

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DY079

Name of Service: Gabriel's Playschool

Address of Service: St Gabriels Parish Centre, St Gabriels Road, Clontarf, Dublin 3, Co. Dublin

Eircode: D03 P6F6

Name of Registered Provider: Veronica Yeomans

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 29/05/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	47	PM	34
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: Early Years Inspectorate,
Child and Family Agency,
Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park,
Dublin 15

Inspection undertaken by: Á Dunne, E Hosford

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.

Description of service

Gabriel's Playschool is a private service located in a parish centre in Clontarf on the north side of Dublin. This service offers part time and full day care education and care to children aged from 2 to 6 years of age and is open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The service also offers a service to school age children. The service operates from three care rooms in a two storey multi-use parish centre. The three care rooms are the Sunflower room (full day care room for children aged 3-5 years), Fuchsia (part time room for children aged 3-4 years) and the Jasmine (part time room for children aged 3-4 years). The service also has use of a large open-foyer, kitchenette, sanitary accommodation areas, office and an outdoor play area featuring a soft all-weather surface.

Staffing

The service employs 21 staff for the early years service to include the registered provider, preschool manager, two deputy people in charge, 1 cover staff, 15 childcare staff and 1 staff employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). On the day of inspection the registered provider, who works in the service, preschool manager, 2 deputy persons in charge, 1 staff under AIM and 11 staff working directly with the children in the service were present.

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 the regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 29.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child. Regulation 11 Staffing levels was assessed across all rooms.

The scope of the inspection included all rooms - the Jasmine room, Fuchsia room and Sunflower room.

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, preschool manager, deputy persons in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

(2) It was confirmed by the registered provider that 21 childcare staff are employed in the service. The files of 21 staff were reviewed.

(a) Two written and validated references were available in relation to four adults from a past employer.

One written and validated reference was available in relation to 11 adults from a past employer.

(b) Two written and validated references were available in relation to six adults from a source other than past employer

One written and validated reference was available in relation to 11 adults from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 21 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for three adults who had lived outside of the State for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the 19 adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) Documentation was not available to show that two adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(4) Both employees' qualifications were on the list of recognised qualifications, however the date of their certification was past recognition date and needed to be verified by DCDE to have their qualifications assessed for equivalency. The two employees have completed this task. All current qualifications have been checked by our manager and are on the DCDE list of qualifications. Furthermore, as part of our recruitment process, all qualifications will also be checked by our manager and confirmed using the DCDE qualifications list.

Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted

Summary Comment

Following two opportunities to provide evidence of the corrective actions above, the registered provider failed to provide the evidence required to assure the Inspectorate that the regulatory requirement had been met. Therefore, the non-compliance in relation to Regulation 9(4) remains outstanding, and will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service. On the morning of the inspection there were 10 adults working directly with 47 children aged between 2 to 6 years and in the afternoon of the inspection there were 8 adults working with 34 children aged from 2 to 6 years.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection, as follows:

- In the Jasmine room, there were 15 children aged 3 years to 5 years being cared for by 3 adults in the morning.
- In the Fuchsia room there were 15 children aged 3 years to 5 years being cared for by 5 adults in the morning and 17 children aged 3 years to 5 years being cared for by 3 adults in the afternoon.
- In the Sunflower room there were 17 children aged 3 years to 5 years being cared for by 2 adults in the morning and 17 children aged 3 years to 5 years being cared for by 3 adults 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-

(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

Basic Needs:

- The service served a hot meal and snacks to the children. On the day of inspection, the inspectors observed at 11am lunch from home which consisted of crackers, sandwiches, cheese, fruit, and yogurts, a hot meal was served at 2pm supplied by an external food company. At 3pm afternoon tea was provided by the service of pitta breads, ham, cheese and fruit. Water was available in each care room for the children to drink.
- Each care room had incorporated outdoor play into their daily curriculum and the children were encouraged and supported to engage with activities while outdoors. On the day of inspection, the children of the Jasmine room were on an outing to a farm in the local park.
- The transitions between activities such as toilet visits, mealtimes, free play and outdoor play were observed to be calm and relaxed with staff available to care for the individual needs of the children.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed to have respectful, warm and responsive interactions with the children through the use of soft tones and positive non-verbal communication strategies such as being at the children's level.
- Staff were observed to be engaged with and sit with the children during play time and having positive interactions during play activities of building plastic bricks and magnetics. They were responsive to the children and were observed to give them choices regarding their play activities.

- Staff members supported each other in the provision of care to the children.
- Communication with parents is through a phone message application, verbal at drop off and pick up and through email for service information.

Physical and Material Environment

- Low level shelving and child sized furniture supported children's independence.
- The range of play materials and equipment to include a large variety of Montessori materials were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children attending the service enabling exploration and development of their play opportunities.
- Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment available to them.
- Children's need for rest were met through the provision of cosy areas offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day.
- An enclosed outdoor play area was surfaced with a soft matting surface with equipment made available by the staff in each of the care rooms. The equipment available included games, cars, trucks, and balls.

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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.

Infection Control:

- The premises, play equipment and materials were in a clean and hygienic condition
- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included thermostatically controlled water, soap and paper towels and pedal operated lidded bins for disposal of paper waste.
- Handwashing was observed after bathroom visits, after outdoor play and before and after mealtimes.
- Food which is brought from home for lunch time was observed to be refrigerated to prevent spoiling of perishable items.

Administration of Medication:

- A care plan was available for two children that required emergency medication, with their required medication displayed in a conspicuous position in the care room out of children's reach. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.

Outing:

- Outings to the farm were managed and carried out according to the service outing policy.
- A written record was maintained for each outing and included the staff and children present, time of departure and return to the service, equipment available to staff, such as first aid box and mobile phones and any incidents that occurred on the outing.

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

- (1) The service provided evidence that four adults trained in First Aid Response were available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2) (a) and (b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and safely stored in easily accessible and conspicuous positions in the service.

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 written record was available of the fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 26 May 2025.
- (b) A record was available of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment demonstrating it was last serviced in July 2024 and for the number, type and maintenance of the smoke alarms in the premises, which were last serviced on the 18 February 2025.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

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
 - (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Compliance Information

- (c) The service was adequately lit, heated and ventilated.
- (e) The service was equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities as follows:

Room	Number and age profile of children	Sanitary facilities available	Sanitary facilities required
Fushcia room	19 (2-6 years of age) Part time care	2 toilets 3 sinks 1 nappy changing unit.	2 toilets 3 sinks 1 nappy changing unit.

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Jasmine Room	19 (3- 4 years) Part time care	2 toilets 2 sinks	2 toilets 2 sinks
Sunflower Room	22 (3- 5 years) Full day care	2 toilets 2 sinks	2 toilets 2 sinks