

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017CE077
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Name of Service:	Spraoui Early Learning Centre
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Address of Service:	Heather Hill, Limerick Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
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Name of Registered Provider:	Theresa Murphy
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection (Day 1):	16/04/2024
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Date of Inspection (Day 2):	17/04/2024
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No of pre-school children (Day 1):	AM	70	PM	70
No of pre-school children (Day 2):	AM	74	PM	74

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency Ennis Primary Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare V95TY4E
Inspection undertaken by:	A. McCarthy & S. Meehan
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).

Conditions if applicable

Not applicable

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 and learning 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 Penguin room (age range: three to four years), the Dinosaur room (age range: two to three years), the Chicks room (age range: one to two years), the Hippos room (age range: two to three years) and the Giraffe room (age range: three to four 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

The service employs eighteen adults. The registered provider is the owner of the service and does not work in the service. On the 16th and 17th of April 2024 the area manager, the service manager, fifteen adults who worked directly with the children and an auxiliary person who prepares, cooks and serves the food were present. The designated person in charge provides an administrative role and provided cover in the care rooms during inspection. The area manager provided an administrative role during the 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. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulations 9, 11, 15, 16, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report. A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15 and 16. 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 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)

During the inspection a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

On the 16th and 17th of April the area manager and the service manager were available on the premises at all times.

(c)

There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and roles and responsibilities of each employee. During the inspection an area manager, a manager and a deputy was available. A photograph of each adult and their designated roles and responsibilities were displayed at the entrance to service.

Nineteen files were available for the adults employed by the service. These files were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)

Twenty-eight written references with evidence of verification were available from past employers.

(b)

Ten written references with evidence of verification were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

Garda Vetting disclosures were available in respect all 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 eleven adults who lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

All the adults working directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education ranging from level 5 to 7 or an equivalent 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.

(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 who attended the service.

(2)

An adequate number of adults cared for the children at all times during the inspection. On the 16th of April 2024 fifteen adults cared for seventy children in the morning and in the afternoon. On the 17th of April 2024 fifteen adults cared the seventy-four children in attendance.

(8)(a)

The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available on the premises at all times.

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-

(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,

(b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and

(c) an authorised person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

Compliance Information

(1)
Seventy-four forms were available for all the children registered with the service. A sample of fifteen records were reviewed, these forms adequately recorded the required particulars outlined in section (1)(a)-(i).

(3)
Enrolment forms detailing the requirements outlined from (a) to (i) were available for each child attending the service.

(4)
The registered provider ensured that records referred to in paragraph (1) are retained for a period of two years after the children cease to attend the service.

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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(k)

Fifteen accidents, incidents, and injury forms for pre-school children in attendance were reviewed. Thirteen of these forms were completed with a signed parental signature.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(k)

Two of the fifteen forms reviewed were not completed in full to include a signed parental signature after incidents had occurred.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(1)(k)

Corrective and Preventive Action

Incident forms that were not signed were immediately printed and signed by parents. All accident and incident forms are completed and will be completed by staff going forward in accordance with the service policy. A risk was completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence.

Summary Comment

Based on the corrective and preventive actions and supporting documentation the area of non-compliance is addressed. The requirement of regulation 16 (1)(k) is met.

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

(1)(a)

The children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, having regard to the children's age and level of development. Five care rooms were in operation during the inspection.

Basic Needs of the Children:

The adults in all the care rooms interacted with the children in a caring and respectful manner. The children's individual cues for comfort or assistance were responded to immediately. The children attending the Toddler and Preschool rooms initiated open ended play and transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor environment on both days. During mealtime the children attending all the care rooms were seated together during mealtime and appropriate crockery and feeding utensils were provided suitable to the children's age and stage of development. The adults sat and conversed with the children, mealtimes were observed to be relaxed and sociable occasions. The adults recognised the children's individual cues of tiredness and responded to their need for sleep in all the care rooms. The children's toileting and nappy changing requirements were met on an individual need's basis and the adults communicated with children in a sensitive manner during this time. Children were supported to become independent and self-caring and were encouraged to take care of their own belongings including hanging up their coats and opening bags and tidying up their toys when finished playing. The children in each room were offered a range of developmentally challenging play and learning activities and the children were observed to be fully engaged and included in all activities in the indoor and outdoor environments.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

Early relationship formation was supported through continuity of care and the children could expect the same adults to be available to them each day in the service. A key person approach was observed in each care room, the adults

were assigned yearly to rooms and were observed to offer support and praise to each child for their involvement in activities. The adults demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge of the children’s preferences, interests, and individual capabilities. The children’s lead was followed by the adults in the care rooms, and they rotated in accordance with the children’s needs on an individual and group basis. The children were notified in advance of any transitions in the programme of care and learning. The adults worked effectively together to facilitate the care provided to the children. The adults communicated in a positive manner with parents or guardians during drop off and collection periods from the service. The children’s care need observations were shared daily with parents on the service’s electronic application devices. The individual learning journals captured the children’s creative work and developmental progress, these are shared frequently with parents throughout the year.

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 entrance to the service was appropriately secured with a keypad and a bell operated system to monitor people’s entry to the service. The internal and external entry and exit points prevented children exiting or unauthorised persons accessing the service.
- The outdoor area was secured with a high fence, concrete wall, and gates.
- The children were supervised at all times during the inspection and the children’s arrival and departure to the service was recorded on the service’s electronic recording system for each care room.
- Hazardous items were stored out of reach of the children, cupboards and storage areas were secured with child safety devices to prevent the children accessing the contents within.

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 each of 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 each care room.
- The children's soothers were stored in individually labelled containers.
- The children's bedlinen and personal care items were labelled and stored individually.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not administered during the inspection.
- A policy on administration of medication was available to inform staff of the service's practices, and staff confirmed that they had received training.
- Parental consent was available for prescription and non-prescription medications given to the children in attendance.
- Medication was stored in a secure cabinet out of reach of the children.

Safe Sleep:

- A safe sleep policy was available to inform staff of the service's practices, and staff confirmed that they had received training.
- The three designated sleep rooms accommodated standard sized cots for the babies to sleep. Low level beds and mattresses were available for children to sleep in the care rooms. Areas for the children to rest and relax were available in each room with soft furnishings.
- The sleep room temperatures were maintained between 16 to 20 degrees Celsius during the inspection. A thermometer was available in the sleep rooms for staff to measure and monitor the room temperatures.
- The children's sleep observations were recorded by staff every ten minutes on the service's electronic application device. These observations included the children's colour, position, and breathing.

Fire Safety:

- Staff maintained records of up-to-date fire safety training.
- The fire exit doors and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The fire exit routes, and fire assembly points were readily identified with clear and illuminated signage.

Outing:

- The area manager confirmed that outings are not undertaken by the service.

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)
Three adults had a record of up to date First Aid Response (FAR) training and were rostered to be available on the premises.

(2)(a)
A suitably equipped first aid boxes was stored in the office at the entrance to the service.

(b)
A first aid box was available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency in 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 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)
Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were completed by the service. The last fire drill took place on the 8th of April 2024.

(b)
Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system took place respectively on the 21st of November 2023 and the 27th of April 2024.

(4)
Fire action notices were displayed demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for seventy children attending the service on a full day care basis. The policy is valid until the 27th of March 2025.