

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC453		
Name of Service:	Two Rivers Kindergarten		
Address of Service:	An Sanctoir, Bawnknockane, Ballydehob, Co. Cork		
Eircode:	P81 KV56		
Name of Registered Provider:	Chloe Garde		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	23/03/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM n/a
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		
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		

Description of service

Two Rivers Kindergarten is a registered community-based service. The service is in operation since 2001. The service provides a Steiner philosophy early years sessional service for children aged from 2 to 6 years and for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The current opening hours are from 09:30 to 13:00 hours each day Monday to Friday.

The service operates from a single storey premise nestled within a wooded area a few kilometres from the rural village of Ballydehob in Co Cork. Facilities include two inter-linked playrooms, toilet facilities and an extensive outdoor play area beside the premise.

Staffing

There were 4 adults associated with the service, this included the named registered provider who is not service based. There was 1 of the 3 staff employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. The 3 staff who work directly with the early years children all hold a recognised qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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.

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*

(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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(a) There was a named person in charge and a deputy available to deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge and the deputy were present on the premises on day of the inspection.

(2)

Documentation was assessed in relation to the requirements of Regulation 9 for 4 adults, this included the registered provider and the three staff that worked directly with the children. The following records were available:

(a) Of the required 8 references, all 8 references were from previous employers with records of validation on file.

(b) Not applicable as all records were from a previous employer.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of the 4 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting records were available on file for two adults who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

There was evidence that the 3 staff members working directly with the children had attained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (d) A curriculum vitae record was unavailable for one staff member at time of inspection. The inspectorate was unable to review written record of employment history and to verify whether international police vetting records were required.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) The required curriculum vitae (CV) for one staff was submitted. One processed international police vetting record was required for this staff and was submitted. As the staff member had travelled abroad extensively, a signed statement was submitted by the staff member, declaring they had stayed for less than 6 consecutive months in the other countries, as outlined in the CV. Management stated they will ensure going forward that the required CV record of each adult will be reviewed and stored on site prior to any adult commencing in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

The CV, police vetting record, and signed statement from staff member.

Summary Comment

Correspondence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 9 (2)(d) of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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 in the service on day of the inspection.
- (3)
During the period of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations and an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children.
There were 12 children present in the morning sessional service with 2 adults in attendance at all times. The adult child ratio was correct.

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

- Snack time was observed to be a social occasion, as the children chatted freely in a relaxed environment. The staff members sat at the large table and offered appropriate assistance to the children as required.
- Slippers were worn by the children for indoor play comfort and safety.
- Children's coats and bags and the children's outdoor all in one outfits and wellies were stored on hooks in the decking entrance area so as to encourage independent dressing. The staff were observed assisting the children as required to dress prior to playing outdoors.
- The daily routine was observed to be mainly child led and outdoors under the close supervision of staff.
- Staff were observed to interact in a caring manner with the children building their confidence and communication skills within the setting. Staff helped children to recognise and understand sharing and working together as a group as seen on day of inspection when children were involved in a group discussion all about the transformation of a caterpillar to a butterfly. Another large group discussion was about each child getting the opportunity to tell the group, one thing they did over the weekend. The children were observed waiting their turn and sharing the experience. The activities observed fostered the children's confidence in language development through listening, speech and singing songs during the session.
- There was generous clear floor space in the two interlinked playrooms for the children to enjoy free play, socialise and investigate their environment in a supervised manner.
- The person in charge stated that the parents and guardians were invited to a group meeting held regularly in the kindergarten and various issues are discussed including the activities they plan on doing with the children, emerging interests, themes and the work and maintenance required in the premise and outdoor play area mainly completed by the parents.
- The service managed a digital group application for parents to receive notices regarding the service.

