

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2022SO001

**Name of Service:** Inspiring Minds Preschool

**Address of Service:** M.C.R. Community Centre, Mail Coach Road, Sligo, Co. Sligo

**Eircode:** F91 YY63

**Name of Registered Provider:** Joanna Wyvar

**Service type:** Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 21/05/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	9	PM	13

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S Killeen
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Non applicable
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### Description of service

Inspiring Minds Preschool is a private run Pre-school Service. The service is registered to accommodate 15 children from 2 years to 6 years. The hours of operation are 8:30am to 4.30pm weekdays for 46 weeks per year. The preschool service is located at the rear of the community centre. There is one preschool room with children's sanitary accommodation off the preschool room. The service has an outdoor area situated directly outside the preschool room.

### Staffing

There are six adults currently employed to work in the pre-school service. This includes the registered provider who works directly with the preschool children and one staff member in a supporting role under the Access and Inclusion Model. All staff hold a minimum level 5 on the national framework of qualifications (NFQ)

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,15,17,19,23,25,28. 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.

### 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, 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)

The registered provider ensured that.

(a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.

(b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.

(c) There was 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.

(2)

On the day of inspection, three adults were present, the registered provider, and two adults who were employed to work directly with the children.

The following vetting information was available for six adults:

(a) Six written validated references from past employers for four of the adults.

(b) Four written validated references from reputable sources for one of the adults.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for six staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another state was available for three adults who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.

(4)

Six of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care

and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

### 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)

On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times throughout the inspection.

(8)

The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises when children were present in the service as evidenced in a sample review of attendance records.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

*(a) the name and date of birth of the child;*

*(b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*

*(c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*

*(d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*

*(e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*

*(f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*

*(g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*

*(h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*

*(i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

*(c) an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

On the day of inspection, all children's files were reviewed,

(1)

A record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service, containing the required elements listed in (a) – (i) above.

(3)

A record in writing in respect of each pre-school child was available and open to inspection on the premises by-  
(c) an authorised person

## Part IV – Information and Records

### Regulation 17 – Information for parents

*A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).*

### Compliance Information

The register provider ensured that all parents and guardians who have a child in attendance in the services was provided with the necessary information as demonstrated by the parent handbook. This included:

The name, position and qualifications of management team to include, register provider, service manager and deputy manager. Ongoing communication with parents was observed with the Service information displayed on a notice board for the parents when they enter the service. Also available weekly staff roster, illness guide and child safety statement.

(a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g)

The type of service provided, the ratios required, type of facilities available, opening hours and policies are displayed on the notice board in the entrance to the service. The service uses application to communicate with the parents daily.

### 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
- 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 (a) (b)

#### Basic Needs:

- The service promoted healthy eating, and food and snacks were provided at regular intervals during the day. Children were observed eating pasta, meatballs, and vegetables in a pasta sauce. The food was catered daily from a local supplier. The evening snack consisted of a variety of rice cakes, yogurt, corn, raisins, sandwiches with different fillings, and wraps. Children's drinks were available in the care room on a table within their reach throughout the session, should they feel thirsty at any stage.
- Staff members were observed sitting and speaking with children during snack and lunchtime, using it as an opportunity to enhance social interaction.
- Bibs and aprons were available to the children for messy play activities and during mealtimes. Spare clothes were available if the children required a change of clothing during the session.
- Free movement of the children was facilitated in the daily routine of the service, as observed on the day of inspection, with children moving freely between the indoor and outdoor areas as they wished.
- The day of the inspection was hot and sunny. The staff demonstrated care and attention by encouraging the children to take regular drinks throughout the day. This was observed while the children were playing outside.
- As the weather was very warm, sun cream was applied as required, and staff ensured that the children wore sun hats and limited their time in direct sunlight during outdoor play.

- The pre-school children were provided with rest periods in the afternoon. Quiet rest areas were available in the care room, and children were observed spending time in these areas for short periods of rest throughout the day.
- Inclusion plans were implemented in accordance with each child's individual needs, as evidenced by the detailed documentation reviewed during the inspection. The plans clearly outlined the developmental goals identified for each child, along with the specific strategies and interventions used by staff to support progress.

