

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025WW001
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	The Nest School Littlebrook
-------------------------	-----------------------------

Address of Service:	Chapel Road, Delgany, Delgany, Co. Wicklow
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	A63 R7F4
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Lynda Browne
-------------------------------------	--------------

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

Date of Inspection:	11/12/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	33
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Early O'Brien & H. Bourke
Title:	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).

Conditions if applicable	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

Description of service

The Nest School, Littlebrook is a privately owned early years' service located in a housing estate in Delgany, Co Wicklow. It consists of a single storey, purpose-built premises with four care rooms available on the ground floor. There is adequate sanitary accommodation for both children and staff and a staff room, kitchen, storeroom and office. Each care room has direct access to a large enclosed outdoor play area which is a wraparound play space from the front, via the left hand-side to the rear of the building. Access to the main entrance, Rooms 1 and 2 is at the front of the building with access to Rooms 3 and 4 at the rear of the building. The service operates for 44 weeks per year for full day, part-time and sessional care. The hours of operation are 08:15 to 15:45, Monday to Friday.

Staffing

The registered provider employs thirteen adults to work in the service. This includes the centre manager, a chef and three relief members of staff. On the day of inspection there were eleven adults present including the registered provider, eight of whom were working directly with the children.

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 area of governance, health, welfare and development of child.

The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4) - Management and recruitment,

Regulation 11 (1)(2)(8)(a) - Staffing levels,

Regulation 19 (1)(a)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child.

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 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)
- (a) The centre manager is the designated person in charge of the service and there is a named person appointed to deputise as required.
 - (b) The manager was present and in charge of the service and present in the service throughout the inspection.
- (2)
- Documentation was reviewed in respect of fourteen adults employed to work in the service and met regulatory requirements as follows:
- (a)(b) Of the 28 validated, written references that were required, 24 were available from a past employer and 4 from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were on file and had been obtained for 14 adults.

(d) Police vetting was required for eight staff members who had lived outside of the State for a period of more than six months as an adult. On the day of inspection, documentary evidence of police vetting was available for seven staff members.

(4)
There was documentary evidence available to demonstrate that thirteen staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

Police vetting was unavailable for one member of staff who had lived outside of the State for a period of six months or more as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has engaged the services of a solicitor to have an affidavit signed in the presence of the staff member confirming to their knowledge that they have no previous convictions from their time spent living in China.

To prevent this non-compliance from reoccurring in the future, the registered provider now has a clear understanding of what is required for international vetting and has put a procedure in place for future recruitment.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider has submitted a copy of the signed affidavit in addition to a copy of their updated policy on the requirements for international police vetting.

Summary Comment

The inspectorate has deemed that the actions submitted adequately address the non-compliance and will inform the next inspection.

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 for full-time, part-time and sessional care was adhered to at all times during the inspection. On the day of inspection there eight adults working directly with thirty-three children attending the service.

8(a)

There was a minimum of two adults on the premises at all times during the inspection evidenced in the staff roster available on the day of inspection.

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

Basic Needs

Healthy eating was promoted in the service and staff reported that all meals are provided by the service for children attending on a full day, part-time and sessional basis. On the day of inspection, the children were observed to be eating pasta, bolognese and garlic bread for dinner, and a selection of fruit and yogurt for snack. Staff advised that alternatives were available, and food preferences were catered for on the day of inspection. Additional helpings were available on request by children. Drinking water was accessible to children throughout the day and all children were given water with their dinner. Younger children were provided with bibs for dinnertime. Children were encouraged to feed themselves and staff supported younger children who needed assistance. Children appeared happy and content within each of the care rooms.

Children's care needs were observed to be met promptly. Children's nappies were changed regularly, and staff were observed engaging warmly with children when providing this care. Children were encouraged and supported to be independent in using the toilet and in cleaning up after their play and meals.

There was a designated nap time in two of the care rooms for younger children who require sleep. Stackable beds were available for these children.

Supporting Relationships

Children were observed being supported by the staff members as they engaged in their self-directed play and activities. The atmosphere was friendly, happy and child centred. The staff members were observed responding to the children in a positive manner and provided praise and encouragement to each child on a regular basis. A family tree with pictures of the children and their families provided a connection with home that provided the children with a sense of security and belonging in each of the care rooms. Individual learning journals and storybooks were maintained for each child, following their development and learning progress throughout the year and will be presented to parents at the end of the pre-school year.

Physical and Material Environment

The care rooms were constructively planned to create interesting play and learning spaces to encourage children to extend and develop their imaginative and explorative play and learning experiences. Low level tables and chairs were provided for tabletop activities and low-level open shelving ensured toys, equipment and materials were accessible to the children. Materials and equipment included paint, crayons, paper, books, dolls, dolls house, puzzles, blocks, cars, animals, sand and water play, natural and open-ended materials and fine motor skill toys including pegboards, jigsaws, matching shapes and art and craft materials for cutting, gluing and sticking. Children's artwork was displayed throughout the service. The outdoor play area was an extension of the indoor learning environment and was planned and considered from the perspective of the children and included an area with small world, digging/construction area, water play, mud kitchen, planted area, balance and push pull equipment.

Programme of Activities

Children were observed to make choices on their own play materials within the environment and demonstrated familiarity with the routine of their day.

Positive language was observed to be used across the staff team and with the children. Language development was supported in discussions observed both in play and at snack time where the adults encouraged the children to use words to describe their thoughts and feelings and to share stories on matters that had meaning to them.

Within the routine of the day children's identity and belonging was supported with opportunities for them to be curious. Children demonstrated autonomy within their learning environment as they transitioned to activities throughout the inspection.