

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC142
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Name of Service:	Eileen's Playschool
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Address of Service:	8 Glincool Drive, Maglin, Ballincollig, Co Cork
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Eircode:	P31 E892
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Name of Registered Provider:	Eileen Murphy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	14
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440
Inspection undertaken by:	D Prendergast
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

Eileen's Playschool was established in 1997. It is registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years, however, it currently accommodates children from the age of 2 years and 8 months. Two daily sessional services are facilitated; from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm, in conjunction with the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.

The service is located in a residential area of Ballincollig, in Co Cork and operates from a care room adjoining the registered provider's private residence. Children's and staff sanitary facilities are available beside the care room and an outdoor play space is accessible onsite.

Staffing

There are five adults currently attached to the early years service. This includes the registered provider, who is available to provide cover if required. Three of the adults are involved in the day to day care of the children. A maintenance worker does not work 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 unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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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.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN1881	20/04/2026	On review of the staff attendance records, it was noted that a member of staff with First Aid Response (FAR) training was not available to the children at all times.
Status	The person in charge submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

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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.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (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) A person in charge and a deputy had been assigned to the setting and this was detailed in writing.
 - (b) The person in charge was present for the duration of the unannounced inspection. A review of the staff attendance records indicated that the service was consistently operated with either the person in charge or the deputy on duty.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that two staff files had not been reviewed previously. Both of these files were assessed for compliance.

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- (a) A total of four written and validated references were required. Three were on file from past employers.
 - (b) One of the references was from a source other than a previous employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for both adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Review of the adults' curricula vitae indicated that police vetting from outside of the jurisdiction was not required.
- (4) The adult who worked directly with the children had attained a recognised award in early childhood care and education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

- (3) It was noted that the Garda vetting disclosure held in respect of one staff member was dated after the staff member had commenced working at the service. This was not accepted under part (3) of the regulation, as Garda vetting is required to be in place prior to any person being appointed, assigned, or allowed access to or contact with children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In her written reply, the person in charge outlined the vetting had been applied for and was in process at the time the staff member commenced work. As a preventive measure, going forward employment will be strictly prohibited until Garda Vetting has been received.

Supporting documentation submitted

The statement from the person in charge is accepted as evidence.

Summary Comment

Based on the statement submitted as evidence, the person in charge has been determined to meet regulatory compliance with this regulation.

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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) Throughout the period of inspection, it was noted that an adequate number of adults worked with the children who attended the service.
- (3) At the time of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of the regulation.
- During the morning, 3 adults were observed to work directly with the 20 children present, who were aged 3 to 5 years.
 - In the afternoon, the same 3 adults were available to the 14 children in attendance, who had an age range of 3 to 5 years.

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;*

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- (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) The person in charge advised that there were 39 children enrolled at the setting. Of the 39 corresponding child records, a sample of 10 were reviewed and met the requirements from (a) to (i).

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:*
- (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;*

Compliance Information

- (1) Written information in relation to the following was clearly outlined in writing:
- (b) The type of service offered and the age range of children accommodated.
 - (c) The adult:child ratio at the setting.
 - (d) Details in relation to the service's programme of care.
 - (e) The facilities provided.
 - (f) The hours of operation. The service catered for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme.

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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

(1)(a)

Basic needs:

- A calm and pleasant atmosphere was evident during the children's snack break, which was accommodated shortly after 10.00am.
- Staff ensured that the children had consistent access to their reusable water bottles, including during outdoor play.
- Easily accessible, adjoining sanitary facilities were available for the children, who were encouraged to wash their hands and use the toilet independently.
- A quiet corner was provided for rest and relaxation, should any child wish to avail of this area.
- The layout of the care room ensured that children had sufficient space to carry out their chosen activities. The children also had the opportunity to engage in an extended period of active play in the outdoor area, during the morning.

Supporting relationships:

- A kind and caring approach was observed during the adults' interactions with the children. Staff members actively encouraged the children's participation in decisions which affected them. For example, before beginning a planned activity, the children were asked whether they would like to carry out said activity in the care room, or in the outdoor area. This was subsequently decided through a vote, which was patiently explained to the children, in a manner that was easily understood.
- At snack time, some of the children were allocated the task of giving out lunchboxes, which encouraged a co-operative environment. Adult assistance was also provided, as needed.
- The person in charge advised that the service worked in partnership with parents by operating an open door policy. Regular communication was facilitated through the use of a communication application,

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which was used to share a summary of each week, as well as photographs. Annual parent teacher meetings also took place.

- Staff communication was promoted through the provision of daily meetings and the adults also used a messaging application, to share ideas and information in relation to upcoming events.

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:

- Upon arrival, the prevention of unauthorised access was observed to be ensured; the main entrance door was secured.
- The outdoor play environment was enclosed by a combination of walls, hedging, fencing and secured gates.
- A shock absorbing surface was available underneath outdoor play equipment, such as climbing frames and slides.
- Safe storage was provided for cleaning agents.

Infection control:

- Dispensers of liquid soap and paper towels were easily accessible at the wash hand basins, along with a foot pedal operated bin. The children were observed to wash their hands before snack time and after using the toilet. It was also noted that a child was reminded to wash their hands after cleaning their nose and the adult who assisted with this practice also washed their hands.
- Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator prior to snack time. This reduced the risk of food spoilage.
- The children's coats and bags were suitably stored.
- The tables used to accommodate the mid-morning snack were sanitised before use. Additional cleaning was observed to be undertaken after the children had been collected.
- The sanitary facility was provided with a supply of natural ventilation.

Administration of medication:

- Suitable storage was ensured for temperature reducing medication. This was maintained in a high-level cupboard and was noted to be in-date.

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Fire safety:

- Fire extinguishers were securely wall mounted.
- Fire exits were clear.

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

- (2)
- (a) A first aid box was accessible to the adults, within the care room.
 - (b) The first aid supplies were readily available at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) See statutory notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IN1881 served.

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 firefighting 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) Monthly fire drill records were presented for review. The most recent fire drill was noted to have taken place on 20 March 2026.
 - (b) The service had a list of the number and type of the available firefighting equipment. Maintenance records demonstrated that the firefighting equipment and the wired smoke alarm were both serviced on 17 November

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(4) Notices, which outlined the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, were displayed at the setting.