

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY039
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Name of Service:	Durrow Pre-School No 2
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Address of Service:	Ballybought, Durrow, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
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Eircode:	R35 H5H0
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Name of Registered Provider:	Susan O'Brien
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	43	PM	18
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.
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Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

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, ten staff members including the registered provider and the cook were present. Of the ten adults present eight were working directly with the preschool children and the registered provider provided support to the care rooms as required.

Of the eight staff present on the day and working directly with the children, six staff held a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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), (4) - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1), (2) – Staffing Levels.
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child.
- Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance.
- Regulation 25 (1), (2)(a)(b) – First aid.
- Regulation 26 – Fire Safety.
- Regulation 27 – Supervision.
- Regulation 28 – Insurance.

however, on inspection additional non-compliances were identified under:

- Regulation 15(1)(f) – Record of a Pre-School child.
- Regulation 16(1)(a) – Record in relation to pre-school service.
- Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials.
- Regulation 29(c) (d) – Premises

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the blue and green rooms.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within 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.

Additional Information

1. A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child was issued to the registered provider onsite by the Early Years Inspector on 29 September 2025.
2. A written response and documentary evidence was submitted by the registered provider to the Early Years Inspector on 30 September 2025. The Early Years Inspectorate accepted the response.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes 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

(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.

Compliance Information

The records of ten staff members, including the registered provider were reviewed.

- (2)
- (a)(b) Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of nine adults employed whose staff files were reviewed.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for nine adults working in the service. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (4) Seven adults were employed to work directly with children attending the service and held 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.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) Two written and verified past employer references were not available in respect of one adult employed whose staff file was reviewed.

(c) A Garda Vetting disclosure was not available for one adult working in the service.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to two persons being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service as two adults were employed before two verified references, garda vetting and qualifications were sought and assessed to ensure the adults were suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children.

(4) Two adults were employed to work directly with children attending the service and did not hold 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.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) (b) References received from staff member. When hiring in the future to follow a checklist that all staff have 2 references.

(3) Re-applied for staff garda vetting.

(4) Document of course attached for the two employees.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(a)(b) Two verified references.

(4) Two documents.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 9.

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 eight staff members during the inspection. The registered provider was available to provide support and assistance to the rooms as required throughout the day.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day as specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6.

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

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:

(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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(f)

1. The registered provider did not ensure that a health care plan in writing was available on the day of the inspection in respect of a pre-school child who required the provision of special care and attention.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(f)

1. All children that attend the service that require any medical care, the parent will have to provide a care plan, and it will be placed in the child's medical bag.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Care plan.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 15(1)(f).

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;

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

1. The registered provider did not ensure that a curriculum vitae was available for two employees and photographic identification was available for one employee.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Asked staff to provide a C.V.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Two CV's and photographic identification.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 16(1)(a).

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.

Non-Compliance Information

- The chairs used in the Blue and Green rooms were not suitable for children aged between 2 and 4 years to use for meals and tabletop activities as evidenced by the following observations:
 - At 11:55 am it was observed that two children aged 1-2 years and six child aged 3-4 years were sitting on chairs that were too high for them as they were unable to place their feet on the floor for stability and balance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- Smaller chairs installed into the room and legs of table lowered. When changing care rooms from school age to early years, check that legs of table are lowered at the end of school age session daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographs of correct seats and tables heights.

Summary Comment

The written response and photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 21. This area of practice will be assessed at the next inspection.

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 main entrance door to the service was secured and controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.

Staff members in each care room advised the inspector they would remove any beaded necklace if observed that a child may be wearing them.

The staff members were aware of the potential choking risks that grapes posed when asked by the inspector.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying.

The staff members supervised the children's handwashing.

Facilities for nappy changing were available in the service.

Administration of Medication:

Medicine was not given at the time of the inspection; written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The staff members were familiar with required practices when administering medication in the service.

Safe Sleep:

Two low-level beds were available for children who required sleep. The staff members demonstrated knowledge of the care of sleeping children in response to questions asked by the inspector.

Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service.

Outing:

Outings do not take place from the service; this was confirmed by the registered provider.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for six staff members. However, the vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. The two side gates securing the outdoor area were not secured sufficiently or high enough to prevent unauthorised entry to the outdoor area at the rear of the premises.
3. There was no documentary evidence available that daily indoor room and outdoor environmental risk assessments were completed to ensure a safe play and work environment for the children and staff.
4. A cupboard in the Green room with hazardous items was observed to be unsecured and was accessible to the children. Then hazardous items were deodorant and air freshener.
5. There were no visibility strips on the glass panels in the patio doors in the three care rooms which created a potential risk of injury to a child if they did not recognise the glass.
6. A metal frame used to support a container for water / sensory play was rusted. The plastic cover was broken and had sharp edges. The sharp edges from the plastic cover and the rusted metal surfaces on the frame could cause a potential injury to a child using this play unit.
7. The protective cover on the foot pedal of the bin in the Green room was broken exposing the metal bar which could cause a potential injury to a preschool child if they fell against it.

Infection Control:

8. There was no fridge available for the storage of the children perishable food snacks in the three care rooms.
9. Nappy changes were observed on the day of inspection and were not completed in line with best infection control practices. On two occasions, the adult did not wash their hands prior to commencing nappy changing, did not use a single use disposable apron and did not remove the disposable gloves following the bagging up of the soiled nappy and on one occasion handwashing was not completed.
10. The nappy change bin in the nappy changing area was broken as the foot pedal would not activate the lid. This required the staff to handle the lid to dispose of soiled nappies which was not appropriate for infection control practices.
11. A toilet trainer seat was observed to be stored on the windowsill in the sanitary area used by the Green room. Trainer seats should be stored on a hook on the wall following cleaning after use for infection control practices.
12. The lobby of the sanitary area located between blue and purple room was used for storage as evidenced by the following observations:

- the trolley with the rest mats used by the Blue room.
- two staff coats.
- a Hoover.

