

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018GY514
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Name of Service:	Spraoui Early Learning Centre
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Address of Service:	Stradbally North, Clarinbridge, Co. Galway.
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Eircode:	H91 DP7K
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Name of Registered Provider:	Theresa Murphy
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	17/02/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	46	PM	46
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan and A. Mc Carthy.
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
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Description of service

Spraoi Early Learning Centre is a privately owned childcare service in Clarinbridge, county Galway. The service offers a full day, part time and sessional programme of care from Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00. The programme of care is facilitated for children ranging in age from 0 to 6 years of age. The service has five playrooms and four playrooms were in operation during the inspection. The service has three designated sleep rooms and a kitchen where the hot meals prepared in another service are reheated. There is also a designated utility, staff kitchen and dining area in a separate building. A secure outdoor play area for children's play, exploration and exercise during the day is located to the rear and side of the building.

Staffing

There were eleven adults which included the manager working directly with the children in the service. After the inspector's arrival the area manager arrived and assisted with the inspection. The registered provider was not present and does not work in the service.

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.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 registered 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 manager was the adult in charge and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b) The manager and an adult to deputise were available throughout the inspection.

Thirteen adult files were reviewed including the area manager and registered providers:

(2)(a) Twenty-three of the required 26 written and validated references were from past employers were available.

(b) Three of the required 26 written and validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 13 adults working in the service.

(d) International police vetting was available for nine adults working in the service who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months.

(4) Eleven adults working directly with the children and the area manager held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging at Level 5 and 8 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) The ratio of adults caring for children was maintained in the care rooms. Eleven adults cared for the 46 children attending the service in the morning and 11 adults cared for 46 children in the afternoon.
- (8)(a) The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available on the premises during the operation of the service.

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)

BASIC NEEDS

- The healthy eating policy and a three-week menu was available for parents and guardians. The food observed was healthy and nutritious. The snacks were supplied by parents and consisted of cheese, crackers, sandwiches, brown bread, yogurts and fruit pieces. The main hot meal was served between 12.10 and 12.45.
- Drinks tables with water beakers or bottles were available for children to self-serve in the playrooms and in the outdoor play area, when required.
- Age-appropriate crockery and plates were offered and used during children's meals and snack times.
- Most of the children were toilet trained and either toileted independently or with some assistance by adults when required.
- Children who wore nappies were changed on an individual basis and each child's dignity was preserved.
- The children were observed washing their hands before eating their morning snack, dinner, after toileting, nappy changing, after messy play and outdoor play. Hand washing was supervised by the adults.
- In each of the playrooms, the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couches, in designated cosy areas.
- The children showing signs of tiredness were given the opportunity to sleep on demand.

- Children’s behaviour was consistently managed in a positive manner by the adults, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement and encouragement.
- The children could move about freely in the interest areas in their playrooms.
- All children had the opportunity to go outside for fresh air and play activities. Children were appropriately dressed while playing in the outdoor area.

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 door into the pre-school was secured to prevent unauthorised access by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- The external outdoor play area was secured by a high wall and gates so that unauthorised persons could not access or enter the area, or children could not exit unsupervised.
- All cleaning agents and equipment were kept inaccessible and out of children’s reach.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Blinds cords were secured by fasteners and thereby inaccessible to a pre-school child.

Infection Control:

- The designated nappy changing areas had clean intact changing mats and a leak proof self-sealing pedal bin for the disposal of nappies.
- The children’s belongings for nappy changing were individually labelled. The children’s barrier creams were clearly individually labelled within their designated nappy changing area.
- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towel were available for effective hand washing.

Administration of Medication:

- Parental consent was sought and available for prescription and non-prescription medications given to the children in attendance.
- The adults advised that they had a system for regularly checking expiry dates.
- Medication for children attending the service was within expiry date and stored as per manufacturer’s instructions.

- The correct method of recording medication administered was in line with best practice and the service policy.
- Medication was kept in line with manufacturer's instructions and out of reach of the children.

• **Safe Sleep:**

- There were nine cots in total available in the designated sleep rooms for children under two years of age and stackable beds and sleep beds were available for children over the age of two years of age.
- Physical sleep checks were recorded every 10 minutes in line with the service policy and best practice.

Fire Safety:

- The service carried out monthly fire drills.
- The fire exit routes, and fire assembly points were readily identified with clear and illuminated signage.

Outing:

- The area manager stated that the service did not conduct outings.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The fire exit passageway at the end of the corridor adjacent to the Hippos room was partially obstructed. A clothes horse was placed in the fire exit passageway. This posed as a risk in the event of a fire. It was acknowledged that this was rectified during the inspection.

Infection Control:

2. There was a strong malodour in the nappy changing area next to the Hippo room. The mechanically operated ventilation appeared to not be working.

Administration of Medication:

3. Three of the five administration of medication records that were reviewed since the last inspection were not signed by the parents after the medication was administered. This posed as a potential safety risk to a child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response that:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The clothes horse will not block the fire exit again a new clothes drier is now in place. This clothes drier was delivered on the day of the inspection as the previous one had broken the previous week. We will ensure that fire exists are kept clear.

Infection Control:

2. The mechanical ventilation system has been fixed to eliminate odour build up.

Administration of Medication:

3. The forms were signed at pick up the day of the inspection. It has been reinforced that the person in charge at the time of drop off or pick up is to ensure all medication is signed in and out each day.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence.

Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence.

Administration of Medication:

3. Documented evidence.

Summary Comment

1, 2 and 3 - The evidence submitted was reviewed by the Early Years Inspectors and has been deemed to have met the regulatory requirements 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) Two adults had a record of up to date First Aid Response (FAR) training and were available on the premises on the day.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available in the kitchen.

(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 firefighting 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 02 February 2025.
- (b) Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the fire-fighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service date recorded for the fire-fighting equipment was 18 October 2024 and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 18 October 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

The service had adequate insurance for 56 children on a full day care basis and was valid until the 27 March 2025.