

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY383
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Name of Service:	Through the Round Window
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Address of Service:	32 John Mc Cormack Avenue, Walkinstown, Dublin 12
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Eircode:	D12 P6C6
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Name of Registered Provider:	Barbara Brennan
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/04/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	12
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St. John's Road West, Kilmainham, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland, A Byrne
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

Through The Round Window is a privately owned service located in a residential area in Dublin 12. The service operates from a purpose-built structure located to the rear of the registered providers residence and offers sessional and part time care and education between the hours of 9:15am to 2:15pm Monday to Friday. Additionally, the service has a fully enclosed outdoor area to the front of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider works directly with the children attending the service and employs one staff member. In addition, the service has two designated individuals available to provide emergency cover as needed.

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 *announced/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.

This inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following regulations:

9(1)(a), (b), (c), (2) (a)-(d) and (4) Management and Recruitment

11(1), (2) Staffing Levels

19(1)(a) Health, welfare and development of child

23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

25 First Aid

28 Insurance

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 member 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.

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as needed.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service and remained present for the duration of the inspection.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure, demonstrated through conversations with staff and their awareness of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Conversation with the registered provider confirmed that there are currently two staff employed in the service including the registered provider. Additionally, the service has two designated individuals available to provide emergency cover as needed. The following records were available for the four adults.
- (a) Seven references were available from past employers and were appropriately verified.

- (b) One reference was available from a reputable source other than a past employer and was appropriately verified.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for five adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Not required as no adults lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that all four adults hold 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.

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 for the duration of the inspection.
There were two adults available to twelve children.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the 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-

(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

Children's lunches were provided by the parents and were observed to include a variety of healthy food options supporting the promotion of positive eating habits in line with the services healthy eating policy. Staff encouraged children to enjoy their mealtime in an unhurried manner. Drinking water was available and accessible to children. Children were encouraged to take responsibility for their own hand washing practices after using the toilet, following outdoor play and before eating with support provided by staff as needed. Staff were observed to sing songs with children providing opportunity for shared experiences, exposing them to a variety of different sounds, building on their vocabulary and supporting their language development. Staff provided advance notice of transitions with verbal and visual cues such as a sand timer, ensuring children were well prepared and there was smooth progression to the next activity. Staff described how they work collaboratively with parents to ensure children's individual needs were understood and addressed effectively. This approach was evident in the calm atmosphere where all children appeared settled, engaged and comfortable in their environment.

Children were actively involved in decision making about their daily experiences. For example, children asked to eat their lunch outdoors on a picnic blanket and staff responded positively and facilitated their request. Staff were observed to give children time to process information, express their ideas and respond to questions during an outdoor activity. Children were observed learning about seeds and trees and appeared to be immersed in the learning, asking questions and exploring materials, deepening their understanding of the natural environment. Staff attentively observed the children, joining in on play in a warm playful manner when invited and providing support when needed. Staff advised how they value children's voices and support them to develop reflective and communication skills. A group display book was available, and staff described how they sit together with the children every Friday and reflect on the weeks learning experiences and work together to document it with photographic images, pictures drawn by the children and descriptive text. The service uses a messaging platform to support partnership with parents, sharing daily images of the children engaged in play, news and updates. It

was observed that this communication is two way with parents responding to the group sharing images of how they are extending the children's learning at home.

The physical environment, both indoors and outdoors was arranged to support and enhance children's learning experiences. Materials were positioned at an accessible level in open shelving in the indoor environment which nurtured the children's independence. Children's opportunity to engage in imaginative play was supported with materials such as a puppet theatre, a shop and a home corner. During the inspection children were observed enjoying role play with a staff member in the shop area laughing and chatting with one another. Montessori equipment supported children's development across areas such as practical life, sensory, language, maths and fine motor skills. Materials such as playdough and water were available enhancing children's sensory awareness and early science skills. A library area with child size armchairs and a variety of books allowed for children to build on their literacy skills and concentration. The art and mark making area provided opportunity for children to explore their creativity and express their thoughts and ideas through a variety of materials. Children were observed to bring some of these materials into the outdoor area to create pieces of art with seeds and leaves. The outdoor environment was an extension of the indoor environment and provided opportunity for challenge and safe risk. For example, children were observed engaging in active play on an all-weather grass surface which included purposefully designed mounds and tunnels that encouraged curiosity, physical challenge and movement.

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 service was secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and unauthorised persons from gaining access.
- Toys and play equipment used by the children were observed to be safe for the age group, maintained and in good condition.
- Cleaning agents and medication were stored out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- Staff demonstrated awareness of the recommended exclusion periods for common childhood illnesses.

- Pedal operated bins were in use in the sanitary areas and the care room to support effective hygiene practices.
- Liquid soap, warm water and single use paper towels were available at wash hand basins in the sanitary area and the care room.
- All perishable food brought by the children from home was observed to be stored in a fridge reducing the risk of bacteria multiplying.
- The care room was observed to be clean and well maintained and cleaning schedules were available outlining daily cleaning tasks.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of the procedures to be followed when administering emergency medication. They reported having received training from a professional and a plan was observed to be in place to guide practice in the event of an emergency and records were available to document information.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were observed to be unobstructed throughout the inspection.
- Staff demonstrated knowledge of the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire and advised that fire drills were carried out monthly. A record of the fire drills was available with the most recent fire drill carried out on 23 March 2025.
- Children's attendance books were monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present in the care rooms to ensure safe evacuation of the children in the event of an emergency .

Outing:

- Staff discussed the procedure followed by the service when taking children on outings. Risk assessments and outings forms were observed to be in use in line with the services outings policy.

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) There was evidence to show that two adults hold certification in First Aid Response training, and both were available for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) (a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and stored safely in an easily accessible and prominent position on a shelf in the care room.
- (b) The first aid box was observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance for the number of children in attendance. The insurance certificate was observed to be valid until 27 March 2026.