

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020CN003		
Name of Service:	Angels Nest Creche		
Address of Service:	Ashford Downs, Grandard Street, Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan		
Eircode:	A82W5K6		
Name of Registered Provider:	Cynthia McAuley		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date(s) of Inspection:	02/09/2024		
No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM 24
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	AM Cunningham & D Murray		
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		

Description of service

Angels Nest Creche is a privately operated Early Years' Service located in a housing estate in Ballyjamesduff Co. Cavan which opened in 2020. The childcare centre is one of two childcare services managed by the registered provider. The childcare service provides full day care, part time and a sessional service to children aged from 2 to 6 years. A school aged service is also provided. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and operates from 08.00am to 6.00pm.

Staffing

The registered provider is not involved in the day to day running of the service and was not present for the inspection. The designated person in charge was present and facilitated the inspection. The service employs eleven adults which includes the manager, assistant manager, six childcare practitioners, two staff members who care for school aged children only and one staff employed in the kitchen. All staff members were available on the day of inspection.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation 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, 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.

(6A) Paragraph (4) shall not apply to an employee of a registered provider where - (a) the registered provider receives funding for the employment of the employee pursuant to a scheme funded by the Minister and known as the Access and Inclusion Model, and (b) the employment of the employee is for the purpose of providing support, pursuant to the scheme referred to in subparagraph (a), for a child attending the service to enable the child to participate in the programme known as the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) funding Programme."

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Twenty-two validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 11 staff. 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 available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(6) (a) One staff member was employed under the scheme known as the Access and Inclusion Model.

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 was, a manager, assistant manager, 6 childcare staff working directly with the 34 children attending the service.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity:

The **Toddler** room: had 1 adult providing care to 3 children ranging in age from 2 years to 2 years and 7 months. All children were attending on a full day care basis.

In **Preschool 1**: room 3 adults providing care to 15 children ranging in age from 3 years to 5 years. Eight children were attending on a full day care basis while 7 children were attending on a sessional basis.

In **Preschool 2** room: 1 adult providing care and education to 6 children ranging in age from 3 to 4 years, 5 children were attending on a full day care basis with 1 child attending on a sessional basis.

In **Preschool 3** room: 2 adults providing care and education to 10 children ranging in age from 2 years to 3 years, 8 children were attending on a full day care basis and two children were attending a sessional service.

The manager was available to provide relief to the rooms as needed.

(8) (a) According to the staff roster 2 adults were present 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,

Compliance Information

1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- All children's individual needs were met with additional care, attention and supervision given as required. Children rotated between their care rooms and the outdoor spaces during the day.
- Staff members were observed changing children's nappies regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Older children were encouraged to become independent and self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development which included using the toilet, hand washing, caring for their belongings and tidying away after activities and play.
- Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. In the Pre-school rooms 1&2 the children enjoyed tabletop activities, art and crafts and listening to the staff members reading stories and singing songs with lots of conversation overheard. In the Toddler and Preschool Room 3 room staff were helping children to settle in doing art work "My Day at Preschool", children sat at circle time and staff introduced the children to each other and sang songs to help the children settle in for example children enjoyed singing, "say hello to".
- The staff members sat and chatted with the children at mealtimes, helping the children when required whilst encouraging conversation and extending interactions. Children availing of rest time went to sleep at the scheduled sleep time after dinner in Preschool Room 3 Room.

- Transitions were handled smoothly with children being given ample time to complete one activity before starting the next.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Children and parents were greeted at drop off and collection with friendly conversation overheard.
- Staff always used nice soft tones when interacting with the children. Children who became upset were comforted and always reassured, they sought out staff and staff responded warmly. Children were just settling in and staff were very aware to provide comfort and support to the children and used strategies such as transitioned the children into the service by gradually increasing their hours and working in conjunction with the parents/guardians.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

Compliance Information

1)(a) Adequate facilities were available for the children to play indoors. A large outdoor space was available to the rear of the premises which was divided into 2 areas with age-appropriate play materials in both areas. An additional outdoor space was located to the front of the premises, however this space was not in use on the day of inspection. Partially sheltered areas permitted outdoor play in all types of weather.

(b) Cosy areas consisting of mats and cushions were available if a child needed to take a break from activities and rest. Children who were 2 years of age were accommodated to sleep on stackable beds in Preschool 3 room. Each child had access to their own bed linen.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The play materials and play equipment in the care rooms were visible and easily accessible to the children on open shelving at their height which supported children to have choices in selecting materials and equipment to play with. Tables and chair were appropriate to the age and stage of development of pre-school children attending the specific care rooms. The care rooms were resourced and had areas of interest with supporting equipment, art and crafts and a range of suitable toys.
- Equipment in the outdoor spaces included ride on toys, play houses, mud kitchen, wooden activity unit with a slide and swings, digging pit and pouring wall.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The service had a 3-week menu plan with a selection of meals and a variety of snacks. For the children attending the service on a full day care basis, morning snack is at 10am which children take in from home. Mid-morning snack between 11.45 and 12.15pm which consisted of sausage rolls and apples with water. The main meal was served at 2.30pm which consisted of fish fingers, spaghetti and mashed potato. Water was the drink of choice with individual bottles/cups for the children in the care rooms.

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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The main door to the service was secured and the outdoor spaces were enclosed with walls and gates. These security measures ensured that a child did not exit unsupervised and restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service and outdoor spaces.
- All play materials were placed on stable based shelving units. Play materials and equipment were observed to be safe and suitable for the developmental age of the pre-school children present in the service.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand washing policy and nappy changing policy were implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- Cleaning schedules were maintained on a daily basis.

Fire Safety:

The following fire safety measures were observed:

- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) A record was kept of each child's time of arrival and departure on a daily basis by the staff members.

(3) A system was in place to ensure that no person other than the children's parents / guardians, employees or authorised visitors can enter the pre-school. A visitor's book was maintained, there was evidence that visitors were requested to record their attendance.

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 service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises

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

(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) A written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 10/07/2024.

(b) A record was maintained of the mains powered smoke alarms and firefighting equipment on the premises. The mains powered smoke alarms were last serviced on the 12/08/2024. The firefighting equipment was last serviced 14/08/2024.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured for 65 children at any one time attending for full day care. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28th March 2024 to the 27th March 2025.