

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017GY506		
Name of Service:	EduZone		
Address of Service:	Bawnmore National School, Claregalway, Co. Galway		
Eircode:	H91 WY22		
Name of Registered Provider:	Caoilfhionn Casey		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	05/11/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM 7
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park Hospital, Galway.		
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel		
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

EduZone is an early years care and education establishment providing a range of services including part-time and sessional care. While registered for children aged 2-6 years of age, children currently attending are aged from 2 years 6 months to 6 years old. Opening hours are from 09:00 to 13:00, Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. There is a school age care service available from 08:00 to 08:50 in the morning and from 13:40 to 18:00 in the afternoon.

EduZone operates from a standalone modular unit located at the rear of Bawnmore National School, near Claregalway in county Galway. There is 1 large care room off which there are 2 children's sanitary facilities and a kitchen. The adult sanitary facilities and the children's changing area are located in the national school. There is an outdoor play area positioned at the rear of the service and car parking is available at the front of the service.

Staffing

There are 3 adults employed to work directly with the pre-school children, the registered provider does not work in the service. In addition, there is a contractor who carries out a weekly fitness and wellness programme 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 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 co-operation 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.

(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 registered provider ensured that there was a person in charge and a designated named person available to deputise as required.
 - (b) The staff roster indicated that both the person in charge and designated named person were on the premises while the early years children were present in the service.
- (2) Recruitment files of all 5 adults were reviewed:
- (a) All 10 validated references were from past employers.
 - (b) Not applicable as all references were from past employers.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 5 adults for whom they were required, demonstrating compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years.
 - (d) One police vetting disclosure was available on file for 1 adult for whom it was required who had lived

outside of Ireland as an adult for more than 6 consecutive months.

- (4) Staff files viewed on the day indicated that all 3 adults working directly with the early years children in the service had obtained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, ranging from Levels 5 to Level 8, 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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in attendance.
- (2) The minimum adult child ratios were met. There were 18 children in attendance with 3 staff members in the morning and 7 children in attendance with 3 staff members in the afternoon.
- (8)
- (a) The registered provider ensured that there were 2 adults on the premises while the early years children were present. The staff roster confirmed that the designated person in charge and the named person were on the premises while the early years children were present.

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, qualifications and experience of the registered provider, designated person in charge and staff were available from the staff recruitment files.
 - (b) Details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide was available on information supplied by the manager.
 - (c)-(f) Adult/child ratios, type of care programme and facilities and opening hours and fees were available on documentation furnished by the manager.
 - (g) The policies, procedures and statements required under Regulation 10 were available in the service's policies and procedures folder available in the service.

- (h) Details of attendance by each of the 18 early years children on the day of inspection were recorded in the attendance record book of the service. These records indicated that children attending from the 27 August 2025 to 5 November 2025 had been signed at 09:00 and were signed out by 13:30 by an adult in the service.
- (i) The staff roster was available in the reception area detailing staff attendance and also the times of lunch breaks.
- (j) While administration of medication forms were available none had been completed since 11 December 2024. The manager confirmed that no medication had been administered since the children started at the beginning of the new term in August 2025.
- (k) Accident/incident reports were viewed from 05/09/2025 to 22/10/2025 which indicated that all only 1 of 9 records contained the necessary details required.
- (3) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were open to review, on the premises, by the inspector.

Non-Compliance Information

- (k) Eight of 9 accident and incident reports did not contain the required information and the following elements were missing from these reports:
- Eight dates of birth
 - Four staff signatures
 - Two manager's signatures
 - Six parent signatures
- Not completing all of the details on the reports could compromise the wellbeing of the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The following statement was received from the manager;

(K)

The details required for the 8 records have been fully completed. Staff will ensure that all required information is completed and each record signed by staff, parents and the manager in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

(k)

Copies of the 8 records with the missing details completed for each child were received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the manager have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 16 (k).

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:

- The service promoted healthy eating and the food and snacks provided at regular intervals throughout the day were observed to be in line with the services healthy eating policy. Examples of snacks included brown bread, yogurts and bite sized pieces of fruit and vegetables while lunch consisted of pesto pasta, chicken and noodles.
- The tables were prepared with tablecloths and pot plants and each child had an individual plated to place their food.
- The children had access to individual water bottles in line with the service's healthy eating policy.
- Staff were observed sitting with the children engaging in social conversation while the children were eating and while they were engaged in tabletop activities.
- A rest quiet area was in use where the children were observed relaxing on bean bags and a vinyl sofa while sitting reading books between transitions.
- Children were observed playing in the outdoor area play throughout the morning with the various pieces of physical equipment. Staff stated they also have access to the basketball court and football pitch.
- Independence was encouraged and children were observed putting on and taking off their waterproof clothes and wellingtons. The adults were available to assist, where required and were noted to be patient and kind in their interactions with the children during these interactions.
- Children's toileting needs were attended to while they were playing indoors and outdoors. The adults accompanied the children to the sanitary area and assisted as requested by the children. Additional

equipment including children’s toilet seats and steps up were available to enable the children to toilet independently.

