

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL020
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Name of Service:	Child's Fun & Play Preschool
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Address of Service:	38 Rowan Park, Lismonaghan, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
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Eircode:	F92 N9K3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Maia Semenciuc
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	09/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Killeen
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	Non-Applicable
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Description of service

Child's Fun and Play Pre-school is an early year's service situated within a residential estate in Letterkenny Co Donegal. The service provides a sessional service for children aged 2 – 6 years. The service operates weekday mornings 09.00 – 12.00pm and an afternoon session from 12.30-15.30pm the duration of pre-school year. The premises consists of a single story detached building which is adjacent to the home of the registered provider. There is one playroom with adjoining sanitary accommodation in the building. An outdoor play area lies immediately off the front entrance of the building.

Staffing

The service employs three adults, including the registered provider. An assigned person in charge is appointed to oversee the daily operation of the service. Relief staff are available to support the service as required. On the day of inspection, two adults—the registered provider and the person in charge—were present and working directly with the preschool children.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,23,26,27 and 28; These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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, person in charge, 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)

The registered provider ensured that.

- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
- (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
- (c) There was 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.

(2)

On the day of inspection, two adults were present in the service: the registered provider and the person in charge.

Both individuals were employed to work directly with the preschool children

The following vetting information was available for three adults:

- (a) Five written validated references from past employers for three of the adults.
- (b) One written validated references from reputable sources for one of the adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three 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 from the police authorities in another state was available for one adult. who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.

(4)
Three of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.
- (2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times throughout 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

Physical and Material environment:

- The main playroom was observed to be spacious, bright, and thoughtfully arranged with distinct interest areas that fostered purposeful play and holistic development. Children had access to a rest and literacy area with soft furnishings and books, a role play zone featuring a playhouse and dress-up items, and a construction and small world section with vehicles, animals, and puzzles to support fine motor and imaginative skills.
- Creative expression was encouraged through an art area stocked with craft materials and chalkboards, while tabletop activities promoted problem-solving and concentration. The home corner offered realistic kitchen toys for social and role play. Children's artwork and personal displays, such as a 'Class of 2025' wall, a 'Family Wall', and a Family Tree, celebrated individuality and belonging.
- A visible daily routine included engaging activities like 'Tidy Up Time' and 'Everybody Freeze', with roles assigned to children to build responsibility and communication.
- Learning goals aligned with Aistear themes, and the October curriculum featured seasonal topics such as Autumn, Road Safety, and Halloween. Circle time incorporated songs and weather discussions, encouraging active participation.
- Outdoors, the secure, all-weather play area supported physical and social development with equipment like ride-on bikes, a mud kitchen, sand play, and large building blocks, all set within a safe, enclosed environment.

Basic Needs

- Children's lunches are stored safely in a dedicated fridge separate from staff food. Each child's lunch is individually labelled with their name and photo. During the inspection, children were observed eating a variety of nutritious foods such as ham and cheese sandwiches, crackers, strawberries, and bananas. Drinks were made easily accessible throughout the session, encouraging hydration and independence.

- Staff engaged with children at eye level, showing interest in their conversations about weekend activities. Children were seated on age-appropriate chairs and tables. They were not rushed and were supported to finish their meals at their own pace, reflecting respectful, child-centred care practices.
- During the inspection, the adults present demonstrated warm and responsive interactions with the children. They consistently acknowledged children's efforts, offered praise, and engaged meaningfully in both conversations and play activities. Their approach reflected a nurturing and respectful atmosphere that supported children's emotional and social development.
- Children were guided in developing positive relationships with one another. Staff actively promoted social skills such as turn-taking, sharing, and cooperative play. Activities throughout the session encouraged group participation, and roll call provided an opportunity for children to learn each other's names and feel part of the group. It was noted that snack time could be further enhanced as a social opportunity to strengthen peer interactions.
- Children used the toilet facilities in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development. They demonstrated independence in managing their toileting needs and accessed the facilities as required. The toilets were located directly off the main playroom, which supported ease of access and enabled appropriate adult supervision, particularly during handwashing routines.
- Personal hygiene practices were actively promoted throughout the session. Children were encouraged and supported to wash their hands before eating, after toileting, and following messy play activities. Disposable tissues were readily available and used appropriately for wiping noses and faces. Protective aprons were provided during creative activities to safeguard clothing. Storage facilities were available for children's personal belongings, including spare clothing, ensuring individual needs could be met as required

Supporting relationships around children.

- The adults worked effectively as a team, coordinating tasks and routines with ease. Their collaboration contributed to a well-managed and consistent environment, with regular consultation evident throughout the session.
- Communication with parents was ongoing and multifaceted. Informal feedback was provided during drop-off and collection times, and digital communication tools such as WhatsApp and phone messaging were used to share updates.

- Each child had an individual learning journal, which documented their progress and was shared periodically with parents.

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 found to be secured on arrival preventing unauthorised access or exit from the premises.
- Materials were observed to be in a good state of repair.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C.
- Cleaning products and equipment were stored out of the reach of children.
- The outdoor area was secured with tall wooden fencing and a bolted gate.
- Cleaning products and equipment were safely stored so that children could not access.

Infection Control:

- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Tables and highchairs were observed to be cleaned prior to and after mealtimes in the care room.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available within the service for safe disposal of waste.
- There was adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels. Children children were observed to wash their hands with support, before snacks, after messy play and using the toilet.
- The sanitary facilities were observed to be ventilated by openable windows.and were observed to be kept maintained and clean.
- Soap was readily available to children to wash their hands prior to eating, after both toileting and nappy changes. Child friendly handwashing posters were placed beside the sinks. Handwashing was supervised by the adults to ensure all hands were cleaned effectively.

Administration of Medication:

- When interviewed, staff were aware of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication. No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

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 of fire drills was documented as having taken place in the service. A sample of these records were reviewed which showed that the last recorded fire drill carried out for the service was dated 25 September 2025.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms located in the pre-school. Firefighting equipment was serviced on the 01 September 2025 and the fire alarm system was last serviced on 10 and September 2025.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was prominently displayed in each playroom.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

Children were observed to be appropriately supervised on the day of inspection. Staff were positioned both indoors and outdoors to ensure sight and sound of the children. Transitions between activities were well-managed, and staff-maintained supervision during toileting, mealtimes, and outdoor play

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 adequate insurance was in place for the preschool service for 12 children up until 27 March 2026..