

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC154
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Name of Service:	First Steps Creche
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Address of Service:	4 Marrick, Halycon Drive, Silversprings, Co Cork
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Eircode:	T23 RY89
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rosaleen Cotter
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/04/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	15
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Department, Child & Family Agency, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co Cork P81 PD78
Inspection undertaken by:	M. O'Reilly and M. Creagh
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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
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Description of service

First Steps Creche is a privately owned full day care service in operation since 2002. It is registered to accommodate children aged 1 to 6 years and currently caters for children from the age of 1 to 5 years. Also includes children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE). The current opening hours are from 08:00 to 18:00 hours each day Monday to Friday.

The service is located on the ground floor of a converted, detached, two storey house located in a mature residential estate in Silversprings, Cork. On the last inspection dated the 23 May 2024 internal renovations had taken place in the service, reducing the number of playrooms in the service from three playrooms to two playrooms. The service consists of two playrooms, a Wobbler/Toddler room and a Pre-school room. There is an entrance hall, combined office and staff room, a storeroom that stores cots and individual sleeping floor mats when not in use. There is one designated adult toilet, two children's toilets, one nappy changing facility and a sluice room. The service has a secure, partially covered outdoor play area located beside the premises.

Staffing

At time of inspection, there were four adults including the registered provider, working directly with the early years children in the service. The adults who work directly with the early years children all hold a recognised qualification in early childhood care and education or a qualification recognised by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality. (DCDE)

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16, 19,21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27,28 and 29, however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 15. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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.

Additional Information

Inspectors found that the overall governance and management of the service was inadequate. Inspectors found that many of the corrective and preventive actions from the last inspection had not been implemented which demonstrated an inability to maintain and sustain compliance. This posed a risk to care, welfare and safety of children.

- A referral to the Cork City Fire Department was made following the last inspection to review the existing location of emergency fire exit doors following internal renovations to the service. The registered provider informed the Inspectorate that a Fire Safety Officer did review the emergency fire exit doors in the service.
- The registered provider informed the Inspectorate, that planning is currently being sought to remove one of the existing fire exit doors in the service that is no longer required and that leads to the outside area. The registered provider advised there was a delay in the submission of the planning therefore all the non-compliances in relation to renovations of the premise that were present and outlined in the last inspection report dated 23 May 2024 were still not addressed.
- The internal renovations to the premises have not been completed and remain outstanding on this inspection. Once planning is approved the registered provider stated that the internal renovations will be completed as she wants the service to operate to maximum capacity from the start of the preschool year commencing the end of August /September 2025.
- Following the last inspection dated the 23 May 2024 the registered provider agreed to a referral to Quality Development Service, Better Start. While this support organisation contacted the service following receipt of the referral, the service did not engage with them to date.

A regulatory compliance meeting (RCM) was held on the 11 July 2025. In attendance were, the registered provider, two inspection and registration managers and an early years inspector. This meeting was to discuss non compliances found on inspection and how these could be addressed through corrective and preventative actions.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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 registered provider was the named person in charge of the service.
- (b) The registered provider/person in charge arrived at the service at 10:00 hours and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.

(2) The vetting records on three staff members had been reviewed on the last inspection. Documentation was assessed in relation to the requirements of Regulation 9 for the newly appointed staff member who had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection dated the 23 May 2024, the following records were available for the adult:

- (a) The two references on file were from two previous employers.
- (b) Not applicable as the references were not from another source other than a previous employer.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of the staff member. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) A police vetting record was available on file for the staff member who had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of 6 months or more, while over the age of 18 years.

(4)
A copy of a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications was available in respect of the staff member who was employed to work directly with the children.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)(c)

There was no clear management structure in place in the service when the registered provider was not present as there was no alternative person appointed, person in charge in the absence of the registered provider as required.

- The registered provider had not appointed a person working in the service to deputise when she was not present in the service.
- On review of the staff time in, time out record of the previous four weeks and in discussion with the registered provider, it was noted that the registered provider was not present at all times when the service was in operation.

This issue was identified as non-compliant in the last inspection dated the 23 May 2024, 11 May 2023, 02 December 2021 following which the registered provider gave assurances in the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) that the named person in charge or a person appointed to deputise in the absence of the person in charge would be present at all times while the service was in operation.