Supporting children’s relationships:

- A key person approach was in place in the service with named staff members assigned the responsibility for maintaining relationships with a designated group of children and their parents/guardians.
- A multi method framework was in use in the service parts of which were furnished to the inspector. These had been put together by the keyperson and were available for the inspector to view. The adults stated that they document each child’s individual interests and emergent curriculum throughout their time in the service and daily and weekly photographs, accompanied by observations, were sent to parents/guardians.
- Staff stated meetings with management occurred regularly and minutes of a meeting held in September 2025 were furnished to the inspector. These included topics such as behaviour management, self-care and term time holidays.
- Adults in the care room who were supervising children playing in both the indoor and outdoor areas, were observed to work well as a team. They were heard, on several occasions, discussing children’s individual needs and ensuring the children’s needs were met including those of a child who had recently started in the service.

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 main entrance/exit door to the service was secured preventing unauthorised adults from entering the service and children leaving unsupervised.
- The 5 window handles were placed out of reach of the children preventing children from exiting or falling from them.
- Handrails were visible on the ramp and steps providing support to the children entering and exiting the service.
- Toys and play equipment in the indoor and outdoor area appeared to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.

- Heavy storage equipment and furniture were anchored preventing tipping or falling.
- Flexes from the white board and electrical appliances were inaccessible to the children.
- The outdoor waste was stored behind locked gates, not accessible by the children.
- The oil tank in the outdoor area was secured with a concrete wall and metal fencing preventing children from entering the area.
- Cleaning agents were stored under the sink and were secured with a safety catch preventing children accessing unsafe areas.
- Safety tiles were placed under the slides and the hexagonal climbing frame helping to absorb the impact of any fall.
- The perimeter of the service was secured with both metal and wooden fencing. Gates in the area were secured with sliding bolts on the opposite side from the children rendering them inaccessible.

Infection Control:

- Sinks in use by the adults and children in the service were supplied with thermostatically controlled hot water, 28.9°C, dispensing foam soap and paper towels for hand drying. Pedal operated bins were available for the disposal of paper waste.
- Handwashing was observed in the service sanitary area before and after toileting, eating of food, messy activities and when coming in from playing in the outdoor play area.
- Both mechanical and natural ventilation were available in the sanitary area.
- Children's personal belongings were stored on a mobile trolley in the reception area away from the floor area.
- Children coming in from outdoors changed into their indoor shoes. They removed their waterproofs and wellies placing them on mobile trolleys off the floor area.
- The cleaning checklist in the care room was found to be up to date.

Administration of Medication:

- Temperature reducing medication stored in its original container and placed out of reach was available in the event of an emergency. The date of expiry was noted to be 11/2027.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep mats were available for any child wishing to rest or sleep. No children were observed sleeping in the service.

Fire Safety:

- The emergency fire door was unobstructed and fitted with a thumb twist cylinder providing a quick exit in the event of an emergency.
- Fire extinguishers were secured with brackets to the walls in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Perishable food belonging to the children was not stored in the service fridge, posing a risk of the food spoiling. The inspector observed the children removing perishable food from their bags during morning snack time at 10:45.
2. There was no sanitising spray available in the nappy changing area to clean the mat after use, as per the service nappy changing policy, posing a risk of cross infection. In conversation, the manager stated that the nappy changing area had only recently been in use and this was an oversight.
3. There was no hot water available in the wash hand basin of the nappy changing area to aid hygienic handwashing, the temperature of the water was recorded as 11.9°C. In conversation, the manager stated that this had previously been an issue and the school were aware of it.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The following statements were received from the manager;

1. Perishable food belonging to the children is now stored in the fridge in the service. Staff and parents/guardians have been informed that all perishable food will be stored in the fridge to prevent the food spoiling.
2. Sanitising equipment has been placed in the nappy changing room in the school to prevent the risk of cross infection.
3. In consultation with the school hot water is now available in the nappy changing area for hygienic handwashing.

Supporting documentation submitted:

The following photographs and statements were received in the office of the inspectorate from the manager-

1. A photograph of the perishable food now stored in the fridge.
2. A photograph of the box of sanitising equipment including disposable gloves and sanitising spray.
3. The statement from the manager that hot water is available in the nappy changing area has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the manager have addressed the non-compliances 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) A First Aid Responder (FAR) certificate was available to evidence that 1 adult had FAR training completed.

The staff roster indicated that the adult was on the premises while the early years children were present in the service.

(2) (a)(b) The well-equipped first aid box, stored within easy access of the adults, was available at all times.