### Supporting Relationships:

- Staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. Staff were observed communicating positively with the children using soft and gentle tones.
- Settling in and transitions were made as smooth as possible. Staff were observed giving children a five-minute reminder when one activity was about to end.
- Children were observed self-directing their own play. They were given the opportunity to choose activities daily, follow through on their choices, and change activities if they wished.
- A key-worker system was in place, with named staff members assigned responsibility for creating close relationships with a designated group of children and their parents. Staff showed the inspector the layout of the key-working plan and rotation.
- Staff and parents worked in partnership, as observed during drop-off and pick-up times, with various aspects of the children's day being communicated. Staff members demonstrated a strong awareness of each child's likes, dislikes, daily routines, interests, and family background.

### Physical and Material Environment:

- The pre-school room was laid out to facilitate sensory experiences through art and craft, water, and sand trays. Fine motor development was supported with jigsaws, shape sorters, crayons, and paper. Gross motor development was supported with ride-on toys, climbing equipment, and an outdoor play area.
- One part of the preschool room had soft matting and cushions, allowing children to lie comfortably while being stimulated with overhead hanging toys and balloons.
- A range of books was available in the reading area to support children's language development.
- Open shelving in the corner of the room was equipped with various materials and resources, introduced at various times throughout the day to ensure variety and stimulation.
- The walls in the preschool were decorated with pictures of the children's families, helping to establish a connection between home and crèche.

- The walls in the pre-school room were decorated with the children’s artwork, adding colour and a sense of ownership to the room.
- A home corner equipped with a kitchen, dolls, and dress-up resources gave children opportunities for role play and imaginative development. The construction area, equipped with building blocks, trucks, and cars, supported fine motor skill development.
- The outdoor play area provided a change of environment. Resources included bikes, trikes, ride-on toys, and scooters. A climbing frame and mud kitchen were also available.
- During the inspection, staff were actively engaged in outdoor play with the children, including pushing them on swings and participating in parachute games. Children were also provided with chalk to create drawings on a large outdoor chalkboard.

### Programme of Activities:

- Ongoing observations and assessments were documented, helping to create a well-rounded picture of each child. These observations informed curriculum planning. The curriculum was observed to be flexible, adapting to the emerging interests, needs, and preferences of the children.
- The programme of activities and learning completed in each room was displayed at the entrance to the service in a scrapbook format, accessible to parents during drop-off and collection.
- Evidence of goal-planning themes was available. In February, learning goals included the life cycle of plants, the continent of Asia, World Book Day, and St. Brigid’s Cross. These topics supported children’s learning through fun, hands-on activities.

## 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 main entrance into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.

- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- During the inspection, it was observed that children were consistently and appropriately supervised by staff. The staff demonstrated a clear awareness of each child's presence and individual needs throughout the session.
- The outdoor perimeter was secure with waste bins stored out of reach of children.

### Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm running water, supplies of liquid soap, disposable paper towels and foot pedal operated bins were provided at each wash hand basin.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes and after messy play and snack times in all care rooms.
- Children in the pre-school room were observed to wash their hands regularly including before snacks and meals and after coming in from outdoor play.
- The service was observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic manner. A sample of cleaning records were available which demonstrated that cleaning was carried out on a daily and weekly basis with records completed by the relevant staff.

### Administration of Medication:

- The service had a medication administration policy in place and when interviewed person in charge they were aware of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication.

### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for all 6 staff members. However, one adult's vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

I reapplied for necessary garda vetting that was out of date by 4 weeks. I will write reminders of vetting renewal for all staff in a calendar.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photography of application renew of garda clearance.

#### Summary Comment

Following receipt of corrective and preventive actions and the evidence, the requirements for this regulation have been met.

### 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 registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid for children was at all times immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service. This was evidenced by the person in charge and designated person in charge first aid response training certificates with expiry dates of July 2025.

(2)(a) (b)

The first aid box was stored in a clearly labelled first aid cupboard in the kitchen in the preschool room, and available to the children attending the preschool service at all times.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

- The register provider demonstrated that adequate insurance was in place for twenty preschool children up until 27/03/2026