

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL136
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Name of Service:	Charlies Childcare LTD
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Address of Service:	Unit 18, Bayside Shopping Centre, Sutton, Dublin 13, Co. Dublin
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ronnie Carroll
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date 1 of Inspection:	29/09/2025
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Date 2 of Inspection:	30/09/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	65	PM	58
Day 2	AM	64	PM	N/A

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:	E Hosford and Á Dunne
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.
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Description of service

Charlie's Childcare LTD is a private service located in an urban area on the north side of Dublin city. The service provides full day, part time and sessional care to children aged from 1 to 6 years of age and operates from 7:45am to 6:15pm Monday to Friday. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and offers a service for school age children.

This purpose-built service occupies the first floor of a multipurpose commercial premises and consists of five care rooms, an outdoor area, a service kitchen for the preparation of meals, a staff office, and sanitary facilities. The five care rooms are as follows.

- Lollipops room (3-5 years for children attending a full day care basis).
- Flumps room (1-2 years for children attending on a full day care basis).
- Bonbon room (3-4 years for children attending a sessional service from 9:30am-12:30pm)
- Jelly Tots room (2-3 years for children attending on a full day care basis)
- Candy Floss room (2-3 years for children attending on a full day care basis)

Staffing

The service employs a total of 34 staff to include the registered provider, business partner, designated person in charge, deputy designated person, two area managers, a cook, a maintenance person, and 26 childcare staff, of which 20 work with the preschool children. The registered provider does not work within the service and the designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge are not assigned to a care room but are available to assist if required.

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 9,11,19,23,26 and 28. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 19 and 23. As a result, the scope of the inspection did not include the Bonbon 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 person in charge, deputy person in charge, area manager, staff and children who were present on the two days 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) The files of 15 new staff members employed in the service since the last inspection were reviewed. Garda vetting disclosures for all staff were also reviewed.

The registered provider had completed the following checks:

(a) Twenty-one validated written references were available from a past employer.

(b) Nine validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 29 staff members employed in the service. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed.

(d) Police vetting was available from 14 countries for staff members who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult. The registered provider had secured a signed affidavit for

one adult who required international police vetting from a jurisdiction where, although reasonable efforts had been made, vetting could not be obtained.

(4) Eleven staff members who work directly with the early years children had documentary evidence of at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

Non-Compliance Information

(4) There was no evidence available to confirm that one staff member employed within the service and working with the preschool children held 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) In response to the non-compliance the service has stated that the staff member was present in the care room to offer additional support to the staff and was not included in the adult child ratios.

Supporting documentation submitted

(4) Corrective action.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider have been reviewed and accepted and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(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.

(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

(2) During day 1 of the inspection there were 19 adults working with 65 children in the morning and 14 adults working with 58 children in the afternoon.

On day 2 of the inspection there were 14 adults working with 64 children in the morning.

- Lollipops room -4 adults working with 16 children in the morning and 3 adults working with 16 children in the afternoon of day 1. Four adults working with 16 children aged from 3-4 years of age in the morning of the second day of inspection.
- Flumps room- 3 adults working with 10 children aged from 1-2 years of age in the morning and in the afternoon of day 1. Three adults working with 8 children in the morning of the second day of inspection.
- Bonbon room-2 adults working with 7 children aged from 3-4 years of age in the morning of day 1 and 2 adults working with 8 children in the morning of the second day of inspection.
- Jelly Tots room- 4 adults working with 16 children aged from 2-3 years of age in the morning and 2 adults working with 16 children in the afternoon of day 1. Three adults working with 15 children in the morning of the second day of inspection.
- Candy Floss room -4 adults working with 16 children aged from 2-3 years of age in the morning and in the afternoon of day 1. Three adults working with 17 children in the morning of the second day of 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

