

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022DS002
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Name of Service:	Nexus Preschool
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Address of Service:	72 Rokeby Park, Lucan, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K78 N9E5
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Name of Registered Provider:	Therese Noonan
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	22/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Loughlinstown Health Centre, Loughlinstown Drive, Loughlinstown, County Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	O Quill
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 private childcare service is registered to provide part-time care for children aged three to six years. The service exclusively provides care for autistic children and offers two part-time sessions from 9am until 1pm and an afternoon session from 1pm until 5pm.

The service operates from a purposefully adapted building over two floors in a residential area of Dublin southwest. Care of the children was provided across two care rooms named the Panda room on the ground floor and the Cheetah room on the first floor. A third room on the ground floor named the Gross motor room was available to allow children to have movement breaks and a separate sensory room was provided. An enclosed outdoor area which has an artificial grass covering and a variety of outdoor play equipment and materials are provided in this outdoor space.

Staffing

There were twelve adults employed including relief staff. The person in charge did not work directly with the children but was available to provide additional support as required. 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.

Compliance was assessed under the following regulations:

9(1)(a)(b), (2) (a)-(d) and (4) Management and Recruitment,
11(1), (2) and (8)(a) Staffing Levels,
19(1)(b) Health, Welfare and Development of Child,
23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of Child,
25 (1), (2)(a), (b) First aid
26 (1)(a), (b) and (4) Fire Safety

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 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)(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 inspection included a review of files for nine new adults who commenced working in the service since the last inspection. Garda vetting was reviewed for all adults employed in the service.

(a) Eighteen written validated references were available from a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for twelve adults employed in the service. The Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for three adults who had lived outside Ireland for longer than six months.

(4) Records were available evidencing that six adults employed to work directly with the children held the required qualification or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Three adults who were employed to work with the pre-school children did not have a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications. This non-compliance was found on the last inspection on the 09 March 2023. The corrective and preventive actions provided at the time have not address the non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) Immediate corrective measures have been implemented to ensure full compliance with regulations regarding staff qualifications in early years services. Applications have been submitted to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) for recognition of relevant qualifications held by staff members.

The service acknowledges the complexity of aligning qualification requirements between the Department of Education and Tusla within ASD-specific settings. To ensure sustained compliance and continuity of high-quality care, the organisation is actively engaging with both regulatory bodies to clarify and align expectations in relation to staff qualifications for ASD units.

A comprehensive review of staffing structures, qualification verification processes, and recruitment criteria is underway. Future recruitment and workforce planning will prioritise candidates who hold both a DCEDIY recognised early years education qualification and the relevant qualifications required by the Department of Education. Ongoing professional development will be provided to all staff to maintain compliance and enhance the quality of provision for children within the ASD unit.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of applications submitted to Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has taken action to verify staff qualifications. However, to date no evidence has been submitted to confirm if staff qualifications are accepted as meeting the minimum requirement. The Regulatory requirement has not been met.

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 was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were eleven children attending being supervised by eight adults on the day of inspection.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two adults to be on the premises at all times of opening.

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-

(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

(1)(b)

The inspector observed appropriate and suitable care practices within the service. Parents provide lunch for their children. Lunchtime was not rushed children were given time to eat their food and staff sat with children during this time and engaged in conversation. Children's individual water bottles were available in the care rooms and children were offered drinks with their lunch and in the outdoor area. Transitions between activities were managed well by staff. In the Cheetah room staff gave children advanced notice about going to the garden and used songs to support tidying up. Staff supported children to prepare for going outdoors and helped them to put on their coats.

Children who wore nappies had them changed as required and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Children who used the toilet were supported and closely supervised by staff. Suitable cosy areas were available for children to rest and children were observed using these areas throughout the morning as required. The children moved freely in each care room and engaged in one-to-one activities with staff and in group activities. Staff interacted warmly with the children and used gentle tones during conversations, addressing children by name and speaking to them at their level.

Staff explained they communicate daily with parents at arrival and collection times. Individual educational programmes are carried out every couple months with parents to support the individual needs of children attending the service.

All children were given an opportunity to go the outdoor play area. A selection of suitable equipment was available for the children to enjoy.

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:

- Access to the service was secure to prevent unauthorised access or children leaving unsupervised. An intercom system was in place to monitor visitors before granting access. The outdoor area to the rear of the premises was secured by a high wall and gate.
- Cleaning agents and medications were stored safely out of reach of children.
- Blind cords were secured safely on all windows and doors.
- The kitchen and storage areas were inaccessible to children.

Infection Control:

- The environment was clean and staff maintained a cleaning schedule.
- Children's lunches were stored in the fridges provided in the care rooms.
- Sanitary facilities were equipped to support handwashing. Staff guided and supported children to wash their hands after using the toilet, outdoor play and before meals.
- Children's nappies were changed in accordance with infection control procedures.
- Waste was properly managed using pedal-operated bins, ensuring hands-free disposal.

Fire Safety:

- Signs were available indicating the fire exits and they were clear and unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

Administration of Medication:

1. Medication records were reviewed two medication forms for children had not been signed by parents to indicate they were aware medication was given posing a potential safety risk.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Administration of Medication:

1. The parents of the two children were immediately contacted, and the missing signatures were obtained and documented on the relevant medication administration records. Please see attached the picture of the signed Medication forms. A record audit has been completed. All other children's medication records

were reviewed to ensure signatures and documentation were fully completed and compliant.

All colleagues were briefed on the importance of obtaining parental signatures after administration of any medication. The Administration of Medication Policy has been reviewed by all colleagues to clearly outline the requirement for parent/guardian signatures. The Manager will conduct spot and weekly checks of all medication records to monitor ongoing compliance.

Supporting documentation submitted

Administration of Medication:

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions as stated by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance meeting the regulatory requirement.

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) Staff trained in first aid for children were at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a), (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was safely stored and easily accessible and available to the children attending the pre-school 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.
- (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 was available detailing monthly fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had been recorded as undertaken on the 30 September 2025.
- (2) (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the fire fighting equipment and smoke alarm was available. The maintenance records for the firefighting equipment were dated 02 March 2025 and the maintenance record for the smoke alarm was dated the 22 September 2025.
- (4) The procedure to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in conspicuous locations with the service.