(2)
All vetting should be completed before a person is appointed, assigned or allowed access to, or contact with, a child attending the service. The following records were not obtained prior to the staff member commencing work in the service.

(a) Evidence of validation for two references were not on file for one staff member.

(3) It was noted that the two references held in respect of one staff member had not been validated until after the staff member had commenced their role working directly with the children.

This issue was identified as non-compliant in previous inspections dated 23 May 2024, 11 May 2023,

02 December 2021 following which the registered provider gave assurances in the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) that all vetting records would be completed prior to a person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to, or contact with, a child attending the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a)(b)(c)

The registered provider stated that she had recently been successful in appointing a person to deputise when she is not present. The records received stated the newly appointed person is to commence working in the service on the 18 August 2025.

(2)

The two references for one staff member in the service were validated.

(3)

The registered provider stated in her reply that all vetting documentation will be received and on file prior to a person commencing in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(a)(b)(c)

A copy of an email dated the 05 June 2025 from a newly appointed person to the service stating that she plans on commencing work in the service on the 18 August 2025 was forwarded to the early years department.

(2)

The early years department received written evidence from the registered provider that the two references for one adult were validated.

(3)

No documented evidence to support written statement submitted by the registered provider.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9(2)(3) has been adequately addressed.

Regulation 1(a)(b)(c) remains non-compliant as the new staff member is not due to commence employment until the 18 August 2025. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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)

Adequate adult to child ratios were observed in the Wobbler/Toddler room.

(2)

Wobbler/Toddler Room

There were 4 children present in the morning and 3 children in the afternoon. On the Inspectors arrival to the service, 1 of the 4 children present was settling in. The Inspectorate were informed the child settling in was 1 year old and that it was the child's second day in the service. The remaining 3 children present were aged between 1 and 2 years with 1 adult in attendance.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

Preschool room

The adult to child ratios were not maintained when staff went on their lunch breaks on the day of inspection, the ratios were as follows.

- At approximately 12:15 hours, there was 1 staff member present with 12 children in the preschool room and the ratio should be 1 adult to every 8 children. There were 5 children aged between 2 and 3 years and 7 children aged between 3 and 5 years. There was no adult present to relieve the staff members when they went on their lunch break.
- At approximately 12:35, there were then 9 children with 1 adult in the preschool room. Two children were aged between 2 and 3 years and 7 children were aged between 3 and 5 years. The ratio is 1 adult to 6 children aged between 2 and 3 years attending full day care. The ratio is 1 adult to 8 children aged between 3 and 6 years attending full day care.

This issue was identified as non-compliant in the last inspection dated 23 May 2024 following which the registered provider gave assurances in the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) that this issue would not occur again.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staffing issue will be resolved when the new staff member commences in her role on the 18 August 2025.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of an email dated the 05 June 2025 from a newly appointed person to the service stating that she plans on commencing work in the service on the 18 August 2025 was forwarded to the early years department.

Summary Comment

This regulation remains non-compliant as the registered providers response did not contain any corrective actions to currently address the findings under Regulation 11(1). While we acknowledge the registered provider has outlined a new staff member is commencing in the service on the 18 August 2025. This issue remains outstanding as regulatory compliance has not been achieved. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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.*

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) to (i)

Inspectors reviewed 12 registration forms which contained all the required information with the exception of one form which had not been completed. The registered provider did not ensure that a record in writing with all the above required particulars (a) to (i) inclusive was on the service file prior to one child commencing in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

On the 15 May 2025 the early years inspectorate received written evidence from the registered provider that the child registration form for one child had been completed and is now on file in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of a completed child registration form for one child with all the above required particulars (a) to (i) inclusive was forwarded to the early years department and deemed satisfactory.

Summary Comment

The service was deemed to meet the regulatory requirement of Regulation 15 (1).

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:

(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

Compliance Information

(1)

(h) The attendance of each child on a daily basis was recorded that included the arrival and departure time.

(k) The service had records detailing any accidents or incidents that had occurred in the service. A sample of the accident and incident records reviewed; each had been counter signed by the child's parent to evidence that the information had been relayed.

