

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC173
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Name of Service:	Greenmount Community Playgroup Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Greenmount School, Green Street, Cork, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	T12 HE14
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Name of Registered Provider:	Evelyn Murphy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	12/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2 nd Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick V94 XT5F
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
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Description of service

Greenmount Community Playgroup established as a sessional service in 1997. The service is located in Greenmount National School in Cork city. The service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years and offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. The service offers a morning and afternoon session from 8:30am to 11:30am and from 12pm to 3pm, Monday to Friday 38 weeks of the year. The service consists of one care room with sanitary facilities in the main school building and an outdoor area located on the grounds of the national school.

Staffing

There are seven staff employed in the service. The registered provider is not based in the service. On the day of inspection, there were four staff members present. A student on work placement was also present. The designated person in charge does not work directly with the children but is available to provide additional support when needed.

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 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, 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 two named persons available to deputise if needed.
 - (b) The designated person in charge and the two named persons were on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service, and all staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Eight staff files were reviewed and included the file of the registered provider and the student on work placement.
- (a) Nine of the references were from a past employer and were validated.

(b) Seven of the references were from a reputable source and were validated.

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

(d) Police vetting disclosures were available for three staff members who had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) Six staff members working directly with the children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or a qualification deemed relevant by the minister from level 6 to level 8. The registered provider and the student on work placement did not require a qualification.

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) The registered provider ensured there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection.

(3) In the morning session, the minimum adult to child ratios were being adhered to. There were 12 children aged from 3 to 4 years being cared for 3 staff members. The person in charge was available to support the staff if needed. The student on work placement was supernumerary to the adult to child ratios.

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 records were reviewed and were observed to be complete and contained the relevant information outlined from (a) to (i).

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

- The children were observed to be freely moving around the outdoor area during the inspection.

- The children were supported with toileting when needed and the staff supported independence and self-help skills.
- A water station was available to children to promote hydration during the day.
- Children were observed having a mid-morning snack of fruit on arrival to the service. The children had snack at a later time which the service supplied crackers, fruit and toast.
- Individual care plans were available for the children who required them. staff were aware of the needs of the children and were available to support them in their learning and development. It was observed that the environment supported inclusiveness, and the staff outlined the importance of promoting inclusivity.

Supporting relationships

- The person in charge outlined the importance of partnership with parents and guardians in the service. Documented evidence was on display of coffee mornings and lunches where the children's parent and guardians came into the service. Individual meetings were observed to take place with parents and guardians, and this was taking place when the inspector arrived to the service. The staff outlined the importance of communication with each child's parents on supporting the learning and development of each child and ensuring each child's needs are being met.
- The staff were observed to interact with the children in a respectful and positive manner. This was observed when a child was putting on his shoes. The staff were observed giving the child a choice putting his shoes or wellie boots on.
- The staff were observed to communicate with the children and ensured they were at the child level when speaking to them. It was observed that the staff followed the cues of the children. Children were observed to communicate verbally and non-verbally and it was observed the staff communicated with the children in the child's preferred way.
- The staff were observed showing empathy to children when they displayed signs of emotion.
- It was observed during the inspection that the staff worked well together and there was a sense of teamwork among the staff.

Programme of activities

- The children were observed playing on ride on bikes.
- The children were observed playing on the climbing frame and slide.
- The children were colouring with the staff and speaking about what they had drawn.
- The children were observed playing in a tent which allowed for a space for the children to take time away from the larger group.

- The children had access to the mud kitchen area where digging materials were available for the children to use.
- The children were observed playing in the outdoor classroom shed where they played with cars, plastic blocks and small world toys.

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 door into the care room was secured and the gate to the outdoor area was secured. This prevented any child from exiting unsupervised or any unauthorised access to the service.
- Blind cords were observed to be secured during the inspection.
- The outdoor area and care room was observed to be safe environments for the children to learn and play in during the inspection.
- All toys and equipment observed was in good condition on inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach to the children on inspection.
- Waste was stored in an area that was not accessible to children.
- Medication was stored in its original container and was clearly labelled.

Infection Control:

- Children were observed to wash their hands after toileting and before snack time.
- Perishable items for the children's lunches were stored in a refrigerator to prevent food spoilage.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed to be administered on the day of inspection. Staff were aware of the procedures in place in the event of medicine needing to be administered.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exits were observed to be clear and free from obstruction.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. A chemical toilet was observed to be in use by the children in the outdoor area. The use of chemical toilets is not permitted in an early year's service due to infection control concerns and disinfection purposes. This posed a risk to the children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

Corrective Action

The registered provider stated in their response that the portable toilet has now been taken back by the company that supplied it, therefore, is no longer available in our outdoor area.

Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that the chemical toilet is not on the premises and the service will not have one going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Documented evidence from the supplier of the chemical toilet was submitted to the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The registered providers response and documented evidence was reviewed by the inspectorate 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) Four staff members held an in-date certificate in First Aid Responder (FAR). At least one staff member that held First Aid Responder training was on the premises while the service was in operation.

(2)
(a) & (b) The first aid box was safely stored and easily accessible to the staff in the event of it being required. On discussion, the staff were aware of its location in the care room. The first aid box was stored out of reach to the children. The first aid box was observed to be fully stocked.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) *A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-*
(a) *any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and*
(b) *the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

(4) *A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.*

Compliance Information

(1)
(a) There were written records available of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill had taken place in June 2025 due to the service being closed for the summer holidays. The person in charge outlined to the inspector that a fire drill was to take place in the coming week.
(b) There were records available for the number, type and maintenance records of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the service. Maintenance records outlined an annual service had taken place in March and June 2025.

(4) A fire evacuation notice was displayed in the care room of the service in the event of a fire occurring.

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. The insurance policy commenced on 28 March 2025 and expired on 27 March 2026.