

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016DR015
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Name of Service:	The Nest School
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Address of Service:	Waverly Hill, Waverly, Blacklion, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 K573
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lynda Browne
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	62	PM	48
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Early O'Brien & H. Bourke
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).

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Description of service

The Nest School provides part-time and sessional care to pre-school children aged between two years and six months to five years. The service operates between the hours of 08:30 and 14:00 Monday to Friday. The service operates from a purpose-built two storey premises, located in a residential area in Greystones village, County Wicklow. There are four care rooms named Puffins, Owls, Ducklings and Robins and an additional “break-out room”, named The Workshop, which is primarily used by children from the Robin room for small group activities. In addition, there is an office, staff room and a storeroom located on the ground floor. There is a wraparound outdoor area at the rear, front and side of the premises where children have access to outdoor play experiences.

Staffing

There is a total of 14 staff members employed to provide care to the children. This includes the centre manager and two relief staff members. The manager is available to provide additional care in the rooms when needed. The registered provider is not present in the service on a daily basis but did arrive to the service after the inspector’s arrival. A manager from another centre also arrived after the inspector’s arrival. On the day of inspection there were nine adults working directly with the children.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child, safety and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

- Regulation 9 (1)(2)(4) - Management and recruitment,
- Regulation 11 (1)(2)- Staffing levels,
- Regulation 15(1) – Record of a pre-School Child
- Regulation 16(1) – Record in Relation to Pre-School Service,
- Regulation 19(1)(b) – Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
- Regulation 23 - Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child,
- Regulation 25 – First Aid,
- Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures,
- Regulation 28 – Insurance.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15(1) – Record of a Pre-School Child and regulation 16(1)– Record in Relation to a Pre-School Service across all four care rooms, Puffins, Owls, Ducklings and Robins.

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 registered provider, centre manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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 service manager is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.
- (b) The service manager was present and in charge of the service throughout the inspection.

(2)

Upon review of the staff roster and staff files, it was identified that there were seven new staff members employed to work in the service since the last inspection on 13 May 2025. All staff files were reviewed in relation to regulation 9(2)(c).

Documentation was reviewed in respect of seven adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

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- (a) Of the 14 validated, written references that were required, 10 were available from a past employer.
- (b) Of the 14 validated, written references that were required, 4 were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were on file and had been obtained for 16 staff members demonstrating that the service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff.
- (d) Police vetting was required and available for one staff member who had lived outside of the State for a period of more than six months as an adult.

(4)
Records were available demonstrating that all seven adults employed since the last inspection held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or 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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children for part-time and sessional care services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. On the morning of inspection there were 62 children attending the service being supervised by 9 adults and on the afternoon of inspection there were 48 children present being supervised by 9 adults.

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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)(b)(c)(e)(f)(g)(i)

A sample of 10 children's records were reviewed on an online application and the record required in writing in relation to (a)(b)(c)(e)(f)(g)(i) above was kept for each child.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (d) Of the sample of 10 children's records reviewed, 3 records did not detail the address of the parent/guardian.
 - (h) Of the sample of 10 children's records reviewed, while it is acknowledged that each of the parents/guardians confirmed that children had been immunised, there was no evidence of a record of these immunisations received by the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

To correct the non-compliance here, the Manager has asked the teachers to check Childpaths profiles and flag any gaps in the information. This is currently being completed and updated. A group text was sent to each class by

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management requesting updated pre-school child details are on Childpaths to include a copy of each child immunisations for the child's individual file.

To prevent a re-occurrence of this non-compliance, an updated induction letter has been sent to all families starting in August to show what is required for compliance purposes. The software platform utilised has now added a feature where the address is submitted by management at the point of creating the parents profile. An updated check list for each class will be issued prior to new enrolments and new class members to ensure all these details are up to date and on the system before the child starts. Management to sign off on checklist in September that completed for coming year. This will be monitored by management on a continuous basis as new enrolment come in over the school year.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence of a parent letter requesting immunisation records.

A copy of a checklist template including record of immunisations for each child.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance and will inform the next inspection

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:

- (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)
- (h) Children's attendance was recorded on an online application on the day of inspection. These records included details of each child's arrival and departure times from the service.
- (i) A record of the staff roster was available and was reflective of the staff present on the day.

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(j) There was no evidence available that any medication had been administered to any child attending the service this year.

(k) A sample of eight accident and incident records were reviewed on an online application and all were completed as required by the regulation.

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)

Appropriate and suitable care practices were observed to be in place in all care rooms in the service. In their interactions with the children, the adults were respectful and actively listened to the ideas, opinions and needs of each child. All adults were familiar with the names, ages and family members of each child. They reported on the likes and interests of the children within the care rooms, and these interests were reflected in the resources and materials available to the children. It was evident from room displays that children's emerging interests were responded to and incorporated within the curriculum, such as jobs people do in the community, dinosaurs, bees and bugs. The routine of the day was observed to be child led and children were visibly content and engaged in play during the inspection. They transitioned between activities seamlessly and appeared familiar with the routine of the day during the inspection.

Meals and snacks were offered to the children regularly throughout the day. Drinks of water were available within the rooms and were offered regularly. The staff supported the children in managing their personal care. Staff used opportunities when providing personal care for warm one-to-one interactions. Staff addressed children by name and spoke to them in gentle positive tones. Children were comforted promptly if they became upset.

Areas where the children could rest or take a break from activities were available within each of the care rooms. Staff reported that they communicate daily with parents regarding individual children's care.

The children were observed to play outside for extended periods of time on the morning and afternoon of inspection and were dressed appropriately for the weather.

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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 toys and play equipment observed in use by the children in the indoor and outdoor areas on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order.
- The person in charge had taken measures to ensure the indoor and outdoor play environments were safe and free from hazards.
- Medication, which is only administered in an emergency, was stored safely and out of the reach of children.
- Storage facilities for hazardous cleaning materials were inaccessible to children

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing in adjoining sanitary accommodation for all care rooms. Good hand-washing practices were observed after using the toilet, before eating and returning indoors from outdoor play.
- Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of waste materials.
- Cleaning schedules were available in all care rooms and the service appeared to be clean.

Administration of Medication:

- Care plans for five children requiring emergency medication were available. Children's medication was in date and immediately available if required within the relevant care rooms.
- An adequate administration of medication record was available to document medication given should this be required in an emergency. All staff were familiar with the procedures outlined in the services administration of medication policy and procedure.

Fire Safety:

- All fire exits were clear of obstruction.

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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)

A person trained in first aid responder (FAR) training was immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. Three staff members hold current FAR certification.

(2)

(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes for children were safely stored and easily accessible on the premises.

(b) First aid boxes were immediately available to children staff brought these to the garden with children's emergency medication during outdoor playtime.

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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 evidence of regular fire drills having taken place within the service. The last fire drill took place on 03 March 2026.
 - (b) There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the premises dated September 2025 and February 2026 respectively.
- (4)
- There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the care rooms and the main hallway of the building.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had a valid certificate of insurance which expires on 27 March 2027 to a cover a maximum of 66 children with the type of service covered being part-time day care.