

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY016
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Name of Service:	Ballygall Community Playgroup
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Address of Service:	Ballygall Community Centre, Drapier Road, Ballygall, Dublin 11
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Eircode:	D11 PX81
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Name of Registered Provider:	Pauline Wheatley
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Area 1 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Nelson
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).

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Description of service

Ballygall Community Playgroup is a parttime and sessional care service located in a residential area of Dublin 11 and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 22 children aged 2 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 2.00pm. The service operates an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme sessional service from 9.00am to 12.00pm.

Ballygall Community Playgroup operates from Ballygall Community Centre and has one care room, with access to sanitary facilities. A fully enclosed outdoor area is located to rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider who works in the service employs two staff, including a deputy person in charge and an additional staff member. All of the staff work directly with the children and were present on the day of the inspection.

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 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

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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-

- (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.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that;

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.

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- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider it was determined no new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. Three Garda vetting disclosures for the three staff members were requested for review. The registered provider had completed the following checks:
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all the three staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

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 were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs. There were three staff available to 18 children present on the morning of the inspection.
- (2) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection.

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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 registered provider ensured the following activities, interactions, materials and equipment were in place to facilitate the learning, development and wellbeing of children:

Basic Needs:

- Children's lunches were provided by parents, and the lunch time experience was observed to be sociable, where staff and children sat and ate lunch together.
- Children were promptly taken to the toilet when they requested to go, and other children were respectively asked if they would like to use the toilet.
- The children were informed about the plan of the day and that there was an inspector in the room to visit them, appropriately and respectively informing them of the visitor to the room.
- Staff were observed to support children to use Irish, English and Lámh, facilitating verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Appropriate equipment to meet the comfort needs of children was available such as aprons for water play and rubber boots for mud play.

Supporting Relationships:

- Each child was welcomed in circle time by a welcome song, where they were individually greeted by name, promoting a sense of welcome and inclusion in the setting on a daily basis.
- Transitions between activities were indicated in advance using a bell and verbal indication. Staff were observed to prepare in advance ensuring the transitions were planned and organised.
- Staff were observed to be familiar with the routine for the daily activities and worked cohesively as a team in meeting the care needs of the children.
- Staff were observed to engage with the children in a warm, sensitive manner, seated at their level, actively listening and engaging in the play.

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Physical and Material Environment:

- The experiences provided to the children facilitated challenging play opportunities, for example assisting staff in lifting the cover from the mud pit.
- Toys, equipment and play materials were easily accessible and visible to the children on low-level units which nurtured the children's independence and facilitated their choice.
- Well-resourced areas of interest were available and included a water play area, home area, small world play area, arts and crafts, table top area, block play and library area. Real life equipment and play props extended the play experiences.
- The outdoor play area had a range of ride on bikes and cars to facilitate gross motor play, and there was a selection of small world activities, blocks, and mud play with props to facilitate creativity and role play.

Programme of Activities:

- Children were observed to be actively involved in planning for their play through choosing their activity from a choice card. They were observed to move freely through the care room, promoting independent decision making.
- Large and small group activities were planned, with children invited to participate in an adult led table top activity.
- Songs and rhythm were used extensively throughout the inspection, which promotes comfort in verbal communication and language development.
- The staff were observed to use appropriate strategies to facilitate children's learning such as description, modelling, recall, questioning, praise, and listening. These strategies promote language development and facilitate children to manage behaviours in a positive manner.

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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 entrance to the care room was secured throughout the inspection, with the door latch up high out of reach of children. This restricted unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Cleaning products were observed to be up high out of reach of children in the care room.
- Tall presses were observed to be secured.
- Towels were placed effectively during water play to soak up spills, thereby minimising slips.
- The outdoor area was checked for hazards prior to the children going outside.
- The outdoor mud area was suitably covered when not in use.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid soap and single use hand towels were available at all wash hand basins used by the children and the staff members.
- Staff were observed to support children to handwash prior to lunch.
- The premises appeared to be in a clean and hygienic condition and documented up to date cleaning records were available and displayed in the premises.
- Children's lunch boxes were stored appropriately refrigerated.

Administration of Medication:

- There was a suitable method of recording the administration of any medication, and this had been completed appropriately.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed.
- All children were accurately recorded as present in the attendance log.

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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 firefighting 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 record of fire drills was available on the premises with the last drill dated as having been carried out on the 19 March 2026.
 - (b) An up-to-date maintenance record was available for the Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms in the premises. The fire extinguishers were serviced in September 2025, and the smoke alarms were maintained on the 22 January 2026.
- (4) A procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was on display in the care room.