(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

(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

- Children aged 1- 2 years and older who availed of a daytime nap were facilitated to sleep either in cots, contour beds or mats. Sleep in the Flumps room was observed to be child led with staff providing a flexible approach to children that showed signs of tiredness.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The Lollipops and Jelly Tots rooms were suitably resourced with play materials and equipment laid out in defined interest areas to facilitate age-appropriate play opportunities for the children in attendance. The interest areas in each room included home corners, construction areas, arts and crafts areas, and libraries.
- The play materials were stored on low-level shelving which were accessible to the pre-school children in these care rooms which facilitated the children to select toys and activities of their choice.
- The enclosed outdoor play area was located within the service and consisted of an artificial grass surface and was resourced with appropriate play equipment to facilitate outdoor play experiences. These included ride-on toys, building bricks and scooters.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

1. In the Flumps and Candy Floss room there was evidence to demonstrate that staff were not ensuring that children had adequate servings of food and drinks which was also at variance to the service policy on healthy eating for the children to ensure children. For example:

- Additional food was not offered to children in the Candy Floss room at lunch time despite the children showing signs of interest in eating more. Only when the inspector intervened additional food was made available to the children. Children aged 2-3 years of age may be unable to verbalise hunger and staff should be aware and alert to the cues of children to provide additional portions.
- A child in the Candy Floss room that ate their snack at 10.03am but refused their lunch at 12.06pm was not offered additional or alternative food before their departure from the service at 3.05pm. This exceeded the recommended gap of 3 hours between meals for a preschool child.
- The children in the Candy Floss room had their lunch at 12.06pm and did not have their afternoon tea until 3.40pm. This exceeded the maximum gap of 3 hours between meals for a preschool child.
- Water to drink was not easily accessible to the children in the Flumps room as it was stored on a shelving unit out of the children's reach. As a result, staff missed the cues of children on occasions when the children indicated that they wanted a drink. Water should be easily accessible and available to the children while in the service to enable them to decide when they need hydration and drink for thirst.

Physical and Material Environment:

2. The layout and materials available in the Flump and Candy Floss rooms did not promote a child led, engaging and explorative environment for the children. As a result, the children were observed to become frustrated and upset and began climbing on tables and arguing with each other. For example:

- In the Flumps room eight wooden jigsaw boards were empty with the pieces stored in a separate basket. Books were stored on a shelf out of reach. Four dolls had no clothes, and a musical drum had no drumstick.
- The Candy Floss room books were badly damaged and torn, the dress up area was poorly equipped, the art area trolley was empty, and the construction area work bench had no supportive equipment to enhance play with it.

3. The enclosed outdoor area used by the children in the Flumps room on both days of inspection lacked a variety of equipment that would promote excitement and challenge. The area consisted of an artificial grass surface, seven outdoor building blocks, a child sofa and three ride on bikes.

Supporting Relationships around children:

4. In the Candy floss room at sleep time, the transition from lunch was not managed with a coordinated and child led approach with consideration for the age and developmental ability of the children. For example.

- As children moved to their beds alone, they pulled out toys, one child sat on another child's back causing upset.
- The children were asked to remove their own shoes.

5. Staff in the Candy Floss room did not take opportunities to sit with the children and engage in conversation and offer help during a tabletop activity of play dough or during dinner time. Children require social engagement and interactions at their level to enable them to develop social skills and communication.

6. In the Candy Floss room, the information recorded on the electronic tablet by staff regarding each child's sleep times were not accurately recorded. For example.

- Staff recorded that three children woke from their sleep at 2.04pm but all were observed by the inspector as sleeping at 2.36-2.38pm. The information recorded by staff and shared with parents via the electronic application can be used by parents to ensure consistency in care practices on their return home.

(1)(b)

7. Staff in the Flumps room did not always display a positive approach to the children in their care and take the available opportunities to praise and encourage the children's achievements and developmental successes. For example.

- A child that crawled onto a child size sofa independently was removed from the seating instead of being praised for their achievement.
- A child that was eating their meal at lunch time and happily tapping their spoon off their chair was asked to stop.
- Children that preferred to explore the care room rather than sit and sing songs were requested to return to the area and taken away from their child led choice of play.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Basic Needs:

(1)(a)

1. In response to the non-compliances the service has stated that additional food is offered to children along with an alternative food option. This information and updated documents were discussed and shared at a staff meeting on Monday 3rd November 2025.

