

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DS237
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Ready Steady Play
-------------------------	-------------------

Address of Service:	The Creche Liffey Valley Shopping Centre, Liffey Valley Shopping Centre, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Co. Dublin
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	D22 C6C7
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Carol Coffey
-------------------------------------	--------------

Service type:	Drop-In
----------------------	---------

Date 1 of Inspection:	08/12/2025
------------------------------	------------

Date 2 of Inspection:	19/12/2025
------------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	0	PM	0
Day 2	AM	2	PM	2

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	The Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Carysfort House, Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock, Co Dublin
---	--

Inspection undertaken by:	L. Magee
----------------------------------	----------

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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Ready Steady Play is a drop-in service provided for children whose parents are on the premises of Liffey valley shopping centre in Clondalkin, Dublin 22. This service was established in 2003 by the current registered provider. The service is registered to take preschool children aged between 1 -6 years. They are cared for in a purpose-built unit on the ground floor of the centre. The service is provided between Monday-Friday 10am-4.30pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am-4.45pm.

Staffing

On the day of inspection, ten adults were employed to work in the service. This includes the registered provider who does not work directly with the 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. 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.

Additional Information

Two Immediate Action Notices - Issued 8 December 2025

Regulation 9 – Management and Recruitment & Regulation 23 –Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Concerns were identified as an immediate and significant risk or are likely to be a risk to the safety of the children attending the service which is contrary to the requirement of Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment and Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.

It is acknowledged the service responded to these concerns on 9 December 2025; however, the response was found to be inadequate. Two further opportunities were afforded to the service on 10 December and 15 December 2025. The response on 15 December 2025 was found to be adequate. Further information regarding the outcome of these non-compliances can be found as detailed under Regulation 9 and Regulation 23.

An Immediate Action Notice Issued - 19 December 2025

Regulation 23 –Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Concerns were identified as an immediate and significant risk to the safety of the children attending the service which is contrary to the requirement of Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.

It is acknowledged the service responded to these concerns on 20 December 2025; the response was found to be mitigate the risk identified. Further information regarding the outcome of this non-compliance can be found as detailed under Regulation 23.

Regulatory Compliance Meeting (RCM) 22 December 2025

A RCM was held with the person in charge to discuss the significant risk to children identified on the inspection.

Corrective Actions and Preventative Actions (CAPA)

The Early years inspectorate received the Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) on 29 January 2026. The CAPA plan contained insufficient information to meet regulatory compliance. A second opportunity was afforded to the registered provider and this was submitted on 20 February 2026. The corrective actions and preventative actions submitted addressed the non-compliances.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the days 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

(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) On 8 December 2025, there was a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) On 19 December 2025, the designated person in charge was on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2) The inspection focused on records for 6 staff members who had been employed since the previous inspection dated 14 February 2024, in relation to regulations 9(2)(a)(b) & (d) and (4). Regulation 9(2)(c) was inspected for

these 6 adults and a further four adults whose Garda vetting disclosure had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice.

(a) Seven validated references were available from past employers.

(b) One validated reference was available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for nine adults. Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was required and available for two new staff members.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had been carried out for 8 adults prior to commencing employment in the service.

(4) There was evidence that 5 adults working directly with the children had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) On 19 December 2025, there was no named person to deputise as required.

(b) On 8 December 2025, the designated person in charge was not on the premises between 12.05 – 12.40pm.

(2)(a) & (b)

1. One adult who was on the premises on 8 December 2025 did not have any references from either a past employer or a source other than a past employer.
2. One of the seven validated references which was available, was not from the staff members most recent past employer.
3. Two further references were not accepted as neither reference was from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting was not available for one staff member. An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on 8 December 2025. It is acknowledged the service responded to this concern on 9 December 2025. The response was found to be adequate.

(d) The requirement for police vetting could not be determined for two staff as they had either an incomplete or no curriculum vitae.

(3) No documentation was available to review for one adult.

Documentation was reviewed for a second adult, evidenced that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had not been carried out for this adult prior to commencing employment in the service.

(4) One adult who was ready to work directly with the children on the day of inspection, did not have 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 qualification.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) (a)

The service has reviewed and implemented their staffing absences policy, to ensue this will not happen again, this will strictly be adhered to going forward. The service has issued all staff with the newly revised updated “staff absences policy” reminding them of the importance of this policy in relation to staff absences and emphasised that it must be strictly adhered to going forward, if not, then disciplinary measures may be implemented against them.

