

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2020GY004
Name of Service:	Wonders Years Educate Together
Address of Service:	Educate Together National School, Lakeview, Claregalway, Co. Galway.
Eircode:	H91 F5EH
Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine O' Connor
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
Date of Inspection:	23/01/2024
No of pre-school children:	AM 17 PM 8
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Co. Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Meehan
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
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Description of service

This part time service is in a converted classroom in the Educate Together national school in Claregalway, Co. Galway. The preschool offers an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care programme from between 9 am to 12 pm and part time care programme from 9 am to 2 pm. Additionally there is a breakfast club from 8 am to 8.45 pm and an afterschool programme from 2 pm to 6 pm for school-aged children. The service comprises of a large playroom, sanitary facilities and they also have access to a library and an outdoor play area.

Staffing

The registered provider is on the premises daily. There is a named person in charge and a named designated deputy. On the day of inspection, there were 3 adults which included the registered provider on the premises. Three adults work directly with the children and hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 regulations 9, 11, 19, 25,26 and 28. 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.

Additional Information

23/01/2024

An Immediate Action Notice was issued under Regulation 9(2)(c), a mandatory vetting disclosure was not available for 1 adults working in the service contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

23/01/2024

The service manager responded to say that the 1 adult without vetting disclosures would not be rostered to work directly with children until vetting is received and a copy of these vetting disclosures will be forwarded to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate when the service receives them.

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 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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The registered provider was on the premises when the early years inspector on site for the duration of the inspection. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, at all times when the pre-school children were present.

(2)(a)&(b) Six of the validated references on file in respect of 3 adults were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 2 of the 3 adults.

(d) Documentary evidence indicated that no adult lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years and therefore did not require police vetting.

- (4) The three adults held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a minimum of Level 5, in Early Childhood Care and education.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was not available for 1 adult working directly with children. On the 23/01/2024, an immediate action notice was issued to the service by Early Years Inspectorate for the 1 adult without garda vetting contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated in their response that:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The outstanding Garda vetting has been received by the service and in future they will ensure all vetting procedures are carried out prior to an adult working directly with children.

Supporting documentation submitted

On the 02/02/2024 the registered provider submitted photographic evidence of the outstanding Garda vetting.

Summary Comment

The photographic evidence was reviewed by Inspectorate and it has been deemed to have met the regulatory requirements of this part of the regulations.

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 preschool attendance records and roster for the previous 3 weeks were reviewed and indicated that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children. On the day of inspection, the adult and child ratio were correct and maintained.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to, during the inspection.
- On the morning of the inspection, there was 17 preschool children being directly cared for by 2 adults.
- 17 children were aged 3 to 4 years.
- In the afternoon of the inspection, 8 preschool children being directly cared for by 2 staff.
- 8 children were aged 3 to 4 years.
- (8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 staff were on the premises during the operating hours 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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(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

19 (1) (a) and (b)

BASIC NEEDS:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and the food observed was healthy and nutritious. The service had a rolling snack system in place for children, the snacks provided by parent and guardians consisted of a selection of sandwiches, fruit and yogurts.
- The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their snack in a relaxed and unhurried manner. Crockery and plates were given to children during snack times, laid out on low tables in the outdoor play area.
- The children had access to a water station on a low-level table, that allowed them the opportunity to take a drink if thirsty.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.
- Children were either toileted independently or with some assistance as required. All children were toilet trained that were in attendance on the day of inspection.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couches, in a designated rest and relaxation area, in the playroom. Stackable beds were available for children attending on a part time care basis.
- On the day of inspection, the children were observed playing a variety of special interest areas in the playroom, circle time, working together in small and large groups. The children went to the library in the school to read and book which allowed the children to engage, talk about the story and share their thoughts on the book.

- There was a large outdoor area with clearly defined interests and the service also had the use of the hall in inclement weather.

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 did provide evidence that 2 adults were trained in first aid responder for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. There were 3 adults present on the day with a first aid responder in date cert.

(2)(a) The first aid box was accessible and in a conspicuous position in the playroom.

(b) The first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school 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 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 monthly fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was dated 13th of December 2024.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service dated 1st February 2023.
- The smoke and fire detection alarm system for the premises had the last annual service was dated the 14th of December 2024.
- (4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire 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 service had insurance for up to 22 preschool children and was valid to the 27/03/2024.