

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE111
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Pack of Rogues Community Playschool
-------------------------	-------------------------------------

Address of Service:	Ballyea Community Centre, Ballyea, Darragh, Ennis, Co. Clare
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	V95 H1FN
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Lynda Meaney
-------------------------------------	--------------

Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

Date of Inspection:	20/05/2025
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	12
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare
Inspection undertaken by:	J. Hayes & Á.McCarthy
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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	Not applicable
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Pack of Rogues Community Playschool was established in 2000, in Ballyea, County Clare. The full day care, part time and sessional service is a community-based service managed by a local voluntary committee. The service is registered for 30 pre-school children ranging in age from two to six years and operates Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 18:00. A school age service is provided each afternoon. The childcare facility closes during school holidays throughout the year.

The childcare facility is located in the parish community centre on the same campus as the primary school. The two care rooms are located on the first floor. An outdoor space located to the rear of the premises is used for outdoor play for the children. A large indoor recreation hall is also used by the children for physical and play based activities.

Staffing

Six adults are employed by the service. On the 20 May 2025, two adults were present in the building and three adults had accompanied the older children on a school tour to a local pet farm. The registered provider is currently not working in 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 and safety.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (2) 8(a)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 - First aid (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures (1)(a)(b)(4)

Regulation 28- Insurance

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the adults 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) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the deputy manager was present.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee.

(2)(a)(b) Two written and validated references were available for the registered provider, and five adults employed to work at the service. References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all adults employed to work at the service. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Police vetting was available for three of the four adults who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) Police vetting was not available for one adult who had resided outside of Ireland for a period longer than six consecutive months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) Police Vetting has been applied for in relation to the relevant staff member. Once our staff member has received it, it will be kept on file. We will ensure that any new staff members, who may have worked outside of Ireland for longer than 6 months, have their police vetting before commencing work.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(d) The outstanding police vetting documentation was submitted to the early years inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance in relation to regulation 9(2)(d) has been addressed.

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,

Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection, there were two adults in the service caring for six pre-school children. The adult to child ratio was correct overall in the facility.

(2)
On the 20 May 2025, the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Two adults cared for the six children in attendance in the morning, and two adults cared for five children in the afternoon. Three additional adults were on an outing with seven children aged four to five years.

(8)(a)
The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available in the childcare facility at all times.

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 of Children:

The adults treated the children in a kind and caring manner, and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults praised and encouraged the children, conversed with the children at their level and responded promptly to their cues for assistance. The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings, at mealtime and whilst using the toilet. The children transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor environment, engaging in play-based activities. Mealtime was observed to be a relaxed and sociable occasion. The children in the rainbow room engaged in a range of activities relating to the teddy bears picnic theme, engaging in sensory and pretend play, song and rhyme. Some of the children went on an outing to a local pet farm.

Physical and Material Environment:

One of the two care rooms was in use during the inspection. The two care rooms were appropriately resourced for the age and level of development of the children attending the childcare facility. The indoor environment was laid out with a range of play equipment and materials to provide a number of separate, developed interest areas. A reading/relaxing area contained a large range of picture and story books and soft floor seating for the children to use as required. A home corner section contained play cookers, play foods and household objects. An open shelf section held containers with stackable blocks, transport toys, garage units, lacing, threading materials and baby care doll resources. A tool bench with play work tools was provided in another area. Musical instruments, animal toys, connecting blocks, shop play resources and team games were also available. The messy play area contained painting materials and a selection of arts and crafts resources. Sensory play materials consisted of rice, pasta, cotton wool, sand and water play. The organisation of the play environment supported children's independence and self-directed play. All of the play resources were visible to the children and were accessible on open low level shelving units or as part of a themed interest area. Appropriate low-level seating and tables were interspersed throughout the room, which ensured that children could choose between being mobile or playing at tables or choose floor play activities.

The outdoor play area consisted of an all-weather surface and fixed outdoor climbing and activity equipment, a mud kitchen, sand table, climbing frame and a tunnel. The outdoor environment and the indoor recreational hall had facilities for the children to engage in a variety of play based experiences.

Children attending the service for more than five hours on a full day care basis were not provided with a hot meal. This was not in accordance with best practice guidelines.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Any child attending our service will be required to bring in a hot meal with them. The meal will be heated under the safe food and HACCP guidelines for the child. Our Healthy Eating Policy has been updated and all staff are to complete HACCP Training. Parents of children who are staying longer than 5 hours will be informed that a hot meal is required. This is also outlined in our Healthy Eating Policy.. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Supporting documentation submitted

The healthy eating policy for the service was submitted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance under Regulation 19 has been addressed.

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:

On inspection the following was observed:

All external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from accessing unsafe areas or allowing unsupervised access to the childcare facility.

Suitable handrails were provided on the staircase to ensure the safety of the children when using the stairs.

The outdoor areas were secured with fencing and gates to protect the children within.

The children were signed in and out on arrival to and departure from the service.

Storage facilities were secured and inaccessible to the children.

The blind cords were appropriately secured to the windows throughout the service.

Infection Control:

The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. Completed cleaning schedules were available demonstrating measures taken by staff to clean and maintain the service.

The sanitary facilities were equipped with liquid soap, hand paper towels and warm water.

The children were supported by staff to wash their hands at appropriate intervals, such as after activities, using the toilet and outdoor play and before mealtime.

The children's perishable food items were stored in a refrigerator in the main care room.

Administration of Medication:

The adults demonstrated an awareness of the service's administration of medication policy and procedure.

Documentation was available for the adults to record medication administered to the children in attendance.

Safe Sleep:

Low level beds with individual blankets and bed linen were available for the older children who required sleep.

The adults were aware of the safe sleep policy for the service.

Fire Safety:

The adults had evidence on file of up-to-date fire safety training.

The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.

The fire exits routes and fire assembly points were readily identified with signage. A fire action notice was displayed at all the fire exit points in the building.

Outing:

An outings policy was available for the service and the adults demonstrated awareness of the requirements in the policy.

Permission forms were completed and signed by parents or guardians before children went on outings.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

The Garda vetting disclosure for one adult was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the early year's inspectorate regulatory notice. It is acknowledged that the vetting disclosure was due for renewal two weeks prior to the inspection date.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The staff member has applied for their Garda Clearance which has currently been processed but is awaiting to receive the certificate.

We will ensure to keep a checklist of dates for renewal of items such as Garda Clearance, First Aid Course, Children First etc..

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

A copy of the Garda vetting disclosure document with the application number was submitted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance under Regulation 23 has been addressed as the Garda vetting disclosure process has been completed.

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)

One adult held a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in the main playroom in the childcare facility.

(b)

The first aid box was available in the care room for use by the adults in the event of an emergency.

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)

Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out by the service. The last fire drill took place on 02 April 2025.

(b)

Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system took place on 19 March 2025.

(4)

A fire action notice was displayed at the entrance to the service, demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for 30 children. The insurance policy for the service was valid until 27 March 2026.