

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK068
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Nature Explorers Pre-school
-------------------------	-----------------------------

Address of Service:	Coolnabrune, Skeoughvosteen, Via Borris, Co. Kilkenny
----------------------------	---

Eircode:	R95 CX47
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Anne O Kelly
-------------------------------------	--------------

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

Date of Inspection:	10/06/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	11
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Athy Road, Carlow.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Cullen
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

This early years service is privately owned and operated service. The detached single storey building is located to the rear of a private residence in the rural area of Skeoughvosteen, on the Kilkenny/Carlow border. The service is registered to provide a part-time and sessional service to 25 children aged 2 to 6 years of age. The premises consists of two early years rooms, sanitary accommodation, two auxiliary spaces used for play and learning off the main classrooms, kitchenette/office and a large enclosed outdoor play area.

Staffing

The service currently employs eight early years staff and there was also a student engaged in a work experience placement present on the day of inspection. The registered provider is available to work directly in the service when required however does not work directly in the service daily.

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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 15- Child Records and 16 – Records of a preschool service. As a result, the scope of the inspection included both early years rooms and the outdoor area.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

(2) Documentation was reviewed for the eight staff members employed by the service, including the registered provider and a student work experience placement.

(a)(b) Two validated references were available for each adult from either a past employer, or from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff and the student. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for two staff members who had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) Certificates of qualification were available on file demonstrating that staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 were adequate numbers of staff were working directly with the children at all times. There were 20 children with 4 staff members directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection, and 11 children with 3 staff during the afternoon.

(2) On the morning of the inspection, the staff to child ratios were maintained as follows throughout the service:

- The acorn room, there were 7 children aged 3 to 4 years old being cared for by 2 staff.
- The sycamore room, there were 13 children aged 4 to 5 years old being cared for by 2 staff.

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;*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- (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.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) – (i) Prior to a child commencing in the service, all parents and guardians were issued with a child registration form. This registration form was developed by the service and contained all required information for parents and guardians to complete.

A sample of ten child registration forms were reviewed on the day of inspection, and all were completed in full with appropriate declarations signed by parents and guardians.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

(1)(a) – (k) The registered provider ensured that all relevant information was accessible and available for inspection by authorised persons. Relevant staff information was available in records, the Tusla registration certificate was on display providing confirmation of the class of service registered. Staff rosters were available on a staff notice board. Record of attendance, administration of medication and any accident or incident records were available. Policies and procedures were available for staff in the office.

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) There were six staff members trained in first aid response available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises available for the use of the children attending the early years service. A smaller first aid bag was brought with the group to the outdoor area.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 fire fighting 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) There was a record of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The most recent was recorded as having taken place on 13 May 2026.
- (b) There was a record available demonstrating that the firefighting equipment was last serviced in January 2026 and the smoke alarm system on 05 February 2026.
- (4) There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire displayed beside each emergency exit door on the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The service ensured that all children were appropriately supervised at all times throughout the inspection. All staff were suitably qualified with qualifications ranging from level 5 to level 9 in early years education and related disciplines. The child staff ratios exceeded the minimum requirements for care needed under the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

Parents were observed to drop children directly to the door of the preschool building where a staff member received them. At collection times, a one-way queuing system was observed in use for cars entering and exiting the carpark. Children were collected directly from the outdoor area and a staff member handed over children to parents at the gate.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

The children in the sycamore room were observed to have had unrestricted access to the toilet throughout the session. Staff from the acorn room escorted children individually to the sanitary area. After children had finished in the toilet cubicle staff were observed encouraging hand washing. Prior to eating staff members were observed to directly supervise handwashing. During group and individual snack times, staff members were observed to closely supervise eating, either sitting directly with the children or moving between the tables where children sat.

During free play in the sycamore more room, children had access to the main classroom space and a sensory/activity room with a ball pit and foam soft play equipment. Staff members were observed to strategically place themselves in areas where play could be closely observed. Play with equipment such as scissors was also closely supervised to ensure appropriate use.

In the transition from indoor to outdoor play children left the classrooms in small group and were escorted to the enclosed outdoor area. While children were outdoors the staff were strategically positioned around the large outdoor area to have a line of view of each aspect of the play space. Staff knowledge of the children in their care was demonstrated in their responsive supervision of children and quick reactions when a child attempted to climb the fence between the outdoor area and an area used by the private residence.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service demonstrated insurance cover for a part time daycare for up to 25 children. The insurance policy commenced 28 March 2026 and will expire 27 March 2027.