Non-Compliance Information

(i) A weekly staff sign in and sign out record was maintained in the service. The weekly staff sign in and sign out record indicated the names of three of the four staff, the arrival and departure and lunch time break of the three staff members each day.

The details on the staff sign in, sign out record was considered inadequate, for the following reasons.

1. One adult working in the service was not recorded on the roster. The sign in and the sign out time or the lunch time breaks for this adult were not recorded.
2. The record did not indicate the adult: child ratio daily in each room of the service

These issues were identified as non-compliant on the last inspection dated the 23 May 2024 following which the registered provider gave assurances in the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) that all were addressed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that going forward, staff rosters will be recorded at the back of the child register/daily role book. All staff will be required to sign this daily.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence to support the registered providers written statement was submitted.

Summary Comment

This regulation remains non-compliant as the registered providers response did not contain corrective actions to address the findings of Regulation 16 (i) points 1 and 2. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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 service promoted healthy eating and the food provided by the parents and guardians for the mid-morning snack was mainly fruit and a hot meal was provided at lunch time.

- Support and assistance offered by the adults during mealtimes was appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children in their care. For example, in the Wobblers/ Toddlers room the children had the opportunity to feed themselves. The available cutlery was suitably sized and easily handled by the children.
- Children’s toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Independent use of the toilet was encouraged. A staff member was observed supervising and assisting where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying, and the children were supported and encouraged prior to eating, after toileting, and outdoor play in the Pre-school room.
- Shortly after eating lunch, the children in the Wobbler/Toddler room were facilitated to sleep as needed, during a scheduled rest period when the Wobbler/Toddler room was converted into a sleep room.
- There was adequate space in the care rooms to accommodate a variety of play activities.
- Children had sufficient space to move about freely indoors and outdoors. Transitions were made as smooth as possible when children moved from their room to the outdoor play area. The children from the Preschool room were observed playing in the outdoor play area in the morning and in the afternoon on day of inspection.

Supporting relationships:

- The staff members were observed calm and relaxed whilst facilitating play opportunities and carrying out caring duties and when children were calmly assisted to resolve minor conflicts.
- Staff were observed to interact in a caring manner with the children building their confidence and communication skills within the setting. The mid-morning meal was observed to be a social occasion, as the children chatted freely in a relaxed environment with their peers and with the staff and were offered appropriate assistance by the staff for example, peeling of fruit.

Physical and material environment:

- The indoor environment of the Pre-school room was laid out in defined interest areas, including home, construction, arts and crafts and tabletop activities area.
- Rest areas were available to the children in both playrooms to allow the children to opt out of play activities and relax if they so wished.
- The shelving was set low in both rooms to display play materials which were mostly plastic and wooden in nature and easily washable. The low shelving facilitated easy access to the materials by the children.
- There was a secured partially covered, outdoor play area positioned beside the facility. The two playrooms had direct access to the outdoor play area which had an all-weather surface. In the covered

area the children were provided with chairs and tables and a shelving unit where blocks and fine motor play equipment were stored. There was also a sand unit with accompanying play equipment, easel, dolls and prams. The part of the outdoor play area not covered, the children had a choice of activities such as a selection of push and ride on toys and a large and small climbing frame with slides. The older children were observed engaged in free play and gross motor play on day of inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The Preschool room had a range of tabletop activities and games to encourage sociable interaction. Tabletop activities included fine motor skill materials such as jig saws and puzzles and children had access to small and large construction items and small utensils to prompt imagination and pretend play.
- All items of interest were stored at child level such as farm and zoo animals, handheld cars and trucks, dolls, different sized blocks and a variety of art and craft materials.
- Colourful, sensory, and sound making age-appropriate play equipment was available to the children in the Wobbler/Toddler room. Other play equipment available to the children included shape sorters, blocks, activity centre, see saw, handheld toys, push toys and books.

Non-Compliance Information

- In the Wobbler/Toddler room, four of the children’s chairs were too low to be used with the table they were positioned at. It was observed that when the children were seated at the table on said chairs, they were sitting on the edge of the seats. There was a large space between the child and the back of the chair therefore the child had no back support. The staff were unable to push the chairs under the table. This did not allow for the children to sit comfortably during mealtimes or when engaging in tabletop activities.

