

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018KE515			
Name of Service:	Inspire Child Development Centre			
Address of Service:	Naas Racecourse, Tipper Road, Naas, Co. Kildare			
Eircode:	W91 RX72			
Name of Registered Provider:	Nicola Erasmus			
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	27/01/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	5	PM	n/a
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Rd, Naas, Co Kildare			
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Brien			
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	N/A			

Description of service

Inspire Child Development Centre is a privately owned part-time service which provides care to children aged 3 to 6 years on the autistic spectrum. The service is registered to operate from 09:00 to 13:00, Monday to Friday. On the day of inspection, the service was operating a morning session from 08:00 to 12:00 and an afternoon session from 12:30 to 16:30.

The service operates from a purpose built, ground floor premises on the grounds of Naas racecourse. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area located to the side of the building.

Staffing

The service currently employs six staff. There were five staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection including the registered provider.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

8 (1)(3) – Notification of change in circumstances,

9 (1)(a)(b),(2),(3),(4) – Management and recruitment,
11 (1),(2),(8)(a) – Staffing levels,
19 (1)(a)(b) – Health, welfare and development of child,
23 – Safeguarding, health, safety and welfare of child,
25 – First aid,
26 – Fire safety measures.

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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.

(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a 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), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(3)

The registered provider did not notify the agency in advance of implementing changes to the service's registered details. The service is currently registered to operate a part-time service from 09:00 to 13:00. On the day of inspection, the registered provider confirmed that the service operates an afternoon part-time service from 12:30 to 16:30. The service has also changed their morning service hours to 08:00 to 12:00.

This non-compliance was present on the last inspection on 20th January 2022. The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider did not prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

An email with the change in circumstances form was sent to cic.eji@tusla.ie. We received confirmation of change in circumstances on the 24/02/25 that the changes had been approved.

The registered provider will always ensure that the agreed circumstances of operation are correct in terms of administration and operation.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.

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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)(b)

The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required who were both on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

The files of six adults were reviewed as part of the inspection including one adult who commenced working in the service since the last inspection on 22nd January 2022. Documentation was reviewed in respect of these adults and met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b)

Of the 12 validated, written references that were required, 11 were available from a past employer and 1 was available from a reputable source.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for six adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was required and was available for three staff members who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding six months as an adult.

(4)

Records were available evidencing that five staff members who were employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or equivalent. One staff member held a letter of eligibility to practice from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA).

Non-Compliance Information

9(3)

The registered provider did not take appropriate measures to ensure that all adults were suitable to work in an early years service prior to their commencement. Two references in respect of one adult were not validated prior to the adult commencing employment. The adult commenced working in the service on 9th September 2024 and both references had been validated on 17th September 2024.

9(4)

On the day of inspection, there was no evidence available to show that one adult who was employed to work directly with the children in the service held a relevant major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications.

This non-compliance was present on the last inspection on 22nd January 2022. The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider did not prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

9(3)

Since this was an error post the fact according to Regulation 9(3), no immediate corrective action could be taken. However, preventative measures will be put in place immediately.

Once highlighted to the person in charge, immediate preventative measures were put in place in accordance with the service's policies and procedures on recruitment. This was highlighted to the deputy manager too. In accordance with policies and procedures of the service, no staff member will commence without prior official validation of references.

9(4)

The staff member has since left the service due to early maternity leave. She will not be returning. Preventative action has been maintained since the last report as no more staff have been employed unless they have a level 5 childcare/ equivalent to be able to work with children 0-5yrs in Ireland.

Supporting documentation submitted

No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address these non-compliances.

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)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children for part-time services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were five children attending the service being supervised by five adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times.

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

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The registered provider reported that children bring their lunch in from home. Lunch took place at 10:00 and staff were observed sitting with children during their meal. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the inspection and children had a drink with their meal.

The service had a key person system in place and staff demonstrated a good awareness of the individual needs of each child and responded to children's cues promptly. Staff displayed warmth and sensitivity during all interactions with the children throughout the inspection. Staff were observed to use distraction, gentle tones and praise when promoting positive behaviour in line with the service's behaviour policy. Staff provided an appropriate level of supervision whilst supporting the children's independence during play and lunch time. The atmosphere in the service appeared calm and relaxed.

The individual needs of children were catered for on the day of inspection. A child who was observed to be unsettled in the care room was brought to the outdoor play area by a member of staff where they were observed to be more relaxed. Children's language development was supported, staff were observed encouraging children to communicate throughout the inspection.

Staff described how they communicate with parents daily about their child at arrival and collection time and using an online application. Staff stated that regular meetings are held with parents to review children's progress. Staff were observed to work well as a team, frequently communicating with each other in relation to the daily routine and children's needs.

The care room was bright and was arranged into defined areas of interest providing children with the freedom to play and explore. Designated areas of interest included arts and crafts materials, a home corner, a ball pool and soft play area, small world toys, construction toys, sensory play materials and a rest area and library. The care room provided a range of developmentally appropriate play experiences for the children and was adequately resourced with a variety of materials.

The environment was laid out to support the children's independence. Play materials were observed to be accessible to the children on low level shelving. Low level tables and chairs were available in the care room. The service also has a sensory room which was accessible to children throughout the inspection.

There was a fully enclosed outdoor play area with shock absorbent surfacing to the side of the premises. A range of developmentally appropriate play equipment was available to the children in this area. All children accessed the outdoor area on the day of inspection.

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 to the service was adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children within and to avoid unauthorised persons accessing the service or children exiting unsupervised.
- Hand sanitisers and cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.
- All storage facilities were inaccessible to children.
- The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection appeared in good working order.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, warm water and paper towels were available to facilitate hand washing. Staff were observed to carry out hand washing as appropriate. The children were supported to wash their hands at regular intervals including before meals.

- An infection control policy was in place to inform practice. The premises, equipment and materials appeared clean and maintained in good condition.
- Waste was managed appropriately with the use of pedal bins.

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 person trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times on the day of inspection.

(2)

(a) A first aid box was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the room.

(b) A first aid box was available to the adults and children in the service at all times.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a)

A written record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had taken place on 13th January 2025.

(b)

The number, type and maintenance record of the smoke alarms on the premises was available. There was a record to show that quarterly maintenance of the smoke alarm system had taken place on 10th January 2025.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

There was no record available to demonstrate that regular maintenance of the fire fighting equipment had taken place.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The Naas Racecourse manages the compliance of fire safety equipment and it is inspected regularly. Evidence that is supplied by the fire company Firestop from January 2025 submitted.

Preventative action will be taken by management to always ensure that a more detailed and certificate type of fire inspection report is given on the fire equipment in the service after each inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written evidence was presented to demonstrate the corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have been deemed to address this non-compliance.