

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2022GY002				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Spraoi Early Learning Centre				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Gort An Ri, Tubber Road, Gort, Co. Galway				
<b>Eircode:</b>	H91H9RE				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Theresa Murphy				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	13/06/2023				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>43</td> <td>PM</td> <td>43</td> </tr> </table>	AM	43	PM	43
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate , Tusla, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	J Ryan M Riordan				
<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

Spraoui Early Learning Centre is located in a new residential estate, Gort An Ri, near the town of Gort, Co. Galway. It provides a full day care, part-time and sessional Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school service. It operates between 8 am to 6 pm from Monday to Friday, for children aged between 0 years to 6 years of age. The service is registered to cater for a maximum number of 74 pre-school children at any one time.

The premises consists of 5 playrooms, sanitary facilities, a designated sleep room, 2 nappy changing areas, staff room and a kitchen. The pre-school children have access to two secure outdoor play areas to the front and side of the building.

### Staffing

The registered provider has appointed a person in charge and a deputy person who were both present on the day of the inspection. All staff working with the preschool children hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework. Eight staff present had level 8 qualifications.

The two staff working with the school aged children are currently completing their childcare studies.

### 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 announced and focused on the areas of governance and health, welfare and development of child. The inspections may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11 and 19.

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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge were available on the premises as outlined in the staff roster.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and roles and responsibilities of each employee.

(2) There were sixteen staff employed since in the service. The person in charge had ensured that each employee working in the service was suitable and competent and the following documents were available on file for all staff. The area manager worked in the service one day a week. Two staff were appointed to work with the school aged children and there was a person available to work in the kitchen preparing meals.

(a) References from the person's past employers and in particular the most recent employer were available for 14 staff and were validated by management.

(b) References from sources other than past employers in the case of a person who had no past employers were available for 2 staff and were validated by management.

(c) Vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 were available in respect of all 16 staff.

(d) Police vetting was available for 14 staff who had lived in another state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3) All vetting procedures were completed by the management of the service before staff were appointed or allowed access to children attending the pre-school service.

(4) All staff working with the preschool children had childcare qualifications. Two staff currently working with the school aged children are studying for their childcare qualifications.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) At all times during the period of the inspection the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

On the day of the inspection there were 9 staff working across 4 rooms with 43 children present in the morning and 42 children present in the afternoon. The minimum ratio of staff to children was maintained and an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children in each room.

- Baby Room Turtles – there was 1 (0-1 years) and 7 (1-2 years) children and 2 staff present.
- Wobbler Room Penguins - there were 6 (1- 2 years) and 3(2-3 years)children and 2 staff present.
- Toddler Room Zebras - there were 8 (2-3) children and 2 staff present.
- Preschool Room Llamas - there were 18 (3-5 years) children and 3 staff present.
- Afterschool Room Kangaroos – Room was not in use for preschool children.

Additional staff were available to cover for staff breaks, office management and food preparation.

## 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*

### Compliance Information

#### **BASIC NEEDS:**

A healthy eating policy was available in the service. The menu plan for the day was displayed on a notice board in the entrance hallway for parents to view. Each child had their own drinking bottle for water which was clearly identifiable to them and placed on a shelf accessible to the children. Children who played outside had their water bottles available to them on a trolley outside. Staff encouraged children to take frequent drinks of water. Apricot chicken and rice were served for dinner and children were offered second helpings. In the baby room some children were self feeding while others required some assistance with their food. Breakfast and an evening snack of crackers, yogurts or sandwiches were provided by the service. Parents provided fruit which was refrigerated and which the children can have between meals if required. Meals and snacks were observed to be social occasions and children were given plenty of time to enjoy and finish their food.

Toilet training was based on the child's stage of development and their readiness to start training rather than their age. Staff were observed to follow the nappy change policy and wore fresh gloves and aprons for each change which supported the prevention of cross infection in the service. When children returned to their playrooms from outdoor play, they were observed to wash their hands independently in the playroom before dinner.

Children under 2 years of age slept in standard cots when staff observed their cues that they were becoming tired. They were physically checked every 10 minutes and a record of these checks was recorded on a digital device.

Children over 2 years of age slept on sleep beds in their rooms whilst the staff remained in the room to ensure the children's safety. Children in the preschool room who did require sleep had 'relaxation time' for about an hour in the afternoon in the room.

Staff were observed interacting well with the children, using soft tones of voice, using the child's name and getting down to their level and making eye contact when communicating and talking to them.

The key person system was evident which demonstrated which staff members worked with a particular group of children. This supported children in forming and sustaining positive relationships. Staff were observed to be actively involved in children's play in each of the rooms of the service where they initiated play and joined in the games when invited by the children. If a child became upset, they were lifted by staff into their arms and were cuddled, comforted and calmed immediately.

Children were observed to play outdoors on the morning and were appropriately clothed for the hot weather conditions at the time. Each child had their own supply of sunscreen applied 20 minutes before they went outdoors. There were sheltered areas in both play areas for children to seek shade in from the direct sunlight. Staff stated that whilst the weather is hot children are monitored carefully and will only play outdoors in the early morning or late afternoon.

### **PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:**

The premises contains the following spaces, 4 playrooms, a sleep room, an afterschool room, sanitary accommodation areas, a kitchen, a staff room and a manager's office. Two outdoor play areas located at the entrance to the building.

Adequate and varied play equipment suited to the age and stage of development of the child was available in each room and in the outdoor play area. Surplus play equipment was in storage and used on a rotational basis following cleaning. Low level wash hand basins were accessible in all rooms and children were observed independently washing their hands during the day. Children's belongings were stored in each room in labelled lockers.

All play materials were stored on open shelving and accessible to the children.

Sensorial play materials such as sand was available in sand boxes outdoors.

Books were accessible to children in each room which supported children's development with literacy and numeracy skills. Children were observed to choose books after dinner and flick through the pages, looking at the pictures while resting on soft seating in the quiet area.

Imaginative and creative play was evident as some children were observed wearing dress up clothes and there were mirrors in the rooms for the children to look at themselves in the mirror, which supported their sense of identity and belonging.

Children were observed playing in the secure outdoor play areas which was well resourced with outdoor play equipment such as playhouses, ride on toys, mud kitchens, climbing frames, sand boxes, timber chimes, goal posts, a tent and plants. A large, canopied area allowed more outdoor play in hot or cold weather conditions. Curriculum plans were displayed in the entrance hallway for parents information.