

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY108
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Name of Service:	Foundations playschool and afterschool
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Address of Service:	Room 2, Sisters of Charity National School, Mary Street, Clonmel, Co Tipperary
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Eircode:	E91 X768
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Name of Registered Provider:	Edel Meehan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	24/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	5
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Glenmorgan Building, Ferryhouse, Clonmel, Co Tipperary E91RF38
Inspection undertaken by:	Antoinette McNamara
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	N/A
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Description of service

This private early years service provides a sessional and full day care service for children aged 2 to 6 years within the grounds of The Sisters of Charity National School, in Clonmel Co Tipperary. The sessional service runs 38 weeks of the year while full day care runs 41 weeks of the year from 07.30 to 18.00. The service has exclusive use of a single early years room with sanitary accommodation adjacent to it. Outdoors, the service has access to enclosed concrete and grass play areas. A school age service is also provided by the service.

Staffing

There are currently five staff employed in the service. On the morning of inspection there were four staff present. The registered provider is the designated person in charge and there is a second named staff member available to deputise as required. The staff working directly with the children hold qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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.

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4) Management and recruitment,

Regulation 11(1)(2) Staffing levels,

Regulation 21 Equipment and materials

Regulation 22 Food and drink,

Regulation 25 (1)(2)(a)(b) First aid,
Regulation 28 Insurance.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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) The registered provider was the person in charge. There was also a named deputy person in charge who was able to deputise, as required.

(b) A person in charge was present daily.

The staff files for five staff were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for each staff member 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 one 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.

Compliance Information

- (1) There were adequate staffing levels to respond to the children’s needs on the day of inspection.
- (2) The adult child ratios during the day of inspection were above the minimum regulatory requirements. There were 4 staff working with 19 children.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service was equipped with suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials in adequate quantities for the number of children attending, according to their ages and stages of development. The service consisted of one large playroom. The equipment and materials reviewed on inspection were well maintained. Materials were accessible to the children on low level shelving. There was a wide variety of toys such as dress up, a wide range of books, an art easel, messy play tray, building blocks and a farm. There were arts and craft materials available to the children. The children’s autumn arts and crafts decorated the walls. Flags from different countries were also displayed at the children’s eye level. There was also a class tree displayed on one of the walls with all the children’s names.

The service had pigeonholes for each child attending the service.

The outdoor area was shared with the national school. It was fully enclosed to the rear of the pre-school. The children had a variety of toys and equipment outside including hula hoops and blackboards. A shed of additional resources was also available with outdoor material.

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

All foods eaten by the children were supplied by their parents and stored in a fridge. Children brought their own drink bottles which were stored on a shelf in their room, where they could be accessed by the children when they wanted them. Bottles were refilled with water as required. Staff sat with the children during snack time to supervise them, encourage conversation and to help if needed, for example with opening lunch boxes. Foods eaten at snack time on morning of the inspection included: crackers, yogurts, sandwiches, cheese and fruit.

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 responder (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.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An in-date insurance certificate was available for inspection to demonstrate that valid insurance was in place.