This issue was identified as non-compliant in the last inspection dated the 23 May 2024 following which the registered provider gave assurances in the corrective and preventative response (CAPA).

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

New age-appropriate wooden chairs, with strap support, for the children in the Wobbler /Toddler room were purchased.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the newly purchased child size chairs was forwarded to the early years department.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance identified under Regulation 21 has been adequately addressed.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The parents/guardians provided all the food and drink for the children including the main hot meal which was reheated on site. The food was served to the children by the adults in the service.
- Fridges were located in each of the playrooms for the storage of perishable items provided by the parents/guardians for all meals and snacks.
- The children had access to their own water bottles so that they could help themselves to drinks when they were thirsty.

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 the inspector's arrival at the service, the main entrance door was found to have been adequately secured and was maintained secure when not in use.
- Water temperatures at the wash hand basins were thermostatically controlled, so as not to exceed 43°C. Recorded water temperatures in the wash hand basins in the children's toilets and nappy changing areas were between 30°C to 31°C on day of inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the children's reach in the nappy changing area.
- First aid boxes were appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.

- The outdoor area was noted to be fully enclosed and secured.

Infection control:

- There was thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels at the hand washing facilities in the children's and adult toilets and nappy changing facility.
- The tables were sanitised prior to lunch and snack mealtimes.
- Handwashing by the children was observed before snacks, lunch and after toileting, and outdoor play.
- Within the nappy changing areas, there were neat and tidy individual storage for the children's toiletries at adult height. It was observed that there was a supply of nappies for each of the children that required nappy changing. The service also had a supply of extra nappies available on site at time of inspection.
- Non-contact bins were available for the storage of used nappies.

Administration of medication:

- The administration of medication was not observed during the inspection.
- There was only one record of staff recorded details of medication given that a child received while in the service. The medication was recorded individually under the child's name.

Safe sleep:

- The children aged under 2 years and over 2 years rest needs were facilitated in the Wobbler /Toddler room that was converted into a sleep room after lunch. There were adequate numbers of standard cots with safety mattresses for children under two that required a sleep with individual accompanying bed linen.
- Each of the safety mattresses were covered with a waterproof mattress cover.
- The children over 2 years (from the Preschool room) rest needs were also met when individual padded sleeping floor mats were set up in the Wobbler/Toddler room.
- A distance of 50cm was ensured between the three cots and the three sleeping mats, while said cots and sleeping mats were in use. It was noted that the cots were separated by movable partitions, which were placed directly in between the cots. The staff stated the partitions were in place to assist the children from being distracted by the other children in the room at sleep time.

Fire safety:

- Emergency fire exit doors in the playrooms were noted to be maintained free from any obstruction and the emergency lighting of the fire exit signs were illuminated in the two playrooms on day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General safety:

The following were safety issues found on day of inspection:

1. In the outdoor play area, there was an open area on the elevated part of the wooden climbing frame where a broken slide was removed. The staff had put loose cords across the open space which was poorly guarded and considered inadequate to prevent children jumping, falling off or being pushed off with the potential risk of receiving an injury. This open elevated area was at a fall height from the ground. Children were observed playing on this climbing frame on day of inspection and the open elevated space was considered a safety hazard in its present state.
2. There were two bolts protruding from the climbing frame which posed a safety risk as a child could entangle clothing or snag their skin while playing.
3. Supervision of sleeping children was found to be inadequate. The adult supervising the sleeping children was observed leaving the room on three occasions. Three children were sleeping in cots aged between 1 and 2 years and 3 children aged between 2 and 3 years were sleeping on floor beds. If one or more children are sleeping on floor beds, the supervising adult must remain in the room to ensure adequate supervision.
4. Children had unsupervised access to cleaning agents that were stored at child height in the children's toilet beside the Preschool room that children could ingest or cause a skin irritation.
5. There was a loose cable visibly within reach of children in the Preschool room that posed the risk of strangulation.
6. There was no safety precautions taken on the low-level glass on the patio door leading to the covered outdoor play area increasing the risk of a child sustaining a collision injury.
7. In the children's toilet area beside the Preschool room, the joining's in the floor cover located in the centre of the children's toilet were lifting and has the potential risk of causing a trip hazard.
8. Dust particles covered the electrical vent in the nappy changing room which may impede the vent working properly and providing adequate ventilation.

