

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2016DY015

Name of Service: An Cosán Early Years St. Catherine's

Address of Service: St. Catherine's N.S., Ratoath Road, Cabra, Dublin 7.

Eircode: D07 TP21

Name of Registered Provider: Anne Genockey

Service type: Sessional

Date of Inspection: 06/11/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	Non-Applicable
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin
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

An Cosán Early Years St. Catherine's is one of six services operated across Dublin by the registered provider. The service is located on the ground floor of St Catherine's National School in North Dublin. The service provides care for up to 21 children aged between 2 to 6 years old, on a sessional basis and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The service is registered to operate from Monday to Friday between 8.45am to 12:15pm. The service currently operates between 8.45am to 11.45am from Monday to Friday. The service consists of one care room and has access to staff and children's sanitary facilities. There is an outdoor play area at the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service and employs three adults to work directly with the children in the service. This includes one person in charge and two childcare staff one of whom is employed under the access and inclusion model (AIM). On the day of the inspection the person in charge and the two childcare staff were present. The registered provider was not present on the day of the inspection. The person in charge who also oversees the daily operation of the service facilitated the inspection process.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Record of a Preschool Child Regulation 15, Regulation 16 Record in Relation to Pre-School Service, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child and Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the one care room.

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
- (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 had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) The person in charge and the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.
- (2) A review of paperwork and conversation with the person in charge confirmed there are currently three adults employed by the registered provider to work in the service. The staff files of the person in charge and two childcare staff were reviewed as part of the inspection process. The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) There were three written and validated references available from past employers in relation to the staff member employed
 - (b) There were three written references available from a source other than a past employer in relation to the registered provider.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the three adults. 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 adult who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six months or more as an adult.
- (4) The person in charge and two childcare staff held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs.

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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

Compliance Information

- (1) There was an adequate number of adults working with the children. During the morning there were three adults caring for 15 children aged 2-6 years old.
- (3) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

- (1) A sample of ten children's registration records were reviewed as part of the inspection. The registered provider ensured a record (1) (a),(b),(d),(e),(f),(g) and (i) was maintained for each child. In addition, a space was available on the form to record the date the child ceased the service as required under (c).
- (3) (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A record of immunisations required was not available in five of the ten records reviewed. This posed a potential risk in the event of an outbreak of a contagious illness.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(h) Management informed the parents who haven't provided their children's vaccinations records that it is an enrolment requirement. All those parents provided the manager with their children's vaccination/immunisation records.

Preventive Action

(1) At the beginning of children's Early Years enrolment process, management must request to the parents to provide their children's vaccination records and to fill out/sign off the 'Immunisations' section in the registration.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance identified under Regulation 15.

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.*

(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)
- (a) the name, position, qualification, and experience of the person in charge and adults working were displayed on the noticeboard in the hallway for the attention of parents/guardians.
 - (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered were displayed on the noticeboard in the hallway for the attention of parents/guardians.
 - (c) details of the adult to child ratios in the service were displayed on the noticeboard in the hallway for the attention of parents/guardians.
 - (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service was displayed on the noticeboard in the hallway for the attention of parents/guardians.

- (e) the facilities available were displayed on the noticeboard in the hallway for the attention of parents/guardians.
- (f) the opening hours and fees were displayed on the noticeboard in the hallway for the attention of parents/guardians.
- (g) the required policies, procedures and statements of the service were available on request.
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child were recorded in an attendance book in the care room.
- (i) details of the staff roster were available on request.
- (j) The person in charge confirmed that there had been no administration of medication to any child attending the service. The inspector reviewed a blank administration of medication form. All necessary information was included if this form was required.
- (k) The person in charge confirmed that there had been no accidents or incidents involving any child attending the service during 2025. A sample of ten accident and incident records from 2024 were reviewed as part of the inspection. All information was completed in full.

(3) All records and documentation requested by the inspector were available for review.

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

Basic Needs:

- Children brought snacks from home. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians. Staff discussed how they check the children's snacks for any non-nutritious items. Children had access to their drinks throughout the session and were offered a choice between milk and water at snack time.
- There was a cosy area with a child sized sofa and two child sized chairs, cushions and books for rest and relaxation. In addition, there was a table and bench for sitting and relaxation during outdoor play. This area was observed to be used by the children during the inspection.

- A sense of identity was promoted throughout the care room. For example, there was a 'Family Wall' display, a 'Birthday Time' display, a 'Community Wall' display and the children's artwork was displayed throughout the care room and the corridor outside the care room. In addition, children had their own personalised labelled coat hooks.
- The presence of a visual daily routine on display provided the children with a sense of stability, security, and predictability. In addition, staff were observed to give children verbal reminders in advance of moving from one activity to the next activity.
- The children were observed to play outdoors during the inspection. This supported their social, cognitive, and gross and fine motor development. In addition, children were provided with suitable outdoor clothing to support a comfortable outdoor play experience.

