

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD098
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Name of Service:	Waterford Women's Centre
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Address of Service:	74-75 Manor Street, Waterford City, Co. Waterford
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Eircode:	X91 FA02
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Name of Registered Provider:	Elizabeth Power
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	27/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	36	PM	31
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Community Care Centre, HSE Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Cullen
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
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Description of service

Waterford Women's Centre is a non-profit early years service catering for children on a full day, part time and sessional care basis. The service opens from 8:45am to 5:15pm, 5 days per week. The service is registered to cater for children from 0 to 6 years, however, currently accepts enrolments from children aged 15 months and above. Located on the ground floor of converted and extended terraced houses in Waterford city. The service has three early years room, a sleep room, kitchen and all-weather outdoor play area.

Staffing

The service currently employs ten staff members and one childcare community employment scheme staff who work directly with children. There are currently three students on work experience programmes. The registered provider does not work directly 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

9 (1)(2)(4) – Management and Recruitment

11 (1)(2) – Staffing levels

15 - Record of pre-school child

16 (1)- Record in relation to pre-school service

19 - Health, welfare and development of child

25 – First Aid

26 – Fire Safety Measures

28 – Insurance.

However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15 and 16. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the toddler, ECCE room one and ECCE room two.

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 registered provider, 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)(b) The manager was the designated person in charge on the day of inspection, and a named person was available to deputise as required.

(2) Documentation was reviewed for the 11 staff members employed by the service and 3 work experience students.

(a)(b) Two validated references were available for each staff member and two work experience students from either a past employer, or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff and students. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (a) Validated references were not available for one work experience student from either a past employer, or from a reputable source.
- (d) International police vetting was not available for one staff member who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (a) The service contacted the college notified them that two referees need to be supplied in all student packs. Two references were provided. A checklist of student documents has been developed.
- (d) International police vetting has been applied for. Any new employees will be required to have international police vetting.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (a) Two validated references.
- (d) Letter of confirming application for police vetting.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider address non-compliance (2)(a) above.

Evidence of an application for International Police Vetting was reviewed however, a copy of the completed International Police vetting has not been submitted to the inspector to date. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt. The noncompliance in relation to regulation 9(2)(d) remains out outstanding.

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) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff were working directly with the children at all times. There were 36 children with 8 staff members directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection.

(2) On the morning of the inspection, the staff to child ratios were maintained as follows throughout the service:

- In the toddler room, there were 7 children aged 15 months to 2 years 2 months being cared for by 2 staff.
- In ECCE room one, there were 13 children aged 2 years 5 months to 4 years old being cared for by 3 staff.
- In ECCE room two, there were 16 children aged 3 to 5 years old being cared for by 3 staff.

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)(a) – (i) Prior to a child commencing in the service, all parents and guardians were issued with a child registration form. This registration form was developed by the service and contained all of the required information for parents and guardians to complete.

A sample of twelve child registration forms were reviewed on the day of inspection, and all were completed in full with appropriate declarations signed by parents and guardians.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) – (g),

The registered provider ensured that all relevant information was accessible and available for inspection by authorised persons. Information notice boards in the lobby displayed relevant staff information, the Tusla registration certificate was on display providing confirmation of the class of service registered. Policies and procedures were available for staff in the office and a parent’s handbook was also available

(h) (i) (k)

Each early years room was responsible for maintaining records of attendance and any accident or incident records. Staff rosters were available on a staff notice board.

(j) Administration of medication records were available for review, please see regulation 23 for further information.

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

All snack and meals were sent in from home daily by parents. Storage and reheating facilities were available in the kitchen. Drinks were freely accessible to the children in each classroom throughout the day, with children observed to independently retrieve drinks when desired. Mealtimes observed were unhurried social experiences in all rooms, staff sat with children and engaged in conversation. The children were encouraged to feed themselves appropriate to their stage of development and were assisted as required. This was observed in the toddler room where staff encouraged children to eat their own snack and asked children if they ‘wanted help with the last bit’. Attention was given to children’s appearance and cleanliness; staff were observed to support children to clean faces and hands after eating. Children’s clothes were changes promptly when staff noticed they were soiled.

Sleep was child led and staff worked in partnership with parents to ensure consistency between home and service routines. Low-level floor beds were available to meet the sleep needs of children over 2 years of age. Regular nappy changing took place throughout the day and interactions between staff and children during the process were warm and playful. Children who were toilet trained, were supported to use the toilet independently.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Nappy bins used in the service were hand operated which is at variance with the Early Year Inspectorate Regulatory notice on the use of nappy storage and disposal bins in Early Years Services.
2. Staff members did not use disposable plastic aprons during nappy changing. When queried by the inspector, aprons were retrieved from a storage press.
3. The service nappy changing and toileting policy and procedure did not state that the use of aprons was required during nappy changing.

Administration of Medication:

4. Administration of medication digital records did not contain information that a second staff member witnessed the medication which had been administered to children in the service. This was at variance to the service policy on the administration of medication which stated that the record was to be signed by both staff members.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. Pedal bins have been purchased and are in use. Pedal bins will always be available in the nappy room and re-purchased if necessary.
2. All staff members have been notified that they must wear plastic aprons when nappy changing. This will be monitored by the manager and assistant manager
3. The use of aprons during nappy changing by staff been added to the Nappy changing and Toileting Policy. Monitoring policies and procedures and ensuring they are kept up to date.

Administration of Medication:

4. Administration of medicine by two staff members has been added on our communication application and all staff notified of the change. Policies and procedures will be monitored and kept up to date.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photograph of new bin, new signage, and undated policy.

Administration of Medication:

Updated medication form on the communication application.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified have been adequately addressed.

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 two staff members trained in first aid response available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises available for the use of the children attending the early years 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.

(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) There was a record of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The most recent fire drill was recorded as having taken place on 06 November 2025.

(b) There was a record available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 16 August 2025 and the smoke alarm system was last serviced on 04 November 2025.

(4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed beside each emergency exit door on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service demonstrated insurance cover under a community and voluntary insurance scheme. The insurance policy commenced 05 June 2025 and will expire 04 June 2026.