

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX099		
Name of Service:	Puddle Lane Creche		
Address of Service:	4 Ballycanew Grove, Gorey, Co. Wexford		
Eircode:	Y25 F9W7		
Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Nolan		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	19/02/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM NA
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspector Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford		
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Ryan		
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		

Description of service

Puddle Lane Creche and Montessori is a privately operated early years service. It is located in a residential house in Ballycanew village near Gorey. It offers full day care to children aged between 1 year and 6 years of age. The service operates from 07:45 to 18:15 Monday to Friday.

Staffing

There are 11 staff including the registered provider working in the service. The registered provider works directly with the children. All the staff working directly with the children in the service held the minimum QQI level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 17 Information for parents,

Regulation 21 Equipment and materials,

Regulation 22 Food and drink,
Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),
Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4) 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 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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The manager was the designated person in charge and a named deputy was also available to deputise as required.

The registered provider was present on the day of inspection.

(b)

The person in charge confirmed that they or their deputy are always present while the service is open.

Documentation was reviewed in respect of 11 staff employed to work in the service. This documentation met regulatory requirements as follows:

(2)(a)(b)

Two validated references were available on file for all the staff members.

(c)
Garda vetting disclosures were available on file for all staff members. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years in all cases.

(d)
Police vetting disclosures were available for two staff members who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4)
Certificates of qualification for all staff members who work directly with children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Qualification Framework or qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent

(7)(a)(b)(c)
Review of staff files demonstrated that staff were encouraged to participate in additional training days. Evidence was present that staff appraisals and regular staff meetings took place in the service. The manager advised that an agenda was provided to staff in advance of staff meetings. New staff were inducted as per the staff recruitment policy.

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)(2)
Throughout the period of the inspection there were adequate numbers of staff working directly with the children attending the service. In the morning there were 21 children in the care of 6 staff.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The service had a parent handbook which provided parents with an overview of the services offered and the curriculum available. The booklet included relevant information and key policies.

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

Materials and equipment were available on low level shelving in all the care rooms. There was a good supply of open ended and natural materials and well-developed interest areas. Children were observed to easily access the toys and materials independently. Staff set up activities around the room which allowed children choices to lead their own play and learning based their own interest.

The staff had recently completed new training to support a more effective ways of introducing child led learning, allowing children the freedom to explore their own interests. The rooms were redecorated and laid out to facilitate this new child way of engaging in activities and play they choose themselves.

The tables and chairs provided in the service were suitable for the age and stage of development of the children in each of the care rooms. The children’s daily routine was displayed in each of the rooms.

The presence of a family wall display and children’s birthdays in the rooms demonstrated a sense of identity and belonging for the children.

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

The service had a healthy eating policy in place. Children’s meals and snacks were provided by the service. On the day of inspection, children’s snacks consisted of fruit, crackers, breadsticks and water. The hot meal on the day consisted of pasta bolognese. A 2-week menu was displayed in the entrance for parents to view. Children were supported and encouraged to be independent in deciding when to eat their mid-morning and afternoon snacks and could choose when they wanted to eat. There was a bowl of fruit and water, and cups kept on a low shelf in each of the rooms.

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 was evidence available to demonstrate that a staff member holds the appropriate First Aid Responder (FAR) certification, ensuring that a person trained in first aid is immediately available to the children at all times.

(2)(a)(b)
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

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)

Records were available demonstrating that fire drills take place monthly. The last recorded fire drill was documented as having been carried out on 21 January 2025.

(b)

A record was maintained of when the fire detection system and smoke alarms were last serviced in February 2025.

Firefighting equipment records were available demonstrating that these were last serviced in September 2024.

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous places throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had insurance cover for 48 full day care children. It was dated from the 28 March 2024 to 27 March 2025.