Physical and Material Environment

2 and 3. In response to the non-compliances the service has stated that more equipment was purchased and that regular assessment of equipment will be completed twice yearly or as required.

Supporting Relationships around children

4. To address the service states that they encourage practical life skills and independence within the care rooms and that an extra staff member will be allocated to sleep time to help the children.

5. Further staff training on engagements and communication with children will take place.

6. Training completed with staff.

(1)(b)

7. To address the non-compliances the issues identified on inspection discussed at staff meeting and additional training given to staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

Basic Needs:

(1)(a)

1. Food timetable, updated food menu and staff meeting agenda.

Physical and Material Environment

2 and 3. Purchase receipts, toys and equipment audit.

Supporting Relationships around children

4. Preventive action.

5. Purchase and attendance at training

6. Evidence of staff training

(1)(b)

7. Evidence of staff meeting and additional training given to staff.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted by the registered provider have been accepted. The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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:

- Entrances were secured to prevent unauthorised access and children leaving unsupervised. Exits were kept clear for the safe evacuation of children in the event of an emergency.
- Heavy furniture was secured to prevent tipping and injury.

Infection Control:

- Liquid soap and paper towels were available at the wash hand basins in the sanitary facilities in the service.

Administration of Medication:

- Administration of medication records were available for inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- The temperature of the cot room and care rooms was maintained between 18-22 °C while children slept.

Fire Safety:

- Documentation was available to demonstrate that fire drills were completed in the service monthly.
- Fire exits were clearly signposted and unobstructed throughout the two days of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the Candy Floss room there was evidence to demonstrate that regular and routine risk assessments were not completed by staff in the care room or outdoor area to reduce the potential risk of injury to a child. For example,

- Cleaning liquids were stored in an unlocked cupboard and were accessible to the children during the inspection.
- Trailing flexes from an electronic device and air conditioning unit were in reach of the children.
- Plastic bags for the storage of bed sheets for individual children were discarded on tables in the care room while children settled to sleep. 1. In the main hallway of the service three trailing flexes were accessible to the children.
- The kitchen was accessible to the children while they moved from their care room to the outdoor area during day 1 of the inspection.
- While the children played in the outdoor area they had access to a sand tray with stagnant water. Staff were not observed actively dealing with the issue by removing the tray.

2. A child in the Candy Floss room was left unsupervised while playing with playdough and as a result began to eat the dough. The inspector had to intervene and alert a staff member who removed the dough from their mouth.

3. Staff in the Flumps room presented the children with a plastic food preparation glove sealed with tape and containing coloured pom poms. This is not a suitable and safe activity for this age group and consequently a child was later observed by the inspector with plastic tape in their mouth. It is acknowledged, that on being alerted by the inspector the tape was removed from the child's mouth.

4. The covering on soft matting used by the children in the Flumps room was torn at the seams leaving foam exposed which created the potential risk of a child choking.

Infection Control:

5. In the Flumps room there was evidence to demonstrate that staff were unaware of the service policies and procedures on infection control, handwashing and nappy changing procedure. This increased the potential risk of cross infection. example.

- Nappy changing was not carried out according to the service policy and best practice guidelines. Staff reused the same apron when changing each child, neither staff or children washed their hands after the process, and the nappy mat was not cleaned between each child.
- Children's toys were stored in the sanitary facilities.
- Food for a child was placed directly on the highchair table at teatime.
- The children did not have their hands washed before meals, after nappy changing and after outdoor play.

- Staff were not observed to wash their hands after cleaning children's noses.
- One cotton cloth was used to clean three children's noses.
- Pedal bins were provided for the disposal of wastepaper in the sanitary facility and care room; however, staff used the lid of the bin to dispose of items.
- Soothers used by children were observed falling on the floor and being used again by the child.

6. In the Candy Floss room there was evidence to demonstrate that staff were unaware of the service policies on infection control, handwashing and nappy changing procedure. This increased the potential risk of cross infection.

For example.