Issues 7. 8. were identified as non-compliant in previous inspections the 23 May 2024, 11 May 2023, 02 December 2021 following which the registered provider gave assurances that each were addressed.

Infection control:

The following observed practices increased the risk of cross infection:

9. During the mid-morning snack in the Preschool room, all of the children were noted to eat their fruit directly from table surface, as crockery was not provided by the staff.
10. It was observed that staff did not ensure that the children's hands were washed and dried after nappy changing.
11. The bin for the disposal of paper towels in the children's toilet beside the Pre-school room was not a pedal operated lidded bin.
12. Children had unsupervised access to a toilet brush that was stored on the floor of the children's toilet beside the Preschool room. Toilet brushes should be stored out of reach of children but easily accessible to staff for cleaning purposes.

Issues 9. 10. 11. 12. were identified as non-compliant in previous inspections following which the registered provider gave assurances that each were addressed.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General safety:

1. Inspectorate received an email from the registered provider on the 15 August 2025 showing the area where the slide had been removed, wooden planks had been installed across the open space therefore securing the area.
2. The two bolts were removed on the climbing frame where the broken slide was located.
3. An adult will be in the room at all times supervising sleeping children.
4. All cleaning agents have been relocated to the locked utility room. The children have no access to the utility room.
5. The trailing phone cable within reach of children in the preschool room on day of inspection has now been encased and children no longer have access to the cable.
6. Visibility strips are now in place on the low-level glass on the patio door in the preschool room leading to the covered outdoor play area.
7. The opened floor joining's in the centre of the children's toilet have been taped down as a temporary measure until the building works are completed. The registered provider plans on laying a new floor cover in the children's toilet beside the preschool room when the building works are completed.

Infection control:

8. The registered provider stated the electric operated vent in the nappy changing room was cleaned and will be checked monthly to ensure it is in a proper state of repair and cleaned regularly.
9. The registered provider stated suitable individual bowls are now provided for the children, at all snack and mealtimes while attending the service.
10. Staff will ensure that all children's hands are washed and dried after nappy changing at the wash hand basin located in the nappy changing room.
11. The bin for the disposal of paper towels in the children's toilet beside the pre-school room was removed and a pedal operated lidded bin is now in place. The registered provider will ensure that only pedal operated lidded bins are provided in all areas of the service.
12. The toilet brush has been removed from the children's toilet beside the preschool room and is now stored in the utility room located near the children's toilet.

Supporting documentation submitted

General safety:

1. Photographic evidence of the wooden planks installed across the open space on the climbing frame was submitted.
2. Photographic evidence of the area showed that the bolts had been removed.
3. There was no evidence submitted with the registered providers reply.
4. Photographic evidence showed that the cleaning agents that were stored at child height in the children's toilet beside the Preschool room were removed.
5. Photographic evidence of the encased phone cable was submitted.
6. Photographic evidence of strips across the patio door in the preschool room was submitted.
7. Photographic evidence of the tape covering the floor joining located in the children's toilet beside the preschool room was submitted.

Infection control:

8. Photographic evidence of the cleaned vent in the nappy changing room was submitted.
9. No evidence was received.
10. No evidence was received.
11. Photographic evidence of a pedal operated lidded bin was submitted.
12. No evidence was received.

Summary Comment

The inspectors have reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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 was one staff member working in the service that had a current certified First Aid Responder certificate (FAR).
- (2)
(a) The first aid boxes were safely stored out of children's reach in the service.
(b) The first aid boxes were available to adults at all times if in the event that a child may require treatment.

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) A record of monthly fire drills carried out in each room was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place in the Wobbler Room on the 20 March 2025 and in the Preschool room on the 16 April 2025.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced on the 31 July 2024, and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced on 10 January 2025.

