

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY082
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Name of Service:	Wilmot's Childcare
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Address of Service:	Castle Oak, Dark Road, Nenagh, Co Tipperary
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Eircode:	E45 X206
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rosemary Wilmot
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	21/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	32	PM	34
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	North Tipperary Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh, Co Tipperary, E45A099
Inspection undertaken by:	L McGeeney and A McNamara
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	N/A
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Description of service

This service was established to provide care and education to children aged between 0 and 6 years old. A registered school age care service is also provided. The service operates Monday – Friday, 7.15am –6.15pm for 50 weeks of the year. A daily three-hour sessional service, funded under the early childhood care and education scheme (ECCE) for eligible children operates for the 38 weeks of the school year from late August until June. The service is operated from purpose-built, detached, single-storey premises beside a residential housing estate in the town of Nenagh in north Tipperary. There are two modular buildings at the back of the premises: one provides a dedicated space for school age children and the other provides a sheltered outdoor play and sensory area for the pre-school children. There are seven activity rooms in the main building, five of which were being used by the pre-school children on the day of inspection. The other facilities in the service include sleeps rooms, sanitary accommodation areas, outdoor play areas, staff room, kitchen and office.

This is one of two services operated by the registered provider under the name Wilmots Childcare, the other service is located in Co Limerick.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service on a daily basis but is available to call on when required. The service manager is the named person in charge and there are two assistant managers who act as her deputies when she is not present. The inspection was facilitated by the assistant managers.

There were nine staff working directly with the pre-school children as well as additional staff working with the school age children. One member of staff worked between the rooms to provide assistance, particularly during nappy changing or meal times and to relieve staff for their breaks. The managers worked in a supernumerary capacity and were available to assist in the rooms when needed. A cook was employed to prepare, cook and serve the midday meal.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9(1)(2)(4), 11(1)(2)(8), 15(1)(3), 16(1)(3), 19(1)(b), 23 and 25.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 A record of the Pre-school Child.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) There was a designated person in charge and a named deputy who was able to deputise, as required.

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

The staff files for four new staff were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for each of the four new staff members working at the service.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from sources such as previous schools and colleges.

(c) Garda vetting was available on file for each staff member working in the service. Garda vetting had been renewed, in compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting documentation was available for two staff working in the service, who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.

(4) Certificates of qualifications for the staff working directly with children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care of the children. The service ensured there were extra staff in the rooms to provide support during activities which required one to one staffing such as nappy changing and settling-in.

(2) The adult child ratios during the day of inspection met the requirements of the regulations as follows:

- Baby room: 2 staff and 2 babies aged 1 year old.
- Crawler room: 2 staff and 8 children aged between 1 and 2 years old.
- Toddler room: 3 staff and 11 children aged between 23 months and 3 years old.
- Gruffalo: 1 staff and 5 children aged between 3 and 4 years old.
- Hungry Caterpillars: 1 staff and 6 children aged between 4 and 5 years old.

(8)(a) Documentary evidence indicated that there were always at least two adults on the premises while children were in attendance.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

A sample of 12 completed registration forms were reviewed as part of the inspection process:

- (1) The registration forms contained the required information as detailed under parts (a) to (i) of this regulation.
- (3) The registration forms were available on the premises for inspection by an authorised person.

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;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) The information required under parts (a) to (k) of this regulation were available on the premises in a variety of formats including paper based and electronic records.

(3) The required records were available on the premises and open to inspection by an authorised person.

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-

(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

(1)(b) The following practices were observed on the day of inspection which supported the children's health, welfare and development:

The summer months were used as a time to settle-in new children to the service and to support children who were moving from one room to another to adjust to the changes. This settling-in process was carried out incrementally and each child was given as much time as they needed in this phase before the change was finalised. Social stories were used to help parents prepare their children who were coming to the service for the first time.

The staff supported the children to be independent with self-care skills such as using the toilet, self-feeding and hand washing.

The staff embraced the diversity of cultures and interests within the community of the service, for example, the children in Hungry Caterpillars room learned the sign language Lámh and used it as an aid to communication. In the Crawler room they had recently welcomed a visit from a parent to celebrate Bastille Day with French language, food, flags, face painting, stories and songs.

The children's experiences were documented in photos displayed on the walls in the rooms and on the windows near the entrance door to the room where they could be seen by parents. Communication sheets were completed on each child in the Baby, Crawler and Toddler rooms to let parents know essential information about their child's day such as food eaten, sleep times and activities engaged in. Each room also produced a monthly newsletter with photos and details of the special events of the month.

The staff were observed to be responsive to the children and their needs. The inspectors were in the Toddler room during one of the nappy-changing times. Staff were observed to respectfully prepare each child for this transition by telling them ahead of time when their turn was next. The staff used other transition prompts, such

as visual timers and verbal cues, throughout the day to aid the flow of the day and to let the children know what was coming next.

Staff were observed to support the children to develop positive habits and practices by praising their good behaviour, specific to what they were doing, for example, ‘well done on keeping the sand on the sand table.’

The staff showed an interest in the layout, equipment and resources in their rooms and spoke about how they changed around the rooms regularly to keep them interesting and engaging environments for the children. They sourced ideas based on the children’s emerging interests and enjoyed trying them in their rooms. For example, the staff in the Toddler room were collecting materials to make an ice-cream parlour for the imaginative play area as this was of interest to the children now that it was summer.

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:

Entry to the main care facility had to be authorised by a staff member. The outdoor play areas were secured to prevent children leaving unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area. The kitchen area was inaccessible to children. Pinch guards covered the hinges on all doors to prevent injury to children. All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to children. Radiator covers were present on the radiators. Blind cords were securely mounted out of reach of children.

Infection control:

The service was clean and well maintained.

Staff wore gloves and aprons for nappy changing, in line with the nappy changing policy displayed on the walls in the nappy changing areas. The nappy changing areas were clean and had both natural and mechanical ventilation. Suitable handwashing and drying facilities were available in the children’s and adult’s sanitary facilities. This included warm running water, liquid soap and disposable paper towels. The children were observed to wash their hands at appropriate times such as after using the toilet, when returning from outdoor play and before snack, without prompting from the staff which made it obvious that this was a normal part of their daily routine.

Foot pedal operated bins were also in use.

Designated staff toilets were also provided.

Hand sanitizer was available throughout the service.

Perishable food and formula were stored in a fridge.

Cots in the sleep room were positioned at least 50cm apart as required to ensure adequate ventilation around each cot and to prevent cross infection.

Administration of medication:

The service had records for the recording of medication. Records reviewed indicated that staff were following the policy, records were correctly maintained, dated, signed and witnessed by staff and signed by parents. Medication was stored in a fridge in the kitchen, away from the children.

Individual care plans were in place for children who required administration of medication.

Safe sleep:

Staff were familiar with best practices in safe sleep and carried out physical checks on individual sleeping children, every 10 minutes, recording individual children's sleep positions, colour and breathing.

Fire safety:

Fire exits were found to be unobstructed on the day of inspection.

There were fire evacuation procedures displayed in a prominent area within the service.

Firefighting equipment such as fire extinguishers were present in the service.

The service also had an evacuation cot.

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) There were staff trained in first aid response (FAR) available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position.

(b) The first aid box was available to the children attending the service.