

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN024		
Name of Service:	Happy Days Playgroup & Crèche		
Address of Service:	Main Street, Mullagh, Co. Cavan		
Eircode:	AB2 YH26		
Name of Registered Provider:	Jacqueline Brogan		
Service type:	Full Day, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	23/02/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	47	PM 41
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray & AM. Cunningham		
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
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Description of service

Happy Days Playgroup & Crèche is a privately owned service in operation since 2000. The service provides full day care, part time and sessional care to children aged 0 - 6 years and operates from 08:00am to 18:00pm. A school aged service is also provided.

This service is a converted dwellings and consists of the following rooms:

The **Crèche room** provides care to children from 0 to 2 years.

The **Pre-school room** facilitates the care of children from 2 to 3 years.

ECCE room 1 provides care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 4 years.

ECCE room 2 provides care and education to children from 4 to 5 years.

Other facilities include sanitary and nappy changing areas, 1 cot room and a kitchenette off each care room.

Upstairs there is an office, a staff room and toilet. Outdoor spaces are located to the rear of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider employs a manager, assistant manager, 9 childcare staff and 2 school aged staff members.

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.

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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 registered provider, manager, assistant manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) (a)&(b) Fourteen staff files along with 1 student file were reviewed.

Thirty validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 15 adults. 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 3 staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

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(4) All childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above 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.

(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) During the period of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) On the day of inspection, the following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity:

- The Creche room had 10 children ranging in age from 1 to 2 years being cared for by 3 childcare staff and a student. All children were attending on a full day care basis.
- The Pre School room had 10 children ranging in age from 2 to 3 years being cared for by 2 childcare staff. Nine children were attending on a full day care basis while 1 child was attending on sessional hours only.
- The ECCE room 1 had 7 children ranging in age from 2years 8 months to 4 years being cared for by 2 childcare staff. Five children were attending on a full day care basis, 1 child was attending on a part time basis and 1 child was attending on sessional hours only.
- The ECCE room 2 from 10:30am had 20 children ranging in age from 4 to 5 years being cared for by 2 childcare staff and a student. An additional staff member commenced duty at 11:30am.

(8) According to the staff roster there are always at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.

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Non-Compliance Information

(1) On the morning of the inspection in the ECCE room 2 there was not an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending this room. From 09:10 to 10:30am in the ECCE room 2 there was 1 childcare staff member caring for 20 children ranging in age from 4 to 5 years. A student was also present who cannot be counted in adult: child ratios.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff roster has been adjusted to ensure that a relief staff member is available to provide cover when needed. Two staff member that were on leave have now returned to the service, so assurance can be provided that the adult: child ratios will be maintained at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Staff roster.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(i) On the day of the inspection only 2 staff members had signed in. There was no daily sign in record for the remainder of the staff entering and leaving the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

There is now a daily sign in record for all staff entering and leaving the premises. The registered provider will ensure that the sign in record is recorded on a daily basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

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Staff sign in record.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

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) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Children were observed engaging in tabletop activities, art and crafts and free play with children afforded the opportunity to choose and change activities if they so wish. The curriculum was child led with the themes of the month in the care rooms being "All About Me", "Farm Animals", "Camping" and "Numbers" with artwork and activities conducted which supported this theme.
- Mealtimes in the service were observed to be a social and pleasant experience for the children. Staff sat at the table whilst the children ate engaging them in conversation and provided assistance to the children as required. All food in the service was provided by the parents.
- Children's nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Staff members were responsive to the children's cues should they need to use the toilet, with discreet supervision provided and gentle reminders regarding hand washing.
- Any child who became upset were nurtured and cuddled until they settled. During activities children were offered choices and sought out staff members who readily acknowledged and encouraged the children's efforts and accomplishments.

Supporting relationships around children:

- The service uses a software application to communicate with parents and verbally at pick up time regarding activities pertaining to their children during the day.

