

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC473
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Name of Service:	Phyll's Preschool
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Address of Service:	Bealnamorrive, Leads, Coachford, Cork, Co Cork
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Eircode:	P12 F962
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Name of Registered Provider:	Rowena Fisher
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	7	PM	
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Administration Office, St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork. T23X440.
Inspection undertaken by:	Deirdre Cotter
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

Phyll's Preschool is a registered privately owned early years service in operation since 2015. This service is registered to cater for children from 2-6 years and at time of inspection the service was offering a morning and afternoon sessional service to the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The current opening hours are from 9am to 12pm, and from 1 to 4pm each day Monday to Friday.

Phyll's Preschool operates from one designated playroom located in the registered provider private residence. The service is in the rural area of Coachford, Co Cork. The service has a spacious outdoor play area located beside the playroom. There are additional sanitary accommodations in the outside play area.

Staffing

There were two adults associated with the service, including the registered provider. These adults both worked directly with the children. Each of the adults had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 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*

(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 registered provider had ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider as well as the deputy person in charge were on the premises for the duration of the inspection. The roster for the service demonstrated that both of these people were due to remain on site for the duration of the service.

2.

Both staff files were assessed for the staff attached to the service.

(a) Three of the four references were available from a past employer and had been validated.

(b) One of the four references were available from a source other than a past employer and had been validated.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for both 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 required as neither of the staff members had lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.

4.

Both of the staff members held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from Level 5 to Level 7 on the National Qualifications Framework 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 person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of staff working directly with the children.
- (3) On the day of inspection, it was observed that seven children between the ages of 3.5 to 5 years were being cared for by two adults.
- The service met the minimum adult to child ratios requirements during the inspection.

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:

- Children had access to their water bottles at all times. Water bottles were stored on a low level table in the care room.
- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were attended to regularly and staff assisted children when they needed it.
- The rooms were well laid out to encourage the children to move freely between the interest areas.

- The outdoor area was freely accessible to children at all times throughout the day, there was a supply of weather appropriate clothing available.
- It was evident through observation on the day of inspection that children's voices were listened to, and children were able to communicate their needs to attentive adults.

Supporting relationships:

- It was observed that staff spoke at the child's level in a calm, soft tone. Children were at ease with staff and were comfortable in expressing their feelings and emotions to the staff members. Staff were observant of children's needs and were seen to comfort children when they were upset.
- It was observed that staff members sat with the children while they were at play and engaged with them in a meaningful way. These activities included a tea party in the home corner, modelling dough and a cutting activity in the mark making area.
- It was noted that the children's artwork and a family wall had been displayed in the care room with pictures of each child's family. This ensured that children felt seen and created a space where every child was welcome.
- During the mealtime, 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.

Programme of activities:

- The service operated from a play-based pedagogy. This was observed on the day of inspection through the combination of adult led and child led play.
- There were short, medium and long term curriculum plans in place. It was noted that these were up to date and followed the interests of the children. For example, at circle time, one of the children mentioned they had gone fishing at the weekend, and the educators were observed to note this and discuss briefly how they could build on that interest in the coming days.
- The children's learning was documented in learning journals. During the inspection of these journals, the children gathered to show the inspector their work and appeared to have a sense of pride in their learning.
- It was evident on the day of inspection that there was a strong focus on nature and the outdoors. The children were free to access the outdoors throughout the session.

- There were opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors. While the children who chose to remain indoors worked on activities which included early numeracy and mark making; the children who chose to play outside were offered grasses and flowers to make St Bridget's crosses.
- It was evident through observation and examination of documentation that the children were active agents in their learning.

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 main entrance was secured to prevent unauthorised entry to or exit from the premises.
- There was adequate lighting to ensure clear sight of all areas of the room.
- All cleaning materials were stored on high shelves out of reach of children.
- Children's bags and coats were stored safely to prevent slips, trips and falls.
- All electrical cables were out of reach of children.
- There was visibility strips on low level glass panels.
- Windows did not open too widely to avoid children falling or climbing out.
- All toys and play equipment were in a state of good repair.

Infection Control:

- It was noted that the staff reminded children to wash their hands regularly throughout the day, particularly before lunch and when returning from outdoor play.
- The wash hand basins throughout the premises were provided with thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and paper towels. The water temperature was recorded at 33.8°C in one bathroom and at 38.8°C in another bathroom during the inspection.
- Pedal operated bins were available throughout the premises for the safe disposal of used tissues and paper towels.
- A fridge was available for the storage of the children's perishable food in the care room.

Fire Safety:

- The service's fire exits were free from obstruction.
- Firefighting equipment was tethered to the walls near to fire exits.

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 has ensured that one adult had training in first aid response (FAR) and that this person was always accessible to the children.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The services' insurance certificate was available on the premises and demonstrated that the service was adequately insured. The information provided on the insurance certificate included details of the number of children covered daily which was 22. The start date, which was 28 March 2025, the end date, which was 27 March 2026. The certificate also stated the category of service covered which was sessional service and the name and address of the premises. The insurance cover also referred to details regarding, contents, public liability and fire and theft cover.

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,

Compliance Information

(d)

- On the day of inspection, the service appeared to be in good repair with no visible defects.
- There was a routine cleaning schedule in place for the service.
- The service and surrounding areas were visibly clean.
- The outdoor area was in a state of good repair, all equipment was secured in storage cupboards.