, part-time and sessional service from 8.00am to 18:00hrs. The service caters for children aged between 2 to 6 years and is registered for a maximum number of 66 pre-school children, at any one time. There are three playrooms, and a kitchen. The outdoor play area is located at the rear of the premises. On-site parking and set down facilities are available.

The service is registered for school age care.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service daily. On the day of the inspection, twelve adults including the registered provider and the cook were present. Of the twelve adults present, nine core staff members and one student on placement were working directly with the preschool children.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under.

- Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (3), (4), (6)(A), (7)(a), (b), (c) - Management and recruitment.

- Regulation 10 – Policies, Procedures etc. of Pre-School Service.
- Regulation 11(1), (2), (8)(a) – Staffing Levels.
- Regulation 15(1)(a) - (f) – Record of a Pre-School child.
- Regulation 16(1)(a), (i), (k) – Record in relation to pre-school service.
- Regulation 19(3) – Health, Welfare and Development of Child.
- Regulation 27 – Supervision.
- Regulation 32 - Complaints

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 triggered following receipt of information received to the inspectorate.

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 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.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (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) is inserted by S.I. No.632 of 2016 CHILD CARE ACT 1991 (EARLY YEARS SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 which states; Regulation 9 of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations (S.I. No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of “paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)” for “paragraphs (5) and (6)”, and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): “
- (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.
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) There was a designated person in charge.

(b) The named person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined that the records of two staff members who were not recorded at the last inspection and one student on placement since the last inspection on 29 September 2025 were reviewed. One of the two staff members and one student were observed to work directly with the children.

- (a) Not applicable.
- (b) Two written and verified past employer references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of two adults employed by the service, whose staff files were reviewed.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for two staff members and one student. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff.
- (d) Not applicable, as no adult employed had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

- (7)
- (a) There was documentary evidence available of the following:
- Seven adults had completed Children First e-learning training module.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a)(b) One written past employer reference and one written reference from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer reference, for one workplace student present in the service, had no documentary evidence they had been verified by the registered provider.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were not carried out in respect of one adult prior to the person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service as the documents for two references were not verified by the registered provider.

(4) Four adults working directly with the children did not hold qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.

(6)(A) The registered provider did not ensure that the adult employed under AIMS funding had a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.

(7)

(a)

1. There was no documentary evidence available that a system of regular structured team meetings was held with the staff. It is acknowledged that the staff members in the three care rooms had completed monthly meetings and there was a record of these meetings available. There was no evidence available of oversight by the Registered Provider of these meetings.
2. There was no evidence that individual staff supervision was completed between the registered provider and each staff member on a regular basis.
3. There was no documentary evidence available that service wide training had been undertaken in the policies and procedures for the service.
4. There was no documentary evidence available that induction training was completed for new staff members commencing in the service. This did not align to the training policy which stated that Induction training would be provided to “all newly appointed staff/students/volunteers”. This includes, “health and safety, Child Protection procedures, Policies and Procedures”.
5. There was no documentary evidence provided that the designated liaison person named in the service as the person to manage child safeguarding concerns had completed the necessary training for the role.

(b), (c)

6. There was no evidence of service wide staff training undertaken in the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a), (b) Validated references for adult and student on file.

(3) All reference to be verified before all staff/ student is accepted in service to work or training with the early years.

(4) The service will not allow any staff to work with early year's children unless they have a level 5 in childcare and education.

(6)(A) Staff member with early years qualification now working in this role.

(7)(a)

1. The Registered Provider attended the room staff meetings held in February.

Two staff with level 6 in childcare and over 16 years' experience have been hired for morning and afternoon cover in the Toddler room. They will commence in the service when their vetting is completed. This will allow the Registered Provider to return back to management and oversight responsibilities throughout the service. Management will remind the staff to keep their training up to date and if they need help/training in any of childcare management will seek to source it from Offaly County Childcare Committee or external training provider's.

Staff have attended training in managing behaviours organised by Offaly County Childcare Committee and facilitated by an external training provider.

The staff members who are the designated liaison persons in the service have registered for DLP training on 6th June 2026.

2. One to one meeting's to be held and recorded.

3. Sent staff update child protection and managing behaviour policies.

All staff members have received the updated policies on Managing Behaviours and Accidents and Incidents, have read and understood them and signed to this effect. A copy is provided in each room of the service.

When the service receives the updated set of policies and procedures for the service, all staff will receive them by email and as a team, we will go read and review each one at quarterly staff meetings going forward.

4. All staff will be provided with child protection procedures, policies and procedures and health and safety policies on induction and given training and asked to sign it to say they received it on induction.

New update child protection policy, and Child Safeguarding Policy issued to staff by email and new one put up in entrance hall in the service.

5. eLearning in DLP completed and a date for full training by Offaly County Childcare Committee on the 6th of June received.

(b), (c)

6. The Registered Provider has completed training in the Quality and Regulatory Framework eLearning programme. All staff have been advised by email to complete this training and some of the staff members have started the training. A copy of the Child Care Act 1991 (early years' service) regulations 2016 and

Childcare Act 1991 (early years services) Amendment) regulations 2016 is available in the entrance hall to all staff. Offaly County Childcare Committee are arranging training in this area soon.

All staff that are employed by the service will and must have a knowledge of The Child Care Act 1991 and Amendment regulations 2016.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)
- (a)(b) Outstanding validated reference documents.
- (4) Roster.
- (6)(A) Roster.
- (7)(a)
 1. Photographs of room meetings minutes with attendees. Certificates for training completed in managing behaviours for 8 staff members. Vetting documents for two recently recruited staff members.
 2. Photograph of document used to record supervision minutes / email regarding further training in supervision practice.
 3. Documents.
 4. Documents.
 5. Emails.
 6. Record of e-training completed. Emails with confirmation of training booked.

