

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC244
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Name of Service:	S & R Childcare
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Address of Service:	Station Road, Millstreet, Co Cork
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Eircode:	P51 HH27
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rena Cooper
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, 13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork, P51 DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	N O'Donoghue
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

S & R Childcare is a private early years sessional service facilitating children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. While the service is registered to accommodate children aged from 2 years to 6 years, children currently attending are aged from 2 years 8 months to 5 years old. The service is registered to operate two sessions; one in the morning from 9.00am to 12.00pm, and one in the afternoon from 12.30pm until 3.30pm, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks of the year. However, the service is operating the morning session only at this time.

It operates from a purposefully converted house, located at the end of a row of houses, on a side street in the town of Millstreet in north Cork. It comprises of a small entrance area, large care room off which there is an office with adult sanitary facilities, two children's toilets and a small covered, dedicated, outdoor play area accessible from the care room at the rear of the service.

Staffing

There were three adults attached to the service on day of inspection. This included the registered provider who is service based, childcare practitioner and relief childcare practitioner.

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 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,*

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(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 named person who could deputise on the premises on the day of inspection.

(b) From review of the roster a person in charge was on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.

(c) There was a clearly identified management structure in the service. This included the person in charge, deputy person in charge and relief childcare practitioner.

(2) There are three adults attached to the service; all three adults files were open to inspection.

(a) Of the six references required, four validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Of the six references required, two validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures has been obtained for all the three adults with direct access to children. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was deemed to be required for two of the three adults working in the service and copies of the relevant documents were maintained on file for the two adults.

(4) All three adults working directly with children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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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) The person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.

(3) On the day of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of the regulation.

- In the Preschool room, there were 2 staff working with 21 children, aged between 3 years and 4 years and 6 months, all attending sessional care.

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) Twenty-four children were registered as attending the service. Of the 24 children registered, a review of 10 enrolment records were open to inspection. All 10 records inspected had the detail required as listed 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

Basic needs:

- Drink bottles of water were brought in from home, children had access to these bottles at all times and were stored on child height shelving.
- Children were encouraged in developing their independence skills such as putting on their own coat and zipping it up. Staff were available to support children if required.
- Parents/guardians provided a mid-morning snack which consisted of sandwiches, fruit and yoghurts.
- The children were observed independently accessing the sanitary areas. The staff were available to provide assistance, if required.
- Children had access to soft tissues to clean their noses themselves. Staff were observed cleaning children's faces after meals and throughout the day.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff spoke with children at their level, in a calm and relaxed tone. Children were at ease with staff and were comfortable in expressing their feelings and emotions to the staff members.
- During mealtime staff sat at the table and engaged in social conversations with the children.

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- Partnership with the parents was a predominant focus in the service. Staff engage with parents at collection and drop off.
- Staff completed individual activities with children. These activities included matching colours and pictures, puzzle making, reading story books and colouring.
- Staff were observant of children's needs and were observed to comfort children when they were upset. This was observed when a child was upset and a staff member sat with the child and comforted them until they were ready to play.

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 internal and external doors of the service were secured and prevented children from exiting the premises and unauthorised persons accessing the service.
- Toys and equipment assessed were in good condition and well maintained.
- Blind cords were securely out of reach of children.
- The openable windows were out of reach of children.

Infection control:

- Staff were observed cleaning tables between activities and prior to mealtimes.
- Regular handwashing was observed throughout the day. Staff were observant of handwashing and ensured children's hands were clean from dirt from outdoor play.
- Pedal operated bins were observed in the main room and sanitary facilities.
- All perishable foods were stored in the refrigerator.
- Appropriate water temperatures were recorded in the room and sanitary facility. The water temperature ranged from 34.5°C to 35.0°C.

Administration of medication:

- No administration of medication was observed on the day of inspection. Discussion with staff ensured staff were aware of the correct process for administering medication in the event it was required.

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- Anti-febrile medication was observed to be in date, stored in its original container, and inaccessible to the children.

Fire safety:

- Fire exits were clear of any obstruction and were clearly identified in the room on the day of inspection.
- Fire equipment was available in the event it was required.

Non-Compliance Information

Administration of medication:

It was observed that one pre-filled auto injector was out of date on day of inspection. The date on the device was January 2026. The registered provider was unaware the medication was out of date. On discussion with the registered provider, they contacted the parents promptly to get an up-to-date device present on the premises. The device was replaced with one currently in date until January 2027. Not ensuring the pre-filled auto injector was in date posed a safety risk to the child.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Administration of medication:

The registered provider replaced the pre-filled auto injector promptly. The service have put the expiry date of the medication in a visible area and will ensure to conduct regular checks.

Supporting documentation submitted

Administration of medication:

Photographic evidence of the new pre-filled auto injector was forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that a staff member trained in First Aid Response (FAR) was available at all times to the children attending the preschool service.

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) Regular monthly fire drills were documented in the room, the most recent fire drills were completed on 27 February 2026.

(b) A list, which detailed the number and type of firefighting equipment was maintained on file. The records indicated that the smoke detection system and fire alarm system was serviced in November 2026 and the firefighting equipment was serviced on 12 November 2026.

(4) The fire evacuation procedure, outlining details of the steps to be followed in the event of a fire, were displayed in various locations throughout the premises. The fire assembly points were clearly signposted.

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Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

(d) The premises appeared to be maintained in a clean manner, with regular cleaning schedules displayed throughout the service. On discussion with the registered provider, it was identified that regular checks of equipment and the premise is conducted.