(1)(b)

As per the services newly revised staff absences policy, new instructions have been issued within this policy whereby any domestic duties such as banking for the creche, shopping for consumables for the creche etc, will be done before work or after work from now on.

(2) (a&b)

1. This person is no longer employed by the service for cover work and will not be used in any event going forward.
2. The service has obtained a new reference for this person. The service has revised their recruitment policy to ensure this will not happen again.
3. The service has obtained two new references for this employee. The service has revised their recruitment policy to ensure that the obtaining of a reference must be from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) The service will no longer employ this person for cover work, and they will not be called upon in the future to cover any shifts. If there are no fully vetted and qualified persons available to work in the service, parents will be informed that the adult child ratio cannot be maintained and a sign will be put on the counter to say this.

(d) The service obtained an up-to-date curriculum vitae for one staff member and police clearance for the second staff member. As per the newly revised recruitment policy, the service has implemented stricter rules and

guidelines in this policy on having up to date curriculum vitae's always on file and police clearance printed off and on file.

(3)
The service has decided to no longer use this cover person any longer with immediate effect. Regarding the second adult and garda vetting, the service has reviewed and updated their recruitment policy to ensure this does not happen again.

(4)
The service will no longer employ this person for cover work, and they will not be called upon in the future to cover any shifts. If there are no qualified and fully vetted staff members available to work in the service, the service will not open and parents will be informed that the adult child ratios cannot be maintained. A sign will be put up on the counter in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances under regulation 9 (1), (2), (3) & (4) have 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.

(6) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 3 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number 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

On 8 December 2025,

(1) An adequate number of adults were present and available to work directly with the children attending the drop-in service, however there were no children present on this day of inspection.

(6) The minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 3 of Schedule 6 was unable to be inspected as no children were present.

On 19 December 2025,

(1) An adequate number of adults were present and available to work directly with the children attending the drop-in service. One adult was working with two preschool children and two school aged children.

(6) The minimum ratio of adults to children to children specified in column (3) of Part 3 of Schedule 6 was satisfied during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

(8)(a) On 8 December 2025, two adults were not on the premises between 12.05pm – 12.40pm. One adult was present in the service when the inspector arrived at 12.05pm, a second adult arrived at 12.40pm

(8) (a) On 19 December 2025, two adults were not on the premises during the inspection. One adult was present in the service when the inspector arrived at 11.05 am. The person in charge confirmed they had contacted another staff member at 11am to come in to work in the service. At approximately 2pm the person in charge advised the service will be closing for the remainder of the day as no additional staff arrived in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service has revised their staff absences policy to always ensure two staff are always on and have stressed the importance that it is strictly adhered to, the service has also put in new guidelines and actual times (am/pm) that staff must notify the service of any absence, to enable to better respond and get adequate cover in time.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. This regulation will be addressed on the next inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 13 - Temporary pre-school services and pre-school services in drop-in centres

(1) A registered provider of a temporary pre-school service or a preschool service in a drop-in centre shall ensure there are no more than 24 children attending the service at any given time.

(3) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre shall ensure that no child attends the service for longer than 2 hours consecutively.

Compliance Information

(1) The service manager confirmed that the maximum number of children that are accommodated at any one time is twenty children.

(3) Records reviewed on 8 & 19 December 2025, confirmed no child attended the service for longer than two hours consecutively in the week prior to this inspection as per the policy of the service.

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

(i) On 8 December 2025, the staff roster did not accurately reflect who was present on the day of inspection.

On 19 December 2025, the staff roster did not accurately reflect who was present on the day of inspection.

The person in charge was informed at the closing meeting on 8 December 2025 about the importance of the staff roster accurately reflecting the details of the staff on a daily basis.

This was a non-compliance on the last inspection dated 14 February 2024, despite assurances from the registered provider during the corrective action and preventative action process.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service have implemented a review of their staff absences policy, whereby the roster, which is up on the designated wall area, will reflect who is working on the premises in “real time.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation submitted was reviewed.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement has been met. Regulation 16 (i) will be assessed on the next 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-

(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

On 8 December 2025 – not inspected as no children were present.

On 19 December 2025

No food is provided for the children on the premises. Drinking water was available to the children at all times during the inspection. The care room was divided into different interest areas which included a home-corner, hairdressers, a construction area, transport area and a book corner. Tables and chairs were age appropriate and play materials were in easy reach for the children. A rest area was available for the children if they wanted to take a break from their activities. Children were supervised when using the toilet. Staff used respectful language during interactions and played different games with the children. There is no outdoor play area.