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- The staff encouraged the children to engage positively with each other by adopting simple social rules such as turn taking, sharing in play activities and resolving minor disputes. Challenging behaviour when presented was dealt with in a calm and caring manner and the children responded well to distraction and re-direction.
- The adult's demonstrated knowledge of the individual care needs of the children especially the children with medical conditions who may require emergency medication. Documented individual care plans were available to safeguard these children while attending the service.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

Compliance Information

(1)(b) Sleep facilities in the service consisted of a cot room off the Crèche room which contained 11 standard cots which were used for the younger children requiring sleep. Additionally, stackable beds were placed in the Pre school room for the older children requiring sleep. Within the care rooms there were mats and cushions for children to take a break from activities and rest if needed.

(3)(a) The enclosed outdoor play areas were located to the rear of the premises:

Area 1 was directly outside the Creche Room. It had soft tiled surface and was enclosed with walls with a secure wooden gate. and contained equipment such as a plastic playhouse, tyres, plastic children's bench, slides, push walker toys and some ride on toys.

Area 2 was a large area with a number of different surfaces such as a large tarmacked area, soft tiled surface and an artificial grass football pitch with a covered area for children to play outdoors in all weather conditions.

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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 play resources in the care rooms were accessible, organised and stored on shelving which allowed the children to select and replace materials. The care room had areas of interest which included a home area, construction area, musical play equipment, animal baskets, book rack beside cosy area, plastic/wooden building blocks, puzzles, dolls area, art and crafts materials which included sensory boxes with sand and coloured rice.
- Equipment in the outdoor spaces included plastic playhouse, tyres, plastic children's bench, slides, push walker toys, sand table, ride on toys and a toy kitchen with play equipment. In the sheltered area tables were available if children wished to do tabletop activities outdoors.

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 following safety measures were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- On the day of inspection both the indoor and outdoor environment appeared safe. The designated person in charge and the staff members had a clear understanding of their role and range of responsibilities to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children.

Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.
- All bins for contaminated waste were foot pedal operated.

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- The hand-washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times. Warm water, hand paper towel and liquid soap was available in the children's sanitary facilities.
- Children's pacifiers were stored in individual boxes.
- Fridges were available in each kitchenette for the storage of perishable items in the children's food boxes.

Safe Sleep:

The following Safe sleep practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- Children who were in cots and on sleep beds were supervised by an adequate number of adults at all times.
- A sleep log was maintained on all sleeping children at 10 minutes interval recording their colour, breathing pattern and position.
- The temperature of the cot room and the care room for children requiring sleep over 1 year of age was maintained between the normal range of 18°C to 22°C.

Fire Safety:

The following Fire Safety practices were observed in the service as demonstrated by the following examples:

- All emergency exit doors were accessible in the event of an evacuation.
- Fire drills were recorded on a monthly basis.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Two staff members garda vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Updated garda vetting is now available for the 2 staff members. The registered provider will ensure that garda vetting is renewed every 3 years and is available for inspection.

Supporting documentation submitted

Two updated garda vetting's.

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Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)(a)(iii)(iv) & (b) On the day of inspection the Early Years Inspectors were not asked to sign in or out when entering or leaving the premises. There was no daily record available to record this information.

Corrective and Preventive Action

A book is now available for all visitors to sign in and out when entering and leaving the premises. The registered provider will ensure that this record is maintained.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of a Visitors book.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

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.

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Compliance Information

(1) The service provided evidence that a person had up to date First Aid Responders course and was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2)(a) and (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and safely stored in the premises.

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 written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on the 10/02/2026.
- (b) A record was maintained of the mains powered smoke alarms which was last serviced on the 26th of August 2025.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was conspicuously displayed in different areas on the premises.

Non-Compliance Information

- (b) There was no up-to-date maintenance record available for the fire extinguishers. The fire extinguishers were last serviced in June 2024.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (b) The fire extinguishers have now been serviced. The registered provider will ensure that the fire extinguishers are serviced on an annual basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Up to date maintenance record of fire extinguishers.

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Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

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 service was adequately insured for 70 children at any one time attending the service. The policy showed that the service was insured from 28/03/2025 to the 27/03/2026.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

Non-Compliance Information

(c) The nappy changing area used by the children attending ECCE 1 was cold while nappy changing was taking place. There was no means of heating provided in this area.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) A pull cord heater has now been installed in the nappy changing area to ensure the space is no longer cold. The temperature of this area will be monitored on a daily basis and the heater turned on as needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of a pull cord heater mounted to the wall.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.