13. A swing lid bin was used in the sanitary area located between the Blue and Purple room rather than a foot pedal operated bin for infection control purposes.

14. Two containers of skin creams were unlabelled in the nappy change area which was not appropriate for infection control purposes.

15. There were two baskets with material liners used in the nappy change area for storage of nappy changing equipment. These were unsuitable storage containers as they could not be effectively cleaned daily for infection control purposes.

16. There was no cleaning schedules maintained for the room environments.

Administration of Medication:

17. The temperature reducing medication was observed to be expired and therefore not available if required.

Safe Sleep:

18. The rest areas in the care rooms required to be developed to promote cosy relaxing spaces for the children to sit quietly or take a break from activities if they wished.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Re applied for Garda Vetting for all staff.
2. A new gate has been ordered. Make sure the gate is closed at all times to prevent unauthorised entry.
3. A risk assessment sheet given to all leaders to fill in both indoors and outdoors.
4. Lock put on unit straight away.
5. Strips put on doors straight away.
6. Water table removed straight away.
7. Pedal bin purchased. Photos attached, Staff to check bins are in working order when they empty them daily and inform management if there is a problem with them.

Infection Control:

8. Ordered fridge.
9. Staff attended nappy changing course. All staff new and existing trained on how to change a nappy.

10. New pedal nappy bin purchased. Staff to check bins are in working order when they empty them daily and inform management if there is a problem with them.
11. The trainer seat is now hung up.
12. Mats, hoover and coats removed. Inform staff hoover, mats and coats are to be placed in the storeroom.
13. Pedal bin purchased. Inform staff hoover, mats and coats to be placed in storeroom and nothing only bin and step to be left in hallway.
14. Creams have been removed. Only use cream from child's own nappy bag that parents provide will be used.
15. All PPE equipment and wipes to be stored in closed containers.
16. A detailed cleaning schedule has been written up. Detail cleaning schedule to be used at all times in all rooms

Administration of Medication:

17. Temperature reducing medication purchased. A sheet placed in first aid box to remind staff when this medication is out of date and needs to be reordered.

Safe Sleep:

18. Rest area is developed to promote a relaxing space for the children to take a break from activities if they choose to do so.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting disclosure.
2. Invoice attached will forward photo when gate is installed hopefully by end of November 2025.
3. Document.
4. Photograph
5. Photograph
6. Not required.
7. Photograph

Infection Control:

8. Photograph.
9. Document.
10. Photograph.
11. Photograph.
12. Photograph.
13. Photograph.

14. Photograph.

15. Photograph.

16. Photograph.

Administration of Medication:

17. Photograph.

Safe Sleep:

18. Photograph.

Summary Comment

The written response, documentary and photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 23. This area of practice will be assessed at the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

- (1) *A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*
- (2) *Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.*
- (3) *A registered provider shall ensure that-*
- (a) no person other than-*
 - (i) pre-school child attending the service,*
 - (ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*
 - (iii) an employee, or*
 - (iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*
 - (b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*
- (4) *A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in each care room.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a)(b) The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained. The inspectors' visit to the service was documented in the visitor's book on arrival.
- (4) The registered provider confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) There were no persons with FAR (first aid response) training on the premises and immediately available to the children on the day of inspection.

A written immediate action notice under Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child was issued to the registered provider by the Early Years Inspector on 29 September 2025.

(2)

(a) The first aid equipment was not safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the care rooms and entrance hallway in the service. There was no first aid signage displayed.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was not available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending the service as evidenced by the following observations:

- there were two antiseptic wipes with an expiry date of February 2022.
- The sterile eye wash and bandages had an expiry date of September 2024.
- there were no paramedic shears available.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) FAR qualified staff x 2

(2)

(a) First aid sign

(b) First aid box refilled.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1) FAR qualification certificates for two staff members and first aid certificates for two staff members.

(2) (a) (b) photographs and document.

Summary Comment

The written response, documentary and photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 25. This area of practice will be assessed at the next inspection.

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 firefighting 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

- (1)
- (a) A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was 5 September 2025.
 - (b) A record was kept of the smoke alarm maintenance in the premises which was last serviced on 23 April 2025. The firefighting equipment was serviced on 4 March 2025.
 - (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

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 throughout the inspection by the adults caring for them including, indoors in their care rooms, while in the outdoor play areas and when using the sanitary facilities.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2026. The insurance provided cover for 72 children.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

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

(c) kept adequately lit, heated, and ventilated.

(d) cleaned, maintained, and repaired, as required.

Non-Compliance Information

- (c)
- The internal nappy change room had a lingering malodour as the mechanical ventilation was not switched on to circulate the air and remove odours in this area.
 - The windows were not opened in the sanitary area located between the Blue and Purple rooms to ventilate the space.
- (d)
- The pipework under the sink in the sanitary areas used by the Green, Blue and Purple rooms were exposed and required to be covered.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (c)
- Sign printed and placed on doors. Management to check and replace fan signs when checking that fans on, windows in sanitary areas open and gates closed.
 - Check sheet created to ensure fans on, windows open and side gates closed.
- (d)
- The pipework insulated and covered straight away.

Supporting documentation submitted

(c)

1. Photograph.
2. Photograph.
- (d)
3. Photograph.

Summary Comment

The written response, documentary and photographic evidence submitted by the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for regulation 29(c), (d). This area of practice will be assessed at the next inspection.