

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC016
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Amanda's Playschool
-------------------------	---------------------

Address of Service:	Shannagraigue, Carrigaline, Co. Cork
----------------------------	--------------------------------------

Eircode:	P43 AN81
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Amanda Buttimer
-------------------------------------	-----------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	07/02/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	S O'Brien
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).

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

Description of service

Amanda's Playschool is a privately operated service, which caters for children aged 2 to 6 years. It provides sessional care which includes the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. The service operates from 9am to 12.30pm and 1pm to 4.30pm, Tuesday to Friday, 41 weeks of the year. The service is located in a section of the registered providers private residence that was adapted to a childcare setting. The service consists of 1 care room, a foyer area and sanitary facilities. There is a large enclosed outdoor area to the front of the premises.

Staffing

There are four staff employed to work directly with the children. The registered provider is serviced based. On the day of inspection, three staff members including the registered provider were working directly with the children. A student was also present on work placement.

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.

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)
- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named deputy in the service.
 - (b) The designated person in charge and named deputy were on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Four staff including the registered provider were identified as working in the service. All four files were reviewed.
- (a) Six of the eight references were from a past employer and were validated.

- (b) Two of the eight references were from a reputable source and were validated.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all four 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) A Police vetting disclosure was available for one staff member who had lived outside a state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) Four of the staff members who worked directly with the children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from Level 5 to level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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) There were adequate staff available to care for the children in attendance in the service.
- (3) On arrival to the service, there were 21 preschool children aged between 2 years 6 months and 5 years, being cared for by three staff members, therefore, the minimum adult to child ratio was being adhered to.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) A sample of 12 children's records were assessed and reviewed.
- (a) All records assessed contained the name and date of birth for the children.
 - (b) All records assessed contained the date on which each child first attended the service.
 - (c) All records assessed had the capacity for the service to record the date that each child ceased attending the service.
 - (d) All records assessed had a record of the names and contact numbers of parents and guardians if required.
 - (e) Ten of the 12 records assessed had a record of those authorised to collect each child.
 - (f) Eleven of the 12 records assessed had a record of any illness, disability, or allergies each child may have.
 - (g) All records assessed had a record of the registered medical practitioner for each child.
 - (h) Five the records assessed had a record of immunisations, if any, received by each child.
 - (i) Eleven of the 12 records assessed had a written parental consent for the service to provide medical treatment if required in the event of a medical emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (e) Two of the 12 records assessed did not have a record of those authorised to collect each child.
 - (f) One of the 12 records assessed did not have a record of any illness, disability, or allergies each child may have.
 - (h) Seven of the 12 records assessed did not have a record of immunisations, if any, received by each child.
 - (i) One of the 12 records assessed did not have written parental consent for the service to provide medical treatment if required in the event of a medical emergency.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated they have reviewed each child's application form and has requested parents to forward on the necessary information. The forms have also been given to the relevant parents and guardians to sign. The registered provider stated they will follow up with all parents until each form is complete.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The documented and photographic evidence submitted has been reviewed and has met the regulatory requirements.

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

- The sanitary area was located next to the care room. Staff were observed supporting children with handwashing and toileting.

- Food and drinks were provided by the children’s parents and guardians. The staff sat with the children and supported the children opening their lunches if required. Snack time was made a relaxed experience and the staff allowed children to enjoy their food.
- The children had an opportunity for outdoor play after snack time. Children were supported by the staff with putting on their wet gear and wellie boots while also promoting independence.
- Children were observed playing in small groups during free play which promoted children’s social skills.
- A quiet corner was available to the children to sit and rest if needed. Children were observed enjoying this area as a space to take some time away from the larger group.

Supporting Relationships

- Staff were aware of the children’s individual care needs. This was observed during snack time, when staff gave the children time to sit and enjoy their lunch.
- The staff supported children with their communication skills through these interactions ensuring they were at the child’s level.
- Children demonstrated a sense of pride, for example when they were completing a colouring activity, and the staff acknowledged the children’s efforts.
- The staff were observed supporting the children to engage positively with one another and were encouraged to engage in play activities that required turn taking and sharing.

Physical and Material Environment

- The outdoor area had different surfaces for the children to explore such as timber bark, grass and astroturf.
- Natural materials such as the mud kitchen and piping for water and ball play were available to the children.
- Swings, slides, climbing frames and roll on cars supported children’s physical development.
- An outdoor classroom for children to partake in tabletop activities was accessible to the children. The staff stated this area is useful in wet weather.
- Construction toys such as plastic bricks were available for imaginary play.
- Playdough and utensils were available to the children for sensory play.
- Dolls, doll house, and a kitchen area allowed for children to partake in role play.
- Art and craft materials such as crayons and paper were easily accessible to the children.

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 door to the service was appropriately secured and prevented a child from exiting unsupervised or any unauthorised access. The door between the service and the registered providers residence was also secured.
- The outdoor area was a safe and secure area for the children to play.
- All cables assessed were observed to be in good condition on the day of inspection
- All toys and equipment accessed were observed to be in good condition on the day of inspection.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were accessible to the children and staff in the sanitary facilities. Water temperatures ranged between 34.5°C and 38.6°C in the hand basins.
- Children were observed handwashing before snack time.
- Tables were cleaned with suitable cleaning products before snack time.
- Perishable food items from the children's lunches were stored in a refrigerator to prevent the spoilage of food.

Fire Safety:

- The fire door was unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for two staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'
2. An adrenaline autoinjector for one child who required medication in the event of an emergency was not stored in the service. This posed a risk to the child should they require this.
3. An adrenaline autoinjector for one child was stored on a table in the care room and was easily accessible to the children. This posed a safety risk to the children. It is acknowledged the registered provider placed the adrenaline autoinjector out of reach to the children, when asked by the inspector.

Infection Control:

4. A nappy changing mat was placed on the floor if nappy changing was required in the sanitary area. This posed a risk of cross infection to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting applications have been made in respect of the two staff members. The registered provider stated that they have recorded each staff members garda vetting and will complete same every three years as per regulation.
2. The registered provider contacted the parent of the child who required an adrenaline pen, and the parent provided the service with adrenaline pens to be stored in the school at all times. When the child is in attendance in the service, there will always be adrenaline pens available.
3. A corner shelf has been installed high, out of reach to children to store the adrenaline pen and will be stored here at all times.

Infection Control:

4. A nappy changing unit has been installed and there will always be a changing unit in place.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Documented evidence of the garda vetting applications were submitted to the inspectorate.
2. Photographic evidence was submitted to the inspectorate.
3. Photographic evidence was submitted to the inspectorate.

Infection Control:

4. Photographic evidence was submitted to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The documented and photographic evidence submitted has been reviewed and has met the regulatory requirements.

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 was trained and held a current certification in First Aid Responder (FAR) training and was on the premises at all times while the service was in operation.

(2) (a) (b)

The first aid box was sufficiently stocked and was safely stored out of reach to the children. The first aid box was accessible at all times, should it be required.

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) The registered provider ensured fire drills took place on a monthly basis. Records assessed showed the last fire drill took place in January 2025.
- (b) A maintenance record was available for the firefighting equipment within the service and an annual service had taken place in August 2024. A maintenance record was available for the smoke alarms in the premises and an annual service had taken place on 15 October 2024.
- (4) The fire evacuation notice for the service was clearly displayed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the service was adequately insured, and the insurance policy was dated from 28 November 2024 to 27 November 2025.