

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier: TU2015DY166

Name of Service: Pitter Patter Community Play Group

Address of Service: Macro Centre, 1 Green Street, Dublin 7, Co. Dublin

Eircode: D07 X6NR

Name of Registered Provider: Conor Casby

Service type: Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

Date of Inspection: 17/02/2026

No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	8

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

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

Pitter Patter Community Play Group is located on the first floor of the Macro Community Resource Centre on the north side of Dublin City. There is one large care room, sanitary facilities, a sensory room, a kitchen and an office. The partial outdoor area is located off the care room.

The service provides full day, part-time and sessional care to children from 1 to 5 years, operating from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. The service caters for 34 children with no more than 17 children on the premises at any time.

Staffing

Six staff are employed to work in the service to include the person in charge, manager, three childcare staff and one staff member employed under the community education scheme. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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, 22, 23, 25, 26 and 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. The scope of the inspection included the one care 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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person 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

The files of six adults were reviewed along with the garda vetting of the registered provider.

(2)(a) Six validated written references were available from a past employer.

(b) Six validated written references were available from a source other than a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for seven adults employed in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) Documentation was available to demonstrate that five adults working directly with children in the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of

Non-Compliance Information

(d) Police vetting was not available for two adults employed in the service who had lived outside of the state for six consecutive months as an adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d) Each employee has been in contact with the consulates of the relevant countries. Police vetting from other countries has been filled out on behalf of both employees. Employees are still awaiting appointments with

relevant consulates. The process is in progress and will remain a priority for the Board of Management until completion

Future employees will produce police vetting from countries other than Ireland that they have lived in for over 6 months prior to being offered contracts

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(d) None

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 has not been addressed and remains outstanding until Police vetting's are submitted to the inspectorate.

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) There were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the service during the inspection.
- (2) On the day of inspection there were 5 staff caring for 15 children aged from 1 to 6 years of age in the morning and 4 staff were caring for 8 children aged from 1 to 6 years 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:

- Nappy changing and toileting were respectful and positive experiences for the children, and staff were observed to encourage the children to be independent in managing their personal care such as handwashing.
- All children were observed to enjoy outdoor play during the inspection.

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 sat with the children at dinner time to support the children with independent eating and helped when required.
- Staff members supported each other in the provision of care to the children.
- Communication with parents is through a message application on a phone and with verbal updates given at drop off and collection times.

Physical and Material Environment

- The classroom was well equipped and divided into clear areas of interest - cosy area offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day, construction area, home corner area and sensory play area.
- Low level shelving and child sized furniture supported children's independence.
- The materials and equipment provided to the children in the room were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment available to them.
- The outdoor play environment to the rear of classroom was fully enclosed with a roof overhead to enable the children to access the outdoor area during inclement weather. The surface was a soft artificial surface.

The outdoor toys were suitable and available and included a playhouse, climbing frame, ball pit, buggies, a pram, ride on bike and seesaws.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- The service had a three-week menu plan which was on display in the hallway and visible to parents.
- Food provided within the service was prepared in the onsite kitchen.
- The service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals to the children. On the day of inspection, the inspector observed a hot meal served between 11.15am and 11.30am in the care room, which was sausages, waffles and beans followed by fruit. At 1.30 pm, a snack of crackers with cheese or butter was served and between 2.30pm and 2.45pm, afternoon snack of spaghetti on toast was served.

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:

- Initial access to the service area via the front door of the main building is monitored by reception staff. The entrance door leading into the service was appropriately secured with a button release lock system, to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service throughout the inspection.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- No trailing flexes were observed, blind cords were secure and cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children.

- The sensory room and the outdoor area were safe and secure environments with no hazards, with play equipment and materials clean and suitable for use by the children.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included thermostatically controlled warm water, foam soap, and paper towels.
- Children were supported and encouraged to wash their hands after outdoor play, before mealtimes and after nappy changing or toilet visits.
- Nappy changing was completed in accordance with the service policy.
- Food serviced at mealtimes was served on plates or in bowls.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. In the nappy changing area, the nappy disposal bin was full of used nappies and two large full bags of used nappies were on the floor beside the bin. The presence of this quantity of used nappies, leads to poor infection control and a risk of cross contamination.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

1. The nappies were removed. Contact was made with the company servicing the nappy removal. They did not have sufficient staff to collect nappies the week of inspection. The registered provider has informed them that, should this arise again, the service will be changing nappy collection service. In the meantime, the service has arranged with the landlords to remove the nappies should these circumstances arise again.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

1. None

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

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 six adults trained in First Aid Response with valid certification, were available at all times to the children attending the pre-school.
- (2)(a) and (b) A Suitably equipped first aid box was available and was safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position 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 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 was reviewed by the inspector for fire drills completed and the last fire drill was recorded as being carried out on the 6 January 2026.
- (b) The number type and maintenance record for the firefighting equipment was available, demonstrating they were last serviced on 9 October 2025 and for the smoke alarms demonstrating they were last services on 20 January 2026.
- (4) The fire drill procedure was displayed on the walls of the service and observed by the Inspector.

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

Non-Compliance Information

(c) In the nappy changing area of the service, there was no windows present and the mechanical ventilation was not in working order, to extract a strong odour present from presence of full nappy disposal bin and two large nappy disposal bags on the floor. The lack of ventilation was also a non-compliance on a previous inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) The registered provider has spoken to the landlord of the service building and outlined the issue, making clear that the ventilation system being out of service is unacceptable. The landlord is in the process of taking steps to rectify the situation. An appointment has been made with a ventilation specialist to fix the problem. The registered provider has requested the landlord to check that the system is fit for purpose on a regular basis going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

(c) None

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 29 has been adequately addressed. This non-compliance will be reviewed on the next inspection.