- Warm water was not available at the sink used by the children for effective handwashing techniques.
- Paper hand towels and blue paper roll used by the staff and children in the service were not always available or hygienically dispensed as rolls and stacks of paper were provided in the nappy changing area were subjected to repeated handling. This posed a risk of cross-contamination and was inadequate for infection control purposes. The paper towel dispenser in this area was empty.
- While 4 children slept their beds were less than 50 cm apart to reduce the potential risk of cross infection.

Administration of Medication:

7. On review of the 13 records relating to the administration of prescribed medication for children it was observed that staff did not follow the service policy on Administration of Medication, which includes accurate completion of records to ensure safe practice. For example.

- The child's date of birth was not recorded on 7 forms.
- The name and details of the medication administered was not recorded on one form.
- Two prescribed medications for one child were recorded on one form which increased the potential risk of staff error in the administration and the duration of the prescribed medication was not recorded on 3 forms.
- Parental pre consent for the administration of a prescribed medication was not available for 11 children attending the service.
- The initial of the parent on collection of their child to confirm they were made aware of the medication administered was not always recorded.

Safe Sleep:

8. In the Flumps and Candy Floss rooms there was evidence to demonstrate that staff were unaware of the service policies on safe sleep practices and procedures to ensure the safety of children while they slept. For example.

- Staff in the Flumps room did not document the temperature of the cot room or care room while children slept to ensure it was maintained between 18-22 °C.
- Documented ten-minute sleep checks were not completed on a child in the cot room from 12.01-12.55pm while they slept.
- Staff did not complete ten-minute sleep checks one child from the Jelly Tots room who slept in the Candy Floss room concurrently but retrospectively.
- Four children under two years of age were observed sleeping on low contour beds. However, completed documentation was not available to demonstrate that parents had been communicated with, and their written permission was obtained before this practice commenced. This is at variance with best practice sleep guidelines issued to the sector in September 2023.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

To address the non-compliances the service has stated that the following actions have been taken.

1. Cupboard has safety lock and safety audits are carried out. Further staff training has taken place.
2. Children are always supervised, and staff have undergone further training.
3. Item was removed during inspection, staff training and staff meeting.
4. Mat was removed, and safety audits are carried out regularly to replace worn toys and furnishings.

Infection Control:

5. To address the non-compliances the service has stated the following,

- Nappy changing procedures hung up on wall and discussed at staff meeting
- Policy shared and discussed at staff meeting
- Equipment removed from bathroom
- Plates used for food and discussed at staff meeting
- Hand-washing procedures and infection control policy discussed at staff meeting
- Machine washing for face cloths - hygiene control discussed
- Importance of pedal bins for hygiene discussed at staff meeting

6. In response the following was addressed.

- Warm water has been fixed checking of water temp with probe will be completed when opening daily.

- Hand towel dispensers filled immediately, and the filling of hand-towel dispensers is now as part of daily locking up for staff and recorded.
- Beds situated 50cm apart immediately and layout of beds at sleep time discussed at staff meeting along with infection control

Administration of Medication:

7. To address the non-compliances medicine administration was discussed at the staff meeting and further training given to staff.

Safe Sleep:

8. To address the non-compliances visible egg thermometer with temperature displayed is in the rooms for sleep and a recording chart. Safe sleep policy discussed at staff meeting

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Evidence of corrective actions and staff training.
- 2 and 3. Evidence staff training and discussion at staff meeting.
4. Safety toy audit spreadsheet

Infection Control:

5 and 6. Photographic evidence and staff meeting agenda along with staff training.

Administration of Medication:

7. Evidence of staff meeting and updated training

Safe Sleep:

8. Visible thermometer with temp displayed is in the rooms for sleep and a recording chart and safe sleep policy discussed at staff meeting.

Summary Comment

The actions submitted by the registered provider have been accepted. The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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)
- The last recorded fire drill that took place in the service was on the 2 September 2025. Records demonstrate that monthly fire drills are carried out by staff in the service.
- (b)
- The number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms was present in the service. The fire extinguishers were serviced on the 13 May 2025 and the smoke alarms on the 11 July 2025.
- (4)
- A notice of the fire procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were clearly displayed in the service and care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available on inspection for 132 children attending the service on a full day care basis.