

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021GY004
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Name of Service:	Cairde Early Learning Centre
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Address of Service:	Claregalway NS, Lakeview, Claregalway, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 C6D0
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Name of Registered Provider:	Noreen Murphy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	04/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency Unit 2, First Floor, Loughrea Shopping Centre, Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway. H62 XR82
Inspection undertaken by:	B Lavin
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

The service is in a designated room in Claregalway national school, in the village of Claregalway. The service was registered in September 2021 and operates a sessional service for pre-school children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age. The service offers an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) sessional care programme from 09:15 to 12:15 Monday to Friday.

Staffing

Three adults are employed in the service. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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 and health, welfare and development of child. 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.

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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.

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.*

(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.

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Compliance Information

- (1) (a) There was a designated person in charge in the service. A named person was available to deputise as required.
- (b) The person in charge was present in the service for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) Discussion with the person in charge and review of records showed there were three adults employed in the service at the time of the inspection. The following recruitment documentation was available for the adults in the service:
- (a) Four of the required six written and validated references were from past employers.
- (b) Two references from a source other than a past employer were on file for two staff members.
- (c) A garda vetting disclosure was available for the three adults in the service. 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 documents were available on file for one adult.
- (4) Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available on file for the three staff who worked directly with the children.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the following policies and procedures are in place as per schedule 5 for the service. The policies, procedures and statements were consistent with the service practices.

- (a) Statement of purpose and function
- (b) Complaints policy
- (c) Administration of medication policy
- (d) Infection control policy
- (e) Managing behaviour policy
- (g) Fire safety policy
- (h) Inclusion policy

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- (i) Outings policy
- (j) Accident and incident policy
- (s) Settling in policy
- (t) Staff training policy
- (u) Supervision policy

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 period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained. There were 14 children present on a sessional basis aged from 3 to 5 years old with 2 staff members caring for the children.

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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

Basic needs:

- During the inspection the children ate a snack which consisted of fruit, yogurt, crackers, ham, sandwiches and cheese provided from home. The children were seated at low tables in chairs and supervised by the adults who gave assistance where it was needed and encouraged conversation with the children during mealtime.
- Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snacks without being rushed. The atmosphere during snack time was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and staff.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets and did not have to wait to use the toilet. Children were allowed to take their time during toileting. Staff encouraged and supported children to become more independent in toileting practices.
- The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the preschool room. The children were encouraged to move around the room, explore different interest areas and participate in a variety of play and learning activities.
- In the playroom the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with child sized couches in place in the cosy corner.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence and to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.
- Children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions to sharing toys, equipment and turn taking.
- The adults working with the children created a positive atmosphere, having frequent social conversations, joint laughter and showing affection.

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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 one staff member was trained in first aid responder training for children and available to the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) There was first aid box in the playroom, with content items within date, safely stored and easily accessible.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid box was fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service's insurance specifying the address of the service, catering for 22 children at any one time, with an expiry date of 27th of March 2027, was available. The insurance covered -

- public liability
- personal accident
- against fire and theft
- buildings
- outings undertaken as part of the service provision.