

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2017CE077
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Spraoui Early Learning Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Heather Hill, Limerick Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	V95PO34
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Theresa Murphy
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	11/02/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	70	PM	69
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Quality and Regulation Directorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. McCarthy & J. Hayes
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Spraoui Early Learning Centre was established in 2017, as a privately owned service on the outskirts of Ennis town. The service facilitates care for children on a full day care basis, Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00. The single storey, purpose-built childcare facility accommodates five care rooms and three sleep rooms.

The care rooms included the Chicks room and the Dinosaurs room (age range: one to two years), the Penguin room and the Hippos room (age range: two to three years), and the Giraffe room (age range: three to five years). Designated play areas are located at the rear and side of the building. A large car park with set down parking is available to the front of the building.

### Staffing

Nineteen adults are currently working in the service. The registered provider is the owner of the childcare facility and does not work in the service.

On the 11 February 2026 the area manager, the service manager and an auxiliary person who prepares, cooks and serves the food were present. Fourteen adults worked directly with the children. Both the area manager and service manager provided an administrative role and provided cover in the care rooms during inspection.

### 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 and premises and facilities. The regulations inspected included:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (3)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 29 – Premises (e)

Regulation 30- Minimum space requirements (1).

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 area and service managers, 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)

On the 11 February 2026 a manager was available, and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The manager was available during the inspection.

(2)

Twenty files were available in respect of the registered provider, the area manager and the eighteen adults currently working in the service. The findings included the following:

(a)

Twenty-four written and validated references from past employers were available.

- (b)  
Sixteen written and validated references from a source other than a past employer were available.
- (c)  
Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the adults employed by the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)  
International police vetting was available in respect of ten adults working in the service who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months.
- (4)  
Eighteen adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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)  
During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.
- (2)  
On the 11 February 2026 the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Fifteen adults cared for the seventy children in attendance in the morning and fifteen adults cared for the sixty-nine children in the afternoon.
- (8)(a)  
During the inspection more than two adults were available in the service at all times.

## 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.*

## Compliance Information

- (1)(a)
- Basic Needs of Children:**
- The adults treated the children in a caring manner. Positive language was used during interactions. The adults praised and encouraged the children, conversed with the children at their level, used soft tones of voice and responded promptly to their cues for assistance and comfort. The children's nappies were changed on a regular basis. The children were encouraged to be independent during mealtime and whilst using the toilet. The adults treated the children in a respectful manner while the children used the toilet and during nappy changes. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care and prompted to wipe their noses at appropriate intervals. Mealtime was observed to be a relaxed occasion. Water was available in containers accessible to the children throughout the day. Appropriate crockery and feeding utensils were provided during mealtime. The children were placed to sleep after mealtime.

### Physical and Material Environment:

Five rooms were in operation during the inspection. The care rooms were bright, spacious and well-resourced and were laid out to enable the children to freely access the equipment and materials. Throughout the day, the children were offered a range of play based activities. Learning aids and the children’s individual artwork were displayed. areas of interest were available. The care rooms were resourced with a shop and home corner, art stations, sensory areas, pretend play wooden houses, constructive play areas, wooden activity units, and balance blocks. Seating with soft furnishings and mats with adjacent reading materials were used by the children to rest and relax. Low level shelving units were accessible to the children with a range of manipulative, sensory, imaginative and constructive toys and learning materials for the age and level of development of the children.

The outdoor play areas located to the side and rear of the service were accessible. The play areas were enclosed with fencing and gates. An all-weather synthetic material and tarmac surface was available. A covered section was available with wooden boxes. The children had access to an activity unit, a pretend playhouse, wall mounted games, a mud kitchen, sensory play tables, an activity unit with slides and a climbing frame, rocking toys and ride on vehicles were available. Children attending three of the five care rooms accessed the outdoor play area.

### 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 registered provider ensured that a nutritious variety of food was offered to the children in attendance. A healthy eating policy and a weekly menu plan was available to inform the adults working in the service and shared with parents/guardians. Children were offered cereal and a beverage on arrival to the service. The children’s parents/guardians provided a mid-morning snack of yoghurts, rice cakes, crackers and various fruit. The service provided a hot meal of pasta bolognese and cheese. A sharing platter with choices of turkey, ham and a variety of fruit and vegetables were provided in each room in the afternoon. Water was available during mealtime and accessible to the children in each care room throughout the day. Children were offered choice with their food preference and additional portions of food if required.

### 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:

- A key coded, bell operated system, a high-level exit switch and video surveillance were in place at the entrance door to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the service.
- The outdoor area was secured and enclosed with a surrounding perimeter wall, fencing and gate to protect the children within.
- The children were signed in and out on arrival to and departure from the service on the childcare electronic application system and supervised at all times during the inspection.
- Storage facilities were secured and inaccessible to the children.
- Medication was stored in a secure cabinet out of reach of the children.
- A daily risk assessment was available demonstrating measures taken to manage risk within the service.

##### Infection Control:

- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- The children's and adult's sanitary facilities were appropriately equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined and pedal operated bins.
- The observed nappy changes were completed in accordance with the service's infection control policy. A nappy changing procedure was displayed in the nappy changing facilities.
- Both the children and the adults washed their hands at appropriate intervals after activities, toileting and before mealtime.
- Perishable food items and beverages were stored in the refrigerators in the care rooms and the kitchen.
- The children's bedlinen and personal care items were labelled and stored individually.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not administered during the inspection.
- The staff demonstrated an awareness of the service's administration of medication procedure.
- Documentation was available should medication be administered to a child attending the service.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Children were placed to sleep in the sleep rooms and care rooms in standard sized cots and low-level beds.

- The children’s sleep observations were completed every 10 minutes by the adults. The observations recorded included children’s position, colour and breathing.
- The sleep room temperatures were maintained between 16 to 20 °Celsius. A thermometer was available for staff to measure and monitor the temperatures.
- The safe sleep guidance procedure was displayed in each sleep room.
- An area was available in each room with soft furnishings for the children to rest and relax when required.

### Fire Safety:

- Records of completed monthly fire drills are available in the service.
- The fire exits and routes were clear from obstruction throughout the service.
- The fire assembly point and the fire exit route signage were readily identifiable and known to the adults working in the service.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 29 – Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*  
*(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

### Compliance Information

(e)  
The children had access to sanitary facilities adjacent to the care rooms. The sanitary facilities were appropriately equipped with child sized toilets and wash hand basins. The nappy changing facility was equipped with three nappy changing mats and nappy changing procedures were displayed. Two sanitary facilities were available for use by the adults.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

*(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)  
Adequate clear floor space was provided for the children attending the service on 11 February 2026. The service provided a space for the children to freely move and engage in play-based and educational activities within the five care rooms.