Physical and Material Environment

- The service was situated in a premise which provided two interlinked rooms and a large decking lobby area for the storage of the children's coats, bags and outdoor waterproofs. The premises was clean, airy, bright and well maintained. The person in charge informed the inspectorate that the following renovations were completed since the last inspection: the walls were insulated and cladding placed on the outer walls and a new roof. Indoors, there were new electric heaters installed and timber flooring and the inner walls were painted in the two playrooms.
- Openable windows allowed for natural light and ventilation. The playroom was furnished with sufficient child sized wooden chairs and a large circular table where lunches could be enjoyed and crafts completed.
- The playroom was furnished with play materials and equipment that supported the Steiner philosophy; there was a well-equipped home corner, furnished with small kitchen utensils to entice socialisation and promote the child's imagination.
- The spacious care room afforded children the ability to move freely, as they participated in various activities, such as block building, imaginary play, book reading and tabletop activities.
- The children had access to a rest corner that was furnished with a woven floor mat and cushions.
- Tabletop items were stored in woven baskets and wooden boxes to allow the children to easily access the activities. There were stones, cones, shells, fabrics, knitted dolls, puppets and small wooden construction blocks. The children had access to a wide range of arts and crafts and paints.
- The children had access to a well-equipped and secured garden. There were low lying trees and mature shrubs were hammocks, swings and climbing frames were placed to encourage the children to practice gross motor skill activity.
- There was a covered area to allow the children to avail of outdoor time during wet weather.
- There was a large wooden sand pit placed on decking area for the children's comfort and ease of accessibility to the sand. Associated equipment included buckets, spades and utensils for the children to fully experience sensory play.
- A tap installed at low level was available to the children so that they could fill containers and watering cans independently and enjoy water play.
- There were tunnels, tyres and wooden planks for balance practice. There was a musical area within a low tree enclosure, with sound making apparatus including a large sized colourful xylophone.

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 service promoted healthy eating and the food provided was observed to be healthy and nutritious. The parents and guardians supplied the service with the food. The staff cooked and served the food provided. The children had their own water bottles.
- Healthy, nutritious food were observed being eaten by the children at time of inspection. Whole oranges divided into suitable size segments, cucumber sticks, slices of banana and blueberries. Rice with a soya sauce and dairy cheese was served to the children. The children were served the food on the table and bench seating in the outdoor play area. The service provided appropriate plates, beakers and cutlery for the children.
- There was a dishwasher present in the kitchenette area of one of the playrooms that was suitably secured at time of inspection.
- Perishable food items were stored in the service fridge.

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:

- Two Rivers Kindergarten was suitably secured with a fence and locked gate around the perimeter of the outdoor play area so that a child could not leave the premises unsupervised and unauthorised persons were restricted.
- There were no cleaning agents accessible to the children.
- The first aid box was appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- Water temperatures at the wash hand basins were thermostatically controlled, so as not to exceed 43°C.
- Play materials were found to be in a good state of repair with no pinch points or sharp edges.

- There were no visible cables and flexes accessible to the children.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.
- The children did not have access to the kitchenette area and a low gate was secured to prevent their access.

Infection Control:

- The staff members supervised toilet visits and gently prompted handwashing.
- Suitable handwashing facilities was available in the toilets. Warm water, liquid soap and individual hand towels for the children were in place. Each child had their own cotton hand towel which was hung on their individually named hooks stored in the lobby. It was reported that single use cotton towels were washed on a daily basis at 60 degrees Celsius.
- The children had use of step-ups or pots as required. These were suitably stored.
- The children had access to two separate, child sized toilets and two low level wash hand basins which were clean and well maintained. There was one designated staff toilet and wash hand basin.

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

(2)

(a) The first aid box was stored out of children's reach in the service. The first aid box were stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises

(b) The fully equipped first aid box was available at all times to adults if in the event that a child may require treatment.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) While the two staff members had a current paediatric first aid training certificate, there were no staff available at time of inspection with appropriate first aid responder (FAR) training.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) the following was stated:

Two staff members are booked to attend first aid responder (FAR) training on the 8th-10th May 2026. Once training is completed, there will be at least one staff member with first aid responder (FAR) training available to the children at all times while the service is in operation.

Supporting documentation submitted

Correspondence from the first aid responder (FAR) training instructor, stating the two staff are booked to attend FAR training course was submitted and deemed satisfactory. The written statement from the registered provider was also accepted.

Summary Comment

This issue remains outstanding and will be reviewed on the next inspection. The registered provider, on receipt of the completed FAR training certificates, will forward the certificates to the Inspectorate.

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 was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place on the 23 February 2026.

(b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced on the 28 October 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 a maximum of 20 children until 27/03/2026. The records detailed the category of service covered which was sessional service, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.