

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DR119
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Name of Service:	The Grove Pre School
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Address of Service:	The Old Convent, Our Lady's Grove, Goatstown Road, Goatstown, Dublin 14, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D14 V290
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Name of Registered Provider:	Yvonne Tumelty
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM	14
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Dublin 8.
Inspection undertaken by:	R. Duff
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

The Grove childcare service was established in 2010 and is operated by a voluntary board of directors; the registered provider is the manager of the service. Full day care and education is provided for children 2-6 years of age. The service operates daily from 8am – 6pm for 47 weeks of the year; a concurrent sessional service is provided from 9am – 12pm. The service is registered to accommodate a maximum number of 44 pre-school children. A school-aged childcare service is also provided. The children have use of two preschool rooms in the morning and the aftercare room in the afternoon.

The premises is located within the grounds of a primary school in a residential area of south county Dublin. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor space which is located to the front of the building.

Staffing

The service currently employs 11 staff members including the registered provider who does not work directly with the children but is available in the service if needed. The service employs a staff member with administrative duties and 2 school age staff members. On the day of inspection 7 staff members 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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child, information and records and safety. 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
- (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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)(b) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required, both were on the premises throughout the inspection.

(2)

The inspection included a review of the required documentation for five staff members employed in the service since the last inspection dated the 06 March 2024. Garda vetting disclosures were assessed for each of the staff members employed in the service. The following documentation was available;

(a)(b) Of the ten written and validated references that were required, eight were available from a past employer and two were available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for eleven staff members employed to work in the service. Garda vetting disclosures from all staff members were assessed to determine compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidence that the procedures specified above under 9(2)(a)(b)(c) had been carried out prior to five adults commencing employment in the service since the last inspection on 06 March 2024.

(4) Records were available evidencing that two staff members employed in the service since the last inspection dated 06 March 2024 who were employed to work directly with the children held at least the required award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications. Two staff members did not require an early year's qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (d)

Police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

(3)

The procedures specified in paragraph (2)(d) were not carried out in prior to one adult commencing placement in the service as follows:

Police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside the State for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult prior to them commencing employment in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has stated that an application for police vetting has been made to the country where the staff member lived for a period exceeding 6 months as an adult.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance remains outstanding. The regulatory requirement has not been met. The registered provider is required to submit police vetting to the inspectorate once received.

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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.
- (2)
The minimum ratio of adults to children for full time services was adhered to at all times during the inspection. There were 28 children attending the service being cared for by 4 staff members during the morning session and 14 children being cared for by 3 staff in the afternoon.

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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The inspector observed appropriate care practices in place in the service during the inspection. Staff members were attentive and responsive to the needs of the children throughout the morning and were observed to respond to children in a calm and relaxed manner throughout the inspection. The staff provided children with comfort when needed. Staff were observed to support children during conflict resolution or in completion of tasks.

Children were given advance warnings to support transitions to the outdoors and to alert them of mealtimes. The service has a healthy eating policy which is shared with parents/guardians in advance of enrolment. Children brought lunch from home which was closely monitored by staff for choking hazards. A hot meal is provided by the service for children who stay for the full day. Meals times were social occasions with children and adults sitting together, staff provided children with help when needed. Drinks were readily available within the care room. Children were encouraged to clean up after themselves and assisted to clean their faces and hands at appropriate times.

The toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving units and accessible to children. The care rooms had cushions and floor mats to facilitate rest or provide a place for children to take a break from activities.

Children spent time outdoors throughout the day and were dressed appropriate to the weather. The large outdoor area was equipped with a range of toys and materials to support play experiences. Benches were also available for children to take part in alternative activities while outside.

Engagement with families and parents is facilitated by the daily sharing of information on the child's day. This is shared through conversations at drop off and collection and supported by electronic means. On the day of inspection transitions from preschool to home were observed to be friendly, informative and engaging to parents or guardians collecting children.

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:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, access to the main door was monitored and controlled by staff to restrict unauthorized persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. In addition, the outdoor play area was enclosed, restricting unauthorized persons from gaining access to this area and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- The outdoor area was observed to be suitable, safe and secure with domestic bins stored out of children's reach and all outdoor play materials maintained and in good condition free from hazards.

Infection Control:

- The indoor and outdoor environments were maintained in a clean condition.
- The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm water, paper towel, liquid soap, and pedal operated bin.
- The children were supported by staff members to wash their hands at appropriate intervals throughout the inspection.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of procedures to safeguard children when administering medicine. This included getting written consent from parents or guardians, having a second staff member present as a witness during administration, and maintaining detailed records shared with parents or guardians upon collection. Care plans were available for children who required emergency medication.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the purple room, two electrical cables from a radio and a fan were observed trailing onto the floor. The cables were in reach of children during the inspection; this poses a potential risk of injury to a child. It is acknowledged that a staff member removed the cables when the inspector brought it to their attention.
2. In the sanitary area used by all children cleaning products were observed to be left in a mop bucket inside an unlocked press. The children used the sanitary area independently. The press was accessible to

children posing a potential risk of harm if they accessed it. It is acknowledged that a staff member removed the cleaning products when the inspector brought it to their attention.

Infection Control:

3. In the aftercare room, used by preschool children in the afternoon, the laminate covering on a table was cracked and missing in parts exposing porous wood beneath, this prevents the table from being cleaned effectively. This poses a potential risk of cross contamination to children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider has stated:

1. The two electrical cables are no longer in reach of children. The items with electrical cables have been removed. If either item is required, the cables will be secured and kept out of reach of children.
2. A lock has been placed on the press door to secure cleaning products out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

3. The table has been removed from the aftercare classroom. Staff members will monitor furniture for any defects and remove it where necessary.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Infection Control:

Supporting documentation has been submitted and reviewed by the early years inspector.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliance. This regulation will be assessed on next inspection.

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.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (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) Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were practiced monthly. The last fire drill was carried out on 06 March 2026.
 - (b) The number, type and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment was up to date. Fire extinguishers were last serviced on 20 March 2025 and smoke detectors were serviced on 02 March 2026.
- (2)
- (c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.
- (4) Procedures detailing the steps to take in the event of a fire were displayed on the wall in the care rooms and in hallway.

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 Full day service was insured. The insurance certificate provided for review showed cover for the 65 children and an expiry date of 27 March 2026.