

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY126				
Name of Service:	Longfield Academy				
Address of Service:	Ardgeeha, Longfield Estate, Cashel Road, Clonmel, Co Tipperary				
Eircode:	E91 FK20				
Name of Registered Provider:	Donagh McMahon				
Service type:	Full Day				
Date of Inspection:	24/04/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>57</td> <td>PM</td> <td>58</td> </tr> </table>	AM	57	PM	58
AM	57	PM	58		
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

Longfield Academy is a full day care service, located in a residential area, in the town of Clonmel, county Tipperary. A service is provided for children aged 1 to 6 years old, between the hours of 7.30am to 6.00pm. The premises is a purpose built detached single storey building with an adjacent modular building. The main building has four activity rooms, sanitary accommodation, a kitchen, office and storeroom. The modular building has two activity rooms and sanitary accommodation. An outdoor play area is available to the rear of the main building. Longfield Academy also provide a school age service. It has a sister service in Cashel county Tipperary.

Staffing

The service employs 22 staff members, which includes a management team. Staff working directly with children hold qualifications at Level 5, 6, 7 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The registered provider does not work directly with children in the service.

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)(8) Staffing levels,

Regulation 16 (1) (i, j) (3) Record in relation to pre-school service,
Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, welfare, and development of the child,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of the child,
Regulation 25 First aid,
Regulation 26 Fire safety and
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 person in charge confirmed that they or their deputy are present at all times while the service is open.
- (b) The person in charge was present when the unannounced inspection commenced and facilitated the inspection process. The registered provider arrived during the morning.
- (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 three 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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children.

(2) The person in charge ensured that the adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the day of inspection.

The service at all times during the inspection ensured that the adult to children ratio was maintained.

- Junior toddler room: 1-2 years, 8 children cared for by 3 staff.
- Senior toddler room: 2-3 years, 13 children cared for by 3 staff.
- Red ECCE room: 3-4 years, 9:2 children cared for by 2 staff.
- Blue ECCE room: 4-5 years, 10:2 children cared for by 2 staff.
- Purple playschool room: 2-3 years, 10 children cared for by 2 staff.
- Orange ECCE room: 3-4 years, 11 children cared for by 3 staff.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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:

(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;

(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)(i) A detailed staff roster was available.

(j) Medication administration records were sampled and were found to meet the necessary requirements. Written parental consent for staff to administer medication had also been obtained.

(3) The written records were available on the premises for 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-

(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, and

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic needs:

Children enjoyed freedom of movement within their rooms and in the outdoor area. Each room had timetabled outdoor play time in the courtyard playground of at least 30 minutes twice a day. The outdoor area was directly accessible off a number of the care rooms.

The children had access to drinking water throughout the day. Each child had their own drinking cup or bottle that was refilled with water as required. Meals and snacks were served at regular times each day. Food was provided by the parents and stored in a fridge.

The staff supported the children to become independent with self-care skills such as self-feeding, dressing for the outdoors, washing their hands, using the toilet and tidying up after activities, suitable to their age and stage of development. Staff supervised these activities and assisted the children as required.

Nappy changing was carried out at regular times during the day and as required.

Children could rest and relax in the cosy areas in each room. Sleep facilities were available for the children who required a sleep during the day. Cots were available in the sleep room for the children from the junior toddler room to sleep according to their individual needs and routines. Floor beds were available for senior toddlers and older children to sleep.

Physical and material environment:

Each of the activity rooms were bright, well maintained and well resourced. Toys and materials were accessible to the children and laid out in interest areas such as the home corner and tabletop activities. Many of the activities for the younger children were available in baskets and containers on the floor while materials for the older children were on shelves of child height storage units.

The children's artwork was displayed on the walls of their rooms as well as along the walls of the corridors.

Staff had helped the children create areas of familiarity in the classrooms to promote each child's identity and belonging such as family walls and birthday walls with photos of each child and their families.

The outdoor play area was secure. There was a range of outdoor toys appropriate to the ages and stages of development of the children.

Supporting relationships around children:

The children were cared for by favourable adult to child ratios which enabled the staff to give each child as much individual attention as they needed.

Staff were observed to be understanding of the children in their care, to respond quickly and sensitively to their needs and to speak to them with kindness and encouragement.

The staff sat with the children, at the tables, on the floor or in the cosy/reading areas, observing their play and exploration, assisting the children as required, engaging them in conversation and being available to them.

Staff met with the children’s parents at arrival and departure times when they could share information about their child.

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 door to the premises was locked and needed to be opened from the inside, therefore children could not exit the service unsupervised and unsupervised visitors could not enter. The outdoor area was secure to prevent children from leaving. Pinch guards covered the hinges on all doors to prevent injury to children. All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to children. Blind cords were secured to the walls.

Infection control:

The service was clean and well presented. There was hand sanitizer available for use. There was warm running water, liquid soap, hand dryers and paper hand towels available for hand drying throughout the service. There were designated children’s toilets available to the children. Designated staff toilets were also provided. Children were supported to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day such as before eating, after outdoor play and after using the toilet. Staff wore gloves and aprons for nappy changing, in line with the nappy changing policy displayed on the walls in the nappy changing areas. There were shoe covers available to wear. Gloves and aprons were also available to staff in the children’s toilets. 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. There were waterproof mattress protectors on the cot mattresses. Each care room had a fridge for storing food.

Safe sleep:

There was a designated sleep room in the premises for children to sleep during their attendance in the service. Cots were provided, which were designated to individual children who required naps during their time spent in the service. The temperature of the sleep room was recorded as 19.5°C on the morning of inspection. A room thermometer was in operation to ensure that the room temperature was maintained between 18- 22°C. Staff recorded physical checks, colour, position and breathing every 10 minutes, recorded the findings on individual children’s sleep records, in line with the service’s safe sleep policy.

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 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.

Compliance Information

1)(a) There was a written record of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service, most recently on 13th March 2025.

(b) There was a written record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. A fire register was maintained for these records and all records associated with fire safety in the service. The firefighting equipment had an annual service in December 2024. The smoke alarm system was also serviced in December 2024.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An in-date certificate was in place to demonstrate that the service was insured to provide full day care for the number of children the service is registered to accommodate.