Supporting relationships with children:

- Staff were observed to chat with parents at arrival and collection times. In addition, staff discussed how the service have an 'Open Door' policy which gives parents/guardians the opportunity to bring their children into the care room.
- Children were observed to have the freedom to move freely in their care room and independently choose their activities and play experiences.
- Staff were observed to interact continuously with the children. For example, snack time was observed to be a sociable event and staff chatted amicably with the children.
- Children were encouraged to bring their lunch box from the fridge to the table and clean up after snack time. This promoted independence.
- Staff discussed how they support children to transition from home by offering a settling-in period. Parents were also asked to complete in advance an 'All About Me' form providing essential details about their child.
- Staff discussed how the majority of the children attending the preschool follow on to the local primary school on site. Meetings between early years and school staff are held to ensure children have a smooth transition.
- At outdoor play time staff were observed to offer children encouragement and support to put on their outdoor gear when required.

Equipment and Materials:

- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children, providing a comfortable area to eat snacks and take part in tabletop activities.
- The care room had defined areas of interest with supporting equipment. Areas of interest included a home corner, a dress up role play area, a music area, a transport area, a construction area, a building blocks area, an art area which was always accessible to the children and a fine motor skill area. Each of the themed interest areas were well resourced with a wide range of props, materials and accessories accessible to the children. This equipment facilitated a range of play experiences including creative, imaginative and language play and promoted exploration and curiosity.
- Toys and materials were stored on low and accessible shelves and were themed and labelled which promoted spontaneous play opportunities.
- An outdoor play area was available for the children with a soft ground surface. Part of the outdoor play area was sheltered. This provided children with shelter and protected them from harsh weather conditions such as rain and direct sunlight. Equipment and toys available included a playhouse, a wooden car structure, a sand pit with supporting props and a mud kitchen including a range of real-life props which promoted meaningful play experiences and extended play opportunities.

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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspector, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The outdoor play area was securely fenced and gated reducing the risk of children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- There were no flexes or cables observed that were accessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents and medication were observed to be stored safely out of the reach to the children.

- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.
- Staff discussed how they check the children's snacks for any choking hazards such as full grapes.

Infection Control:

- Perishable snacks such as yoghurt and cheese brought by the children from home for morning snack time were observed to be stored in a fridge reducing the risk of bacteria multiplying.
- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, and hand drying facilities. Children were observed to wash their hands throughout the inspection, including before snack time, after outdoor play and after toileting.
- Foot operated pedal bins were observed to be used by children and staff for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22°C was maintained throughout the care rooms, and the windows were open to allow fresh circulation of air.
- The premises was observed to be in a clean and hygienic.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed throughout the inspection. The children's attendance book was monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present in the care room and during outdoor play. This ensured a safe evacuation of the children in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Non-Compliance Information

Administration of Medication:

1. The service did not have adequate individual medical care plans available for two children attending the service.
 - One child with a diagnosed medical condition which listed a prescribed medication. Although staff were aware of the child's medical condition, the medical care did not outline information about the medical condition and the procedures to follow in the event of a medical emergency. In addition, the prescribed medication was not available. This posed a potential safety risk, as the absence of medication and a detailed guidance could hinder the timely and appropriate administration of medical treatment.
 - There was another child with a suspected medical condition. Although staff were aware of the child's suspected medical condition, the medical care did not outline information about the medical condition and the procedures to follow in the event of a medical emergency. This posed a potential safety risk, as

the absence of a detailed care plan could hinder the timely and appropriate administration of medical treatment.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Administration of Medication:

1. Management requested to the parents of children with an allergy condition to provide the service with prescribed medication based on medical diagnosis. Parents provided the service with prescribed medication. Parents and the manager filled in/signed off the Individual care plan for their children. The Early Years staff read through the individual care plans, and the medical administering instructions. The allergy information chart and individual care plans are displayed on the notice board, within the classroom.

Preventive Action

1. At the beginning of children's early years enrolment process, management must request to the parents to provide their children's prescribed medication, based on the medical diagnosis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Administration of Medication:

- Documentary evidence of the updated medical care plans.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance identified under Regulation 23.

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 to show that three adults hold certification in First Aid Response training. The three adults were rostered to work daily and were available during the duration of the inspection.

- (2) (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on a shelf in the care room.
- (b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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) The registered provider ensured that a record of fire drills which were evidenced to occur monthly in the service was maintained. The record showed that the last fire drill took place on the 23 October 2025.
- (b) The registered provider-maintained records relating to the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting was last serviced on 2 September 2025. The smoke alarms were last serviced on 24 June 2025.
- (2) Records were open to inspection by an unauthorised person. All fire safety records requested by the inspection team were available for review.
- (4) Notices detailing the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire emergency were displayed on the wall in the care room and on the wall of the corridor outside the care room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance for a maximum of 21 children attending the service on a sessional care basis with an expiry date of 17 September 2026.