

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017GY504
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Name of Service:	St. Pat's Pre-School And Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Lombard Street, Galway, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 K3C7
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Name of Registered Provider:	Fiona Kelly and Helen O'Flynn.
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	21/01/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	39	PM	17
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan.
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
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Description of service

The service is located on Lombard Street, Galway city in St Patrick's national school. The service first opened in September 2017. The service operates as a private, part-time service for pre-school children aged three years to six years, from 8.30 am to 1.30 pm, Monday to Friday. The service also offers a sessional service for preschool children. The service has two playrooms, sanitary facilities, kitchenette and a staff office.

Staffing

The registered providers are not working on the premises daily and have appointed a manager. There is a named manager in charge and a named designated deputy. There is a total of nine adults working in the service which includes the registered providers. Eight adults working directly with the children hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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 one of the registered providers, 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.*

(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 was the designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise as required in the service.
- (b) The person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspectors arrived and remained for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or a deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.
- All nine staff files were reviewed which included the registered providers:
- (2)(a)&(b) Eighteen written validated references were on file from a past employer or reputable source for nine adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the nine adults working in the service. This was in adherence with the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Four adults worked outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months or more, while over the age of 18 years and had the required police vetting disclosure.
- (4) Eight adults who were working directly with the children, had evidence of an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education 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) On the morning of the inspection, there were 39 preschool children present with 7 adults working directly with, caring and supervising these children.
- In the afternoon, of the inspection, there were 17 children present being cared for by 7 adults.
- The person in charge and assisted with the administration duties of the inspection, acted as childcare relief and carried out cooking duties in the service kitchen.
- (2) The roster indicated that the adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the day.
- (8)(a) During the inspection indicated that more than two adults were on the premises when the preschool was operating.

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

19 (1) (a)

BASIC NEEDS:

- The snacks provided by parents consisted of a selection of sandwiches, fruit and yogurts. The hot meal of the day was chicken curry with rice and extra portions were offered to children.
- The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their snack in a relaxed and unhurried manner. Crockery and plates were given to children during snack times, laid out on age-appropriate low tables.
- Perishable items belonging to children were stored in the service fridge as per best practice.
- The children had access to a water station on a low-level table, which allowed them the opportunity to take a drink if thirsty in both the playrooms
- Children were observed washing their hands at appropriate times throughout the day and supervised by adults as required.
- Each child's privacy and dignity were preserved, while they were either toileted independently or with some assistance as required.
- Soft seating was available in both playrooms for children to relax and rest throughout the day. Children who required sleep had stackable beds and bed linen available.
- On the day of inspection, the children were observed playing in the outdoor area, in circle time, table top activities, imaginary and free play.

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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent a child gaining unsupervised access and unauthorised persons gaining access to the premises.
- The external outdoor play areas were secured by walls, fencing and gates so that unauthorised persons could not access or enter the area or children could not exit unsupervised.
- The door into the kitchen, staff toilet, storage areas and staff room had a system of security.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- The heating system was thermostatically controlled, to ensure the temperature was maintained between 18°C to 22°C.
- On the day of inspection, the water was thermostatically controlled with a temperature reading of 32.2°C to 42.7°C.
- Documented risk assessments for the playrooms and outdoor play areas were available for review.
- Cleaning products were out of child reach within each of the playrooms and in designated utility areas.

Infection Control:

- Adults encouraged and supervised the children to wash their hands before eating and following nappy changing, toileting, messy play, and outdoor play.
- Adequate liquid soap and paper towels were available at the wash hand basins in the sanitary areas.
- There was a designated nappy changing area, the nappy mat was intact and clean. The children's barrier creams were individually labelled. There was an airtight sealable foot operated lidded bin for the disposal of nappies in the nappy changing area. Adults wore disposable aprons when nappy changing as per best practice.
- The toys and play equipment were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in each of the playrooms.
- There were foot pedaled lidded bins in the sanitary areas and playrooms

Administration of Medication:

- Adults were able to demonstrate the process and documentation for the administration of medication.

Safe Sleep:

- Soft seating was available for children in each of the playrooms. Stackable beds with clean linen were available for children attending on a part-time basis.

Fire Safety:

- There was documented evidence that monthly fire drills are carried out in the service.

Outing:

- The registered provider stated that outings do not take place in 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) The registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid responder was rostered during the operation of the service. Two adults were trained and had in date first aid responder certification.
- (2) (a)&(b) A fully equipped first aid box was safely stored in one of the playrooms and was available to a preschool child during the operation of the service.