Summary Comment

The written response, photographic and documentary evidence submitted by the Registered Provider had been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 9.

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 content of the following policies was reviewed and met the requirement of the regulations:

- Behaviour management policy.
- Staff training policy.
- Complaints policy.
- Child Safeguarding Statement.

Non-Compliance Information

1. There was no staff supervision policy or a standalone staff induction policy available for inspection. It is acknowledged there was a reference to staff induction in the staff training policy assessed.
2. The behaviour management policy was not available for review on the day of inspection; this was forwarded by email 6 February 2026, it is noted the policy had not been reviewed/updated since 2020.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. A staff supervision policy will be introduced, and the induction policy will be given to all staff.
2. The Behaviour policy was updated in February 2026 and given to all staff by email. All policies, supervision, induction and Behaviour Management will be given to all new staff member in the future, and they will sign to say they received and it will be noted in the new staff induction book. Behaviour management policy update in Feb 2026 and emailed to all staff. When they have read and understood a copy will be placed in each room. The service has sent an email on 12 March on the updated policies on Managing Behaviours and Reporting incidents and Accidents and plan to implement the new up to date policies and procedures from April 2026 at staff meeting initially discussing one or two policies per meeting. The policies will be reviewed and updated yearly or sooner if any change occurs.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Email regarding updating all the policies for the service in March 2026 with external provider.
2. Behaviour management policy.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the Registered Provider had been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 10.

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) There were forty-three children attending the service being supervised directly by nine staff members and one student on placement during the inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

- In Green room there were three adults caring for eight children aged 2 to 3 years. Two adults were students and unqualified. Students on placement are there for learning purposes and are not part of the staff ratios. They are not counted in the adult to child ratio for the care room. Two qualified adults were required to maintain the correct adult child ratio for the Green room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)
- Registered provider has taken over the role until a new staff member is recruited with a minimum level 5 in childcare and education. All staff have to have at least a minimum level 5 in childcare and education before working with the early years.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Staff roster

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the Registered Provider had been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 11.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child.*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service.*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service.*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service.*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child.*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention.*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner.*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child.*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1) The record reviewed met the requirement for (a) – (i).

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor.*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(a) A curriculum vitae was not on file for one adult employed in the service.

(i) There was no staff roster maintained in the service.

- (k)
1. There were three separate records being used to maintain details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service. The duplication requires to be aligned to one document for the purpose of consistent recording.
 2. Seven accident and incident records dated 26 November 2024 – 14 February 2025 were reviewed and the following was observed:
 - Six of the seven records did not have a parental signature.
 - Four of the seven records did not have a staff member signature.
 - Four of the seven records did not have the child’s date of birth recorded.
 - There were no dates recorded on the seven forms.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (a) CV for staff member has been put into their file on the day after the inspection. Anyone employed to the service in the future will have a C.V.
- (i) Staff roster now in place.
- (k) Single accident and incident book used to record any accidents and incidents.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. CV.
2. Photograph of staff roster for service.
3. Photograph of accident incident book.

Summary Comment

The written response, photographic and documentary evidence submitted by the Registered Provider had been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 16.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(3)

The staff members in the care rooms were observed being kind and respectful towards the children in their care. First names, appropriate eye contact and gentle vocal tones were used during the interactions observed with the children.

The staff members were aware of the behaviour management policy for the service. They demonstrated a knowledge of appropriate age-appropriate strategies to use when managing children's behaviour and demonstrated knowledge of practices that were unsuitable.

The staff members exchanged information verbally about the children's day with the parents / guardians at the drop off and collection times. A daily record is used by staff members in the Green room to ensure that parents / guardians are advised of food eaten, toileting and activities completed. The registered provider uses telephone and email as alternative methods of communication and meetings can be arranged by appointment as necessary.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)

1. During conversation with the Early Years Inspector, the staff demonstrated knowledge of the prohibited strategies which are unsuitable in the management of children's behaviour. However, a 'thinking chair' was used to manage challenging behaviour in the service rather than approaches which supported a child to self-regulate to encourage pro-social behaviour. This behaviour management strategy did not align to the behaviour management policy for the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(3)

1. The practice of 'thinking time' to manage children's behaviours has ceased. We have attended training in managing behaviours and the service have updated and sent policy to all staff members on Managing Behaviours. All staff are working on their tone (playful) when managing children's behaviour.

The manager will complete spot checks in the care rooms and intervene if a staff member needs assistance when managing children's behaviours. The one-to-one supervisory meetings held every two months will be an

opportunity for staff members to discuss with the Registered Provider any practice issues or challenges that they may have or need support with.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographs of bookings for tickets for three staff members to attend training on 9 March 2026.
Updated behaviour management policy.

Summary Comment

The written response, photographic and documentary evidence submitted by the Registered Provider had been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 19(3).

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 children were observed being supervised by the adults caring for them in their care rooms, sanitary areas and at the collection time from the service.

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.*
- (3) *A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-*
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and*
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.*
- (4) *A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with.*

(5) The requirement in paragraph (4) is without prejudice to any requirement to retain the record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) under any other enactment or rule of law.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) (b) (c) The complaints policy referred to the procedures outlined in (1)(a) (b) (c).

(2)(a)(b) This is stated in the complaints policy for the service. The registered provider had commenced an investigation of a complaint and was managing it in accordance with the provider's complaints policy. A record was available as evidence of this.

(3)(a)(b) This is stated in the complaints policy for the service.

(4) The registered provider ensured that a record in writing of any complaint made will be retained for a period of 2 years. This is stated in the complaints policy for the service.