

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE059
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Name of Service:	Inchy Wincy Pre-school
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Address of Service:	Inch National School, Inch More, Inch, Kilmaley, Ennis, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 TC60
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Name of Registered Provider:	Catriona Talty
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	18/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM	0
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Primary Care Centre, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare V95TY4E
Inspection undertaken by:	J Hayes
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).

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Description of service

Inchy Wincy Pre-school is a privately operated early years' sessional service. It is registered to cater for 22 pre-school children. The service provides a morning session and is open Monday-Fridays 09.15hours – 12.15hours. The service is in Inch Primary School on the outskirts of Ennis town, in County Clare. One classroom is available for the pre-school children. The children have the use of an enclosed outdoor play area and a running track within the school campus for outdoor activities.

Staffing

The registered provider operated the sessional service and was assisted by one adult on the day the inspection was carried out.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9-Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11-Staffing levels (1) (3)

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

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Regulation 23- Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

Regulation 28-Insurance

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.

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*

(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.*

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(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 registered provider was the person in charge, and a person was available to deputise.

(b)

The registered provider was available during the inspection.

(2)

Three files were available in respect of the registered provider, the adult working in the service and a relief person.

The findings included the following:

(a)

Six written and validated references from past employers in respect of the adults working in the service were available.

(b)

Not applicable as all required references in respect of adults working in the service were from past employers.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the adults employed by the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was not required as no adult working in the service who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months

(4)

The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1)

During the inspection an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.

(3)

On the 18 May 2026 the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Two adults cared for the seventeen children in attendance.

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

(1)(a)

The children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service through the provision of appropriate activities, interactions, materials, and equipment having regard to the age and developmental stage of the children.

Basic Needs

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The healthy eating policy of the service was available and shared with parents, which supported children and parents to choose healthy foods. Drinking water was available throughout the day if a child was thirsty and needed a drink.

The children toileted independently, with assistance given to those who needed it. Children were encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day, such as after toileting and outdoor play and before eating. Hand washing was facilitated in the sanitary accommodation areas accessed directly from the pre-school room.

The children could rest and relax as desired in the designated quiet space in the service on a large comfortable adult couch.

The children enjoyed freedom of movement within the playroom and in the outdoor area and were active and engaged in learning throughout the morning. Play activities were child led for the most part.

Outdoor play could be accessed in all weathers as it was fully surrounded by the school building and partially covered with a Perspex roof. The children very happily engaged in a variety of activities in the well-resourced outdoor space such as sand play, and imaginative and manipulative play at the mud kitchens. Children could move about freely and develop their coordination, balance and strength through running, jumping climbing and carrying timber blocks.

Supporting Relationships Around Children:

The adults interacted with the children in a kind and respectful manner. The adults listened attentively and conversed with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance. Positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions, and the children were offered praise and encouragement. The adults demonstrated an awareness of the children's preferences, personal interests and capabilities. The adults supported the children in individual and group play based activities throughout the programme and engaged in open ended discussions.

The children were notified in advance of transitions in activities, and their social interactions were supported by adults through turn taking collaboration and group games. Staff were observed to be interested in the children, listened to them and spoke to them using soft tones of voice and positive language, engaging them in conversation and gave each child the opportunity to express themselves. Children's opinions were sought, and their decisions respected which reflected that they were valued. An open-door policy for parents/guardians was in place for the service. An informal communication approach was observed during interactions with parents/guardians. The adults were warmly welcomed into the service at collection time and the children's activities of the day and observations were shared with them.

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Photographic evidence of activities undertaken, and art portfolios were available to share with parents and helped support a sense of working in partnership with parents.

Individual booklets for children were developed by the service to help share each child's learning journey as they move from pre-school to primary school.

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 entrance to the sessional service was secured to monitor the entry of unauthorised persons to the childcare facility.
- The children were signed in and out on arrival and departure to and from the service and were supervised at all times during the inspection.
- Safe storage was available for the cleaning agents and equipment used in the service.
- The external outdoor play area was secured.
- All blind cords were secured and out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- A supply of cleaning agents was stored out of reach of children in the service.
- The playroom and sanitary areas were adequately ventilated by natural forms of ventilation.
- There were warm water and liquid soap at the wash hand basins to facilitate hygienic hand washing for children and adults. Paper hand towels were provided in the sanitary areas used by the children and adults to facilitate hygienic hand drying.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.
- The fire assembly point and fire exit routes were readily identifiable.
- A fire action notice was displayed at the fire exit point in the building.
- The service demonstrated evidence of completing monthly fire drills to prepare the service to respond in the event of fire.

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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 twenty-two children attending on a sessional basis. The policy is valid until 27 March 2027.