

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2022GY003			
Name of Service:	Ellemenopea Limited			
Address of Service:	St Thomas's National School, Gortlowman, Peterswell, Co. Galway			
Eircode:	H91 TP8P			
Name of Registered Provider:	Samantha Geaghan			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	14/10/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	0
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Child & Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor - Green Corridor), Merlin Park University Hospital, 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			

Description of service

The preschool is in a playroom within St Thomas's national school in Peterswell, south county Galway. This service operates an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme and sessional care programme from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm, from Monday to Friday and caters for children aged 2 to 6 years. The service has a playroom, sanitary facilities for children and a quiet rest area to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if a child chooses to do so during the session. The pre-school children have access to a secure outdoor play area to the side of the premises which has recently been upgraded.

Staffing

There is a total of 4 adults working in the service which includes the registered provider. There is a designated person in charge and a named deputy on the premises daily. The 4 adults who work directly with the children hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 to a level 8 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.

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, 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.

(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 person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.
- (b) The person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available on the premises when the pre-school children were present.
- (c) A clear management structure was in place, each adult's roles and responsibilities were displayed in the service.
All 4 adult files were reviewed on the days of inspection:
- (2)(a) Seven of the 8 validated references on file in respect of 4 adults were from a past employer.
- (b) One of the 8 validated references were from a reputable source.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the 4 adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years.
- (d) Documentary evidence indicated that an adult who had lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than 6 consecutive months while over the age of 18 years required police vetting. The police vetting was available for inspection.
- (4) There was evidence that the 4 adults working directly with the children had attained major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 to an 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) An adequate number of adults were working with the children on the day of inspection.
- (2) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to. There were 2 adults working directly with 9 children on the day of inspection in the morning.

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

19 (1)(a)

BASIC NEEDS:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and the food observed was healthy and nutritious.
- A rolling snack time was in place and 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.
- The children had access to a water on a low-level table which allowed them the opportunity to take a drink if thirsty from their own bottles.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.
- Hand washing was observed prior to snack time, after outdoor play and toileting.

- Each child's privacy and dignity were respected, while they were either toileted independently or with some assistance as required.
- Staff communicated effectively with children in a professional manner as they carried out their programme of care throughout the day.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couch in a designated rest and relaxation area in the playroom.
- Children were observed at table top activities, playing in the clearly defined interest areas, at arts/ crafts work and in circle time. The children enjoyed the outdoor play area, messy and sensory play.
- The theme for the week was 'Autum and Halloween'.

Programme of Activities and its Implementation:

- A key person system was in place for each child to support their development and to inform curriculum planning. The role of the key person was to liaise with parents and guardians, conduct observations to support each child's developmental needs.
- Each child had a learning journal identifying their likes and preferences and showing their art, craft and work so far for the year.
- The programme of care was flexible and guided by the children's choices. Children were supported by the staff during periods of individual and group-based activities. The staff sensitively supervised and intervened when necessary.
- Transitions between activities were well planned by staff and were carried out in a calm and relaxed environment.
- On review of the documentation of the service takes a holistic approach to each child's learning and development. They work in partnership with parents to enhance each individual child's lifelong learning experience while attending the service.
- The service programme of activity and curriculum which was in place supported the individual needs of each child in line with their age and stage of development.
- The emerging interests were recorded on a whiteboard to inform the short-term planning and emerging interests of children.
- The activities were observed were both adult and child led, both indoors and outdoors with an emphasis of the children's emerging interests, wellbeing and development.

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 trained in first aid responder for children was available to the children attending the pre-school service. Four adults had current training in first aid response for children.
- (2)(a) The first aid box was stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position in the service.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped with all contents within expiry dates and were 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 firefighting 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 fire drill was conducted on the 18 September 2025.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment in the premises and was serviced on 04 October 2025.
- Records were available in relation to the number, type and maintenance of and fire, smoke alarms in the premises with the annual check dated the 18 February 2025.
- (4) A notice was displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for 20 pre-school children. The insurance policy for the sessional service is valid until the 27 March 2026.