

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2018GY516				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cairde Early Learning Centre				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	55 A, Cuirt na hAbhann, Claregalway, Co Galway				
<b>Eircode:</b>	H91 NY95				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Noreen Murphy				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	26/08/2025				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>23</td> <td>PM</td> <td>23</td> </tr> </table>	AM	23	PM	23
AM	23	PM	23		
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child & Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - 1st Floor, Merlin Park University Hospital, Galway.				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	B. Lavin and E. Friel				
<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

This privately owned full day care service opened in early 2019 and while registered to open from 07:30 to 18:00, current opening hours are from 07:30 to 17:30, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year. The Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) is facilitated between the hours of 09:30 and 12:30. It caters for children aged from 1 to 6 years. The service has 3 playrooms: 2 on the ground floor and 1 on the first floor, a designated sleep room, a kitchen, office and sanitary facilities. There are enclosed outdoor play areas with play equipment provided for the children on the premises.

### Staffing

There are 8 staff employed in the service. The registered provider 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.

On inspection an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 8. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

### Additional Information

26/08/2025

An immediate action notice regarding the high temperature in the sleep room was issued by the Early Years Inspectorate to the registered provider on the 26/08/2025.

27/08/2025

The registered provider submitted a response to the Early Years Inspectorate in relation to the immediate action notice which was accepted. On the 27/08/2025 the registered provider submitted evidence of a dual function cooler fan as a temporary measure to ensure that room temperatures remain between 18 – 22°C. On the 01/09/2025 the registered provider submitted evidence of an air conditioning unit installed in the sleep room which will ensure that the sleep room temperatures remain between 18 – 22°C.

A referral was made to the fire officer on 02/09/2025 in relation to the maximum number of 20 children allowed in the first-floor playroom which was found to be non-compliant.

### 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 II - Registration and Register

### Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.*

### Non-Compliance Information

(8)(1) The service was found to be operating outside of its registration status and planning. The following details were recorded:

The service was registered to accommodate 38 children. A sample of records from 25 May 2025 to 27 June 2025 indicated that there were 42 children present in the service. This was also documented as a non-compliance on the last inspection report on 14 October 2022 in which it was noted that a change of circumstances form had been submitted to the registration office on 27/10/2022, however this had never been finalised.

Operating outside registration status could potentially compromise the safety and wellbeing of the children attending the service.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The registered provider will only allow a maximum of 38 children within the service. The registered provider will ensure by monitoring the number of children that the number of children in attendance will not exceed the registered amount.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Attendance records submitted by the registered provider demonstrate adherence to the maximum number of children approved within the service.

### **Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on 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 register provider ensured that there was a person in charge, which was the area manager and a named person available to deputise, as required.

(b) The person in charge facilitated the administrative elements of the inspection and the deputy was observed working directly with the children while they were present in the service.

(2) Recruitment files for all 9 adults were reviewed:

- (a) Thirteen of the 18 validated references were from past employers.
- (b) The remaining 5 validated references were from sources other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all 9 adults, demonstrating compliance with the Early Years

Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years.

- (d) Two international police vetting disclosures were available for 2 staff members who had lived outside of the state as adults for more than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) There was evidence that 7 of the 8 adults working directly with the children had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications and one adult had a letter of temporary qualification recognition from The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).

### 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.*
- 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.
- (2) The adult/child ratios were met.  
  
There were 7 adults working directly with 23 early years children in the morning and 7 adults working with 23 early years children in the afternoon.
- (8)(a) The staff roster indicated that the registered provider ensured that there were 2 adults on the premises while the early years children were attending 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:*

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (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, area manager, deputy manager and of all other employees were available on file.
- (h) The attendance records for each child were available on attendance record books for each playroom. These indicated that children were signed in after the opening time of 07:30 and out before the closing time of 17:30.
- (i) The staff roster was furnished to the inspectors on arrival which detailed each staff members hours of work, break times and relief staff.
- (k) A sample of 12 accident, incident, injury reports were reviewed from each of the 3 playrooms; these were noted to have all the required information completed.
- (3) The records referred to in paragraph (1) (a), (h), (i) and (k) were open to inspectors on the premises.

## 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

- Drinking water was available to all children in individual beakers throughout the day.
- Children were supported during mealtimes with feeding when needed. Independence was encouraged with self-help skills.
- Children sat at a table and chairs or highchairs which were appropriate for their height and or stage of development.
- The staff were observed sitting at the child's level and chatted in a respectful manner.
- Nappy changing was carried out regularly and promptly when required. Staff members were observed speaking to children during this time and using it as an opportunity for social interaction.
- The individual sleep needs of younger children were met. This was observed on the day by children sleeping at various intervals. Older preschool children were facilitated with a scheduled rest period in the afternoon. For children who did not require a sleep, appropriate rest facilities were available in the care rooms and children were observed spending time in this area for short periods of rest throughout the day.
- Children in the wobbler room were observed to be free to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up and learn to walk in a safe space.
- Children in the older care rooms had easy access to the outside area throughout the day and children moved freely between the indoor and outdoor areas.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions.

#### Supporting relationships

- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. The inspector observed a child receiving comfort in the wobbler room when they woke from their nap. The staff member offered reassurance and communicated using soft gentle tones.