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:

Appropriate measures had been taken to safeguard the children as outlined below:

The toys and play equipment observed in use by the children on the day of inspection were safe and in good working order. Heavy equipment was secured to prevent tipping and injury. Cleaning products and hazardous materials were stored securely out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

Handwashing occurred at appropriate intervals. The sanitary facility was equipped with warm water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and pedal operated bins.

Administration of Medication:

The service policy states no medication is administered in the service unless it is lifesaving emergency medication. If the children are unwell and require medication, the parents are contacted to come and collect their child.

Fire Safety:

The person in charge demonstrated a clear understanding of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire. Regular fire drills were conducted in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

On 8 December 2025, two Immediate Action Notices were issued to the person in charge.

1. One adult posed an immediate safety risk to the children as they were available to work in the service but were not Garda vetted.
2. No adult on the premises had in date first aid training or was trained as a First Aid Responder- see Regulation 25 First Aid.

The service responded to these concerns on 15 December 2025, the response was found to be adequate.

On 19 December 2025, an Immediate Action Notice was issued to the person in charge.

3. One child exited the service unsupervised at approximately 1.25 pm through the fire escape route at the rear of the service. The fire escape doors were closed; however, no alarm activated when the door was

opened. The person in charge followed procedures and the child was found safe and well at approximately 1.40pm. A RCM was held on 22 December 2025, to discuss the significant risk to children identified on the inspection. The response was found to be adequate.

Infection Control:

The following equipment was damaged and unable to be cleaned effectively for infection control purposes:

1. A child size table and a toy wooden kitchen were chipped in places.
2. Three large floor mats were ripped on each of the four corners.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. This person will no longer be called upon for cover work, and no person will be allowed to cover unless we as a company have strictly adhered to the staff recruitment policy.
2. One person completed a FAR Training course. The service will ensure that all staff have first aid training before they start work as per our revised Staff Recruitment policy and the service will continually monitor the dates of such certs for all staff new and old, so that they are always kept up to date and in date, always.

On 22 December 2025.

3. A RCM was held to discuss the significant risk to children identified on the inspection. The corrective action and preventative actions provided by the service were found to address the risk identified.

Infection Control:

1. These items of toys have now been removed from the creche. The service will endeavour to be more vigilant and will check more often for frayed or chipped toys.
2. The service ordered new mats and will remove the current mats that were frayed as soon as the other mats have been delivered in the coming days.

Supporting documentation submitted.

Documentation was submitted

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the service have addressed the non-compliances. This regulation will be assessed on the next inspection.

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

- (2)
- (a) The first aid box was adequately stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous location within the service as required.
- (b) A first aid box was always available to the adults and children in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) An Immediate Action Notice was sent to the registered provider on 8 December 2025, as on the day of inspection, there were no adults on the premises trained in first aid for children. It is acknowledged the service responded to these concerns on 9 December 2025; however, the response was found to be inadequate. Two further opportunities were afforded to the service on 10 December and 15 December 2025. The response on 15 December 2025 was found to be adequate.

This was a non-compliance on 14 February 2024, despite assurances from the registered provider during the corrective action and preventative action process.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

One staff member completed a FAR first aid responder course. The service will ensure that all staff have first aid training before they start work as per the revised staff recruitment policy and the service will continually monitor the dates of such certs for all staff new and old, so that they are always kept up to date and in date, always.

Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documentation was submitted.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement for regulation 25 (1) & (2) has been addressed.

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-*
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,*
 - (b) an employee, and*
 - (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) A written record was available detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill was on 17 December 2025.
 - (b) There was an annual record to show that the fire extinguishers had been serviced.
- (4) The procedures to be followed during a fire drill and in the event of a fire were displayed in a conspicuous location within the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(b) There was no annual record to show that the fire alarms had been serviced.

This was a non-compliance on 14 February 2024, despite assurances from the registered provider during the corrective action and preventative action process.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The service obtained the annual fire alarms servicing report from the shopping centre management.

The service have put the next date due for the fire alarms servicing in their diary and will ask the shopping centre management on an annual basis that they give a copy of the servicing records for their records, so they are available always for inspection by the Fire Safety Officer or Tusla.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The regulatory requirement for regulation 26 (1) & (4) has been addressed.