

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC402
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Name of Service:	Rathduff Community Playschool Ltd
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Address of Service:	Ted's Hall (Adjacent to National School), Rathduff, Co Cork
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Eircode:	T23 C4VC
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Name of Registered Provider:	Karen Kenny
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	27	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

Rathduff Community Playschool was established in 1999 and is a registered early years sessional service that caters for children from aged 2 to 6 years and attending the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE). The opening hours are from 9.30am to 12.30pm each morning Monday to Friday. A registered school aged care service is in operation each evening.

The service operates from a single storey community hall, which is adjacent to the local primary school in Rathduff, Co Cork. There are two adjoining care rooms, sanitary facilities and a kitchen available within the building. The children attending also have access to the neighbouring school yard for outdoor play.

Staffing

There are nine adults attached to the service. This includes the person in charge, deputy person in charge, early years educators, Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) workers and relief workers. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. There is a registered School Age Service operating from the service.

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, deputy person in charge, early years educators 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 deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection. In the event the person or deputy person in charge were not on the premises a named person able to deputise was available.

(b) A person in charge or named deputy person in charge were 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 person in charge, deputy person in charge, early years educators and AIM workers.

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

(a) Of the 18 references required, 14 validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Of the 18 references required, 4 validated reference was available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures has been obtained for all nine 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 was not deemed to be required for any of the nine adults attached to the service.

(4) All eight staff working directly with children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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 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 Preschool room 1, there was 2 staff working with 9 children aged between 3 years and 4 years and 9 months, all attending sessional care.
- In Preschool room 2, there was 3 staff working with 18 children aged between 2 years and 7 months and 4 years and 9 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;

(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) Children's enrolment forms were assessed for 12 of the children registered as attending the service. The 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

1(a) On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through:

- Direct observation and discussion with staff
- Examination of relevant documentation.

Basic needs:

- Drink bottles of water which were brought in from home, children had access to these bottles at all times.
- During mealtimes, a relaxed social environment was evident. Staff allowed children to eat at their own pace and engaged in conversations with the children at snack time. Children were supported by staff with the opening of their snacks and placing them on plates.
- There was a supply of tissues available to the children and staff supported children with cleaning their noses when required.
- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were attended to regularly and staff assisted children when they needed it.

- Good handwashing routines were evident on the day of inspection. Staff supervised children to wash their hands before snack and after playing outside.
- Children in both care rooms had access to a rest area consisting of a couch and sponge mats.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff spoke with children at their level, in a calm and relaxed tone. Staff used positive reinforcement language with the children.
- Children engaged in parallel play and were observed to check in on their friends and include them in play.
- Staff were observed meeting with parents at the end of the session, updating them on the activities of the day.
- During mealtime staff sat at the table and engaged in social conversations with the children.
- A key-worker system was in place with named staff members assigned the responsibility for creating close relationships with a designated group of children.

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 service ensured there was adequate equipment and materials available for the number of children attending the service. The service had additional toys and materials on the premises.

Some of the materials observed on the day of inspection indoors included puzzles, kitchen set, building blocks, cars, tractors, storybooks and a creativity corner.

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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent the entry of an unauthorised person into the service or unsupervised exit of a child.
- Cleaning chemicals were safely stored out of reach of children.
- All emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction.
- All low laying cables were safely secured out of reach of the children.
- The outdoor area was secured to ensure no unsupervised exit of a child.

Infection control:

- Windows were open for natural air ventilation.
- Staff were observed cleaning tables between activities and prior to mealtimes.
- Regular handwashing was observed after outdoor play and before snack time. 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 rooms and sanitary facilities.

Administration of medication:

- No administration of medication was observed on the day of inspection. Staff were aware of the storage and appropriate practices in relation to medication administration.

Fire safety:

- Fire exits were clear of obstruction.
- Firefighting equipment was available throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certificate for the service was furnished to the inspector. The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- The contact details for the insurance provider.
- The name and address of the service insured.
- The categories of insurance cover for the service.

The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27 March 2026.

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