(4)
The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

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 the service was adequately insured, with insurance for 30 children until 27 March 2026. The records detailed the category of service covered which was full day care, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(b) From visual inspection the premises appeared secure. The entrance door was adequately secured to prevent unauthorised entry and unsupervised exit of children from the service. The outdoor area was adequately secured.

(c) The two playrooms were provided with a combination of natural light, through windows and artificial lighting. Light fittings were noted to have protective covers installed. There were openable windows in both playrooms and in the children's toilet facility. Mechanical ventilation was in place in the nappy changing facility.

Non-Compliance Information

The registered provider stated that all construction works would be completed by the 11 August 2024. This was clarified by a copy of an invoice from the builder stating that all construction works would be done at weekends only and completed by the 11 August 2024. However, on this inspection the following issues had not been addressed and remain non-compliant.

(c)

1. A persistent malodour was noted in the staff room/administration room in the morning time. Inspectorate asked the registered provider to open the window in the room. The odour when checked was noted to be not as offensive in the afternoon.

(d)

2. There was evidence of damp on two corners of the ceiling in the Wobbler/Toddler room. There were small open holes visible around the centre of the ceiling. The registered provider/person in charge stated that the visible holes in the ceiling were made from ceiling lights that were moved to another area in the ceiling.
3. One area in the ceiling in the Preschool room had been plastered. The registered provider stated the area was plastered to cover the holes that were made from ceiling lights that were moved to another area in the ceiling. This left an unfinished surface area on ceiling.
4. There was evidence of dampness, chipped and peeling paint visible on the windowsills at child height in the Wobbler/Toddler room.
5. The new wall built between the Pre-school and Wobbler/Toddler room remained unfinished at either side and not provided with a smooth, durable, easily cleanable surface.
6. The washable laminate surface tiles on the wall beside the nappy changing mat had fallen off. The wall the children had access to when their nappy was being changed was not provided with a smooth durable easily cleanable surface.
7. There were visible gaps in the floor in both playrooms where walls had been removed. The rough cement surface was visible and the gaps in the floor covering were considered potential safety risks to the children when playing indoors.

(e)

Since the last inspection dated 23 May 2024, the service had:

8. Removed one of the two wash hand basins in the children's toilet facility beside the Preschool room. There were 12 children in attendance in the Preschool room on day of inspection. The ratio of wash hand basins is 1 wash hand basin to every 11 children. A second wash hand basin was required.

9. The surface of the wall at child height, in the children’s toilet facility beside the Pre-school room where the wash hand basin was removed, was rough to touch with chipped paint and not easily cleanable.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA 2) received from the registered provider post the regulatory compliance meeting (RCM) the following was stated:

- (c)
1. The registered provider stated that the sink in the staff room/administration room was not suitable. As a result of non-use of the sink, the sink pipes have begun to build up an odour. Once the sink was in regular use, the odour did not occur. This will continue to be monitored. The sink will be replaced as part of the proposed building renovations.
- (d)
2. The registered provider stated in the CAPA reply that, this is part of the renovation work to take place in the service. Some of the work, such as the ceiling holes will commence during the month of July and is due to be completed by the end of July 2025.
 3. The registered provider stated in the CAPA reply that this is part of the planned renovation work to be completed.
 4. The registered provider stated that the work on the windowsill in the Wobbler/Toddler room will be completed in July 25.
 5. The registered provider stated in the CAPA response that the wall would be completed as part of the renovation work.
 6. The registered provider stated that this wall will be tiled once planning is received. If planning is not approved, the other option is to extend the present changing area, which would mean removing this wall.
 7. The registered provider stated that the flooring can only be replaced once the bathroom is restructured as part of the renovation work.
- (e)
8. A second wash hand basin is required and has not been installed in the children’s toilet facility beside the Pre-school room.
 9. The surface of the wall at child height, in the children’s toilet facility beside the Pre-school room where the wash hand basin was removed, remains the same, rough to touch with chipped paint and not easily cleanable.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence was received for 1 to 9, inclusive.

Summary Comment

This regulation remains non-compliant as the registered provider's response did not contain any corrective actions to address the findings outlined under Regulation 29, 1 to 9 inclusive. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.