

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC328
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Name of Service:	Playland Creche
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Address of Service:	St. Mary's on the Hill, Knocknaheeney, Cork.
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Eircode:	T23 AH26
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Name of Registered Provider:	Maura Fennessy
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	21/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P1DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher
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

Playland Creche is a registered part time early years service which operates from one classroom in St Mary's on the Hill Primary School in Knocknaheeny Cork. The service is registered to cater for children aged 1 to 6 years but currently the children are aged between 2 and 3 years old. The operating hours are 08:50 to 12:30 Monday to Friday. The service has access to an outdoor area and a school hall. The outdoor area is currently closed for renovation.

Staffing

There is a total of four staff employed by the service. The register provider is based in the school in an alternative role and is not service based. On the day of inspection, two staff members were present in the service who were working 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9: Management and recruitment, Regulation 11: Staffing levels, Regulation 15: Record of a preschool child, Regulation 19: Health, welfare and

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development of a preschool child, Regulation 23: Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, Regulation 25: First aid, and Regulation 28: Insurance, however on inspection additional non-compliances which posed a risk were identified under Regulation 8 Notification of change in circumstances. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations 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

A referral has been sent to Service Operating Outside of Registration (SOORS). Further information is available under Regulation 8 of the report.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, registered provider, person in charge and staff who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN 1903	21/04/2026	One adult present on the day of inspection who had ECRIS Garda vetting completed did not have police vetting available.
Status	The registered provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	

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Part II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider had not notified the agency of the change to the designated person in charge in the service. On discussion with the person in charge on the day of inspection, the inspector was informed that they commenced this role in February 2026. A referral was submitted to SOORS.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

An application has been submitted to TUSLA for the change in circumstances to be complete. The service will ensure that a change in circumstances when required is completed in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

Tracking reference number received.

Summary Comment

The change in circumstances has been completed. The noncompliance identified under Regulation 8 has now been addressed.

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*

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(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) The service had a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named deputy, who could deputise as required.
 - (b) The person in charge and the deputy were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy were on duty at all times, during the hours of operation.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to five adults attached to the service including the registered provider were the subject of the inspection.
- (a) Of the 10 required references, 4 were from previous employers with the records of validation on file.
 - (b) Of the 10 required references, 6 were from sources other than previous employers with the records of validation on file.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained and were on file for each of the five adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

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(4) Records demonstrated that four adults had achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, at level 5 to 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)
- (d) See statutory notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IN1903 served.
- (3) Police vetting for one adult as listed to be required in paragraph (2) was not carried out prior to the adult being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The police vetting has now been complete. An employment check list is in place to ensure this is completed prior to employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of the police vetting received.

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliances under Regulation 9.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

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Compliance Information

- (1) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care of the children in attendance at all times.
- (2) The service maintained the minimum ratio required as per regulation in the care room. The 10 children attending the service were supervised directly by 2 adults.
- (a) The service operated with at least two adults present at all times. This was observed on the day of inspection and was evident through examination of the staff roster.

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) The service had 24 children's records available for inspection and a sample of 12 of these were inspected. All the records inspected were found to contain the required information as listed in (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g) and (i).

Non-Compliance Information

- (h) Seven of the 12 records did not have a record of immunisations received. Not having children's records complete may hinder the care and safety of the children in the service.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The parents and guardians of the children who did not have records of immunisations have been contacted and the records have been updated. Records of contact with parents will be recorded and an immunisation record log is kept.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the immunisation record log received.

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 15.

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

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of the relevant documents:

Basic needs:

- Snacks were provided by the service, with some parents and guardians opting to send snacks for children. These were observed to be healthy and nutritious. Children were observed eating filled sandwiches, cereal, bread, crackers, yogurts and a variety of fruits.
- Staff interacted with the children during snack time and were observed helping and assisting the children where necessary.

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- Nappy changing in the service was observed to be carried out. Each child's dignity and privacy were observed to be respected with one child being changed at a time. Supervision and assistance were provided for the children who accessed the sanitary facilities.
- Children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of a child size vinyl sofa.
- Appropriate seating was available in the form of low-level tables and chairs.
- Children's independence was promoted by staff in the care room. An example of this was when children were encouraged to tidy up after play.

Supporting relationships:

- Throughout the morning, staff were heard engaging in social conversation with the children which helped promote a relaxed and happy atmosphere.
- Interactions between the staff and children were observed to be warm and sensitive. Examples included when children were encouraged to complete puzzles, assisted with hand painting, built blocks, danced to music, played with superhero toys and story time.
- The person in charge informed the inspector that parents and guardians were communicated with via email, phone messages, digital application and at drop off and collection. Meetings were offered outside of these times at parental request.

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 entrance door was secured appropriately. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition.
- There were no cables or trailing flexes accessible to the children on the day of inspection.

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Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before meals and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available in the care room for the storage of perishable foods.
- The children's nappies and wipes were maintained in a clearly labelled storage area.
- Lidded, foot pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste during the inspection.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground on wall hooks to prevent cross infection.
- The two cots in the service had individual bed sheets and the person in charge informed the inspector that if used they were laundered after.

Administration of medication:

- The person in charge informed the inspector that no regular medicine was being administered to a child currently in the service and parental consent was gained for prescribed medication to be administered.

Fire safety:

- The fire exit was noted to be free from obstruction.
- The fire extinguisher was secured to the wall.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

Following four observed nappy changing procedures, it was noted that the adult wore the same apron for all the nappy changes, which posed a risk of cross infection. It is acknowledged that when this was highlighted by the inspector, the adult changed the apron.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following response was received from the registered provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection control:

Disposable aprons are worn for each nappy change. The nappy changing policy notes that aprons were to be changed after each nappy change.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection control:

Photograph of disposable aprons.

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Photo of nappy changing policy.

Photograph of sign to change aprons after each nappy change.

Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 23.

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) Up to date records of First Aid Response (FAR) certification were in place for one of the adults working in the service.

(2)

(a) There was one sufficiently stocked first aid box available in the service, which was safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) The first aid supplies were accessible, should they be required.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the services was adequately insured. The insurance policy commenced on 13 December 2025 and will expire on 12 December 2026.