- In the care room's staff supported children to engage positively with one another and the children were encouraged to engage in play activities that required turn taking and sharing. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them, which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together.
- The service had a designated childcare application with interactive communication with parents and guardians. There was a section with photographs and a description of the child engaged in activities. Staff observations, a child's milestones and individual learning stories were captured. The childcare application showed details of sleep provisions, meals, nappy changing/toileting, special activities, each child's likes, needs and preferences and general observations and comments.

### 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:

- An electronically operated system was in place at the entrance door to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility
- The outdoor areas were secured with fencing and gates to protect the children within.
- Medication and cleaning agents were stored in a secured area out of reach of the children.
- The blind cords were appropriately secured to the windows throughout the service.
- Internal doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from accessing unsafe areas and the outdoor areas unsupervised.

##### Infection Control:

- Warm water was available in all hand washing basins with temperatures ranging from 30.9°C to 35.9°C.
- Paper towel, liquid soap and lidded bins were available at the hand basins and sanitary areas in the service.
- The service was maintained in a clean condition.
- Perishable food items in the children's lunches were stored in the service fridge.
- Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with designated cloth towels/disposal paper towels and disinfectant spray.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playrooms.

### Administration of Medication:

- The inspector observed that medication was administered to a child in line with the service's administration of medication policy. In conversation, the staff demonstrated that they were aware of the correct procedures for the storage and administration of medicines.

### Safe Sleep:

- Adequate numbers of cots were available for the children who required cots for sleeping.
- Individual floor mats were available for the children over 2 years who required a nap.

### Fire Safety:

- The emergency exit route was observed to be free from obstruction during the inspection.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Safe Sleep:

- The temperatures of the toddler sleep room were not maintained and kept at temperatures of between 18°C and 22°C. The following temperatures were recorded throughout the session, when the toddler sleep room was in use. At 1.05 pm with 9 children aged between 2 and 3 years sleeping in the room the recorded temperature was 24.6°C. At 2.37pm with 1 child aged between 2 and 3 years sleeping in the room the recorded temperature was 23.9°C. This posed a safety risk to the children.

#### Fire Safety:

- A sample of records from 25 May 2025 to 27 June 2025 indicated that there were 22 children present in the playroom on the first floor. Galway fire department had conditions attached to the fire certificate stating that "no more than 20 children who are not sleeping to be accommodated on the first floor ". In conversation, the area manager stated that it was planned that 22 children would be accommodated in the playroom in the new term posing a safety risk to the children.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Safe Sleep:

On the 27/08/2025 the registered provider submitted evidence of a dual function cooler fan as a temporary measure to ensure that room temperatures remain between 18 – 22°C. On the 01/09/2025 the registered provider submitted evidence of an air conditioning unit installed in the sleep room which will ensure that the sleep room temperatures remain between 18 – 22°C for children aged over 12 months.

##### Fire Safety:

The number of children who will be accommodated in the playroom on the first floor has been reduced to 20 children.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Safe Sleep:

Photographic evidence of an air conditioning unit installed in the sleep room was submitted to the Inspectorate.

##### Fire Safety:

Copies of the number of children in each room were submitted to the Inspectorate which evidenced that there was a maximum of 20 children in the upstairs playroom, complying with fire conditions.

#### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance's found on inspection.

### 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

(2)(b) Two fixed first aid boxes were available in both the upstairs office and downstairs reception area of the service, which were easily accessible to the adults while the early years children were present in the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1) Documentation available in the form of the staff roster and the First Aid Responder (FAR) certificates on file indicated that there was no FAR trained person available in the service from 07:30 to 09:30 on the morning of inspection, posing a safety risk to the children. It was acknowledged that 2 FAR trained adults were available from 09:30 and that a person with Paediatric First Aid was available at 07:30.
- (2)(b) The inspectors observed the following which could potentially compromise the care of the children in the service:
- There was no sterile water in either fixed first aid box in the office or in the reception area.
  - A total of 6 out of date triangular bandages were found; 4 in the upstairs first aid box with expiry dates of 2020-03 and 2 in the downstairs first aid box with expiry dates of 2024.
  - Insufficient quantities of antiseptic wipes. There was only 1 antiseptic wipe available in the service.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) The staff roster has been adjusted to ensure a First Aid Responder trained staff member is on site during the service operational hours. An additional third staff member has been enrolled in the training course.
- (2) (b) The required first aid contents have been replaced and a new daily checklist is in place to monitor the contents of the first aid kit.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographs of the renewed first aid supplies were received by the inspectorate and the statement has been accepted.

#### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance's found on inspection.

## 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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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) The inspector observed that written records were available of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service. The record of the most recent fire drill was dated 03/07/2025 with previous dates including 10/06/2025 and 27/05/2025.
- (b) Written records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service along with the smoke alarms. Both certificates were dated August 2025.
- (2)(c) Both the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm records were open to review on the premises on the day of inspection.
- (4) The notice of the evacuation procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were located throughout the building on the walls.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service was insured. Written records were furnished to the inspector which included the following details:

- The name, address and contact details of the insurance company
- The name and address of the service
- The number of children for whom the service is insured: 47
- The type of service: Full Day Care

Expiry date: 27 March 2026.