

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY087
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Name of Service:	Fairyhouse Creche & Daycare Centre
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Address of Service:	Moyvilla, Clarinbridge, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H91 YE63
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mary O'Neill
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	21/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	94	PM	88
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality Assurance Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A - (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Co. Galway.
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Friel
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

Fairy House Creche and Day Care Centre is a private early years care and education service in operation since 2006, providing a full day care service which also caters for children attending on a part-time and sessional basis. While registered for children aged from 0 to 6 years of age, children currently attending are aged from 10 months to 6 years old. Daily opening hours are from 07:15 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. The service is open for 52 weeks of the year. There is an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, which is facilitated over 38 weeks, school term time only, from 09:00 to 12:00.

The centre is located near the rural village of Clarinbridge in Co Galway. It operates from a purpose-built childcare facility which has seven care rooms in use by the early years children namely- Nursery, Junior Nursery 1 and Junior Nursery 2 located on the ground floor of the main building along with a designated sleep room and kitchen. On the first floor there are two care rooms known as Montessori and Junior Playschool care rooms and an office. The Playschool and Senior Nursery modular units are located to the rear of the outdoor play areas. Adult and children's sanitary facilities and nappy changing rooms are situated in both the main building and in the modular units outdoors. A school age care service is available in the morning from 07:15 to 08:45 and from 13:40 to 18:00 in the afternoon.

Staffing

There are 25 staff employed in the service including a cook, five school age care staff and the registered provider.

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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 (h) Record in relation to pre-school service – Details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis. As a result, the scope of the inspection included 5 of the 7 care rooms namely; Playschool, Junior Playschool, Nursery, Senior Nursery and Montessori.

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.

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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.*

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The manager was the person in charge and there was a person available to deputise as required.

- (b) The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy were available while the early children were present in the service.

(2) Following a review of the service files and discussion with the service manager it was confirmed that there were eight new staff members employed in the service since the last inspection on the 30/05/2025. Two additional files for existing staff with expired garda vetting were also reviewed.

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- (a) Fifteen of the required 16 written and validated references were from previous employers.
- (b) The remaining 1 of 16 references was from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 10 adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.
- (d) Police vetting disclosures were available for three of the new staff members working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over six months as adults.
- (4) Of the eight new staff; four of six employees working directly with the pre-school children held at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework. A letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Disability and Equality was available for the fifth adult. Two adults not working directly with the pre-school children did not require a childcare qualification.
- (7)(a) Documentation was available to evidence that supervision and induction had taken place for the new adults who had commenced employment in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (4) A childcare qualification was not on file for 1 adult who was observed covering lunch breaks in the Junior Playschool care room at 11:40.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The following statement was received from the manager;

- (4) The service is actively recruiting qualified staff. Three adults currently employed by the service are actively completing a childcare qualification which will ensure that qualified staff are available to cover staff breaks.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (4) A copy of a staff roster was received in the office of the inspectorate which evidenced that only qualified staff are covering breaks in the service. The statement from the manager has been accepted.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the manager have addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (4).

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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.*
- (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

- (1) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (2) The adult/child ratios were met. There were seven care rooms in operation on the day of inspection.

Nursery (10 months – 18 months)

There were 8 full day care children in an attendance with 2 staff members in the morning and 8 children in attendance with 2 staff members in the afternoon.

Junior Nursery 1 (12 months - 2 years)

There were 9 full day care children in attendance with 2 staff members in the morning and afternoon.

Junior Nursery 2 (2 years – 2 years 6 months)

There were 6 full day care in attendance with 1 staff member in the morning and in the afternoon.

Playschool (3 years – 4 years)

There were 22 full day care children and 2 part-time children in attendance with 3 staff members in the morning and 22 children with 3 staff members in the afternoon.

Junior Playschool (2 years - to 3 years)

There were 11 full day care children in attendance with 2 staff members in the morning and in the afternoon.

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Senior Nursery (2 years 6 months – 3 years)

There were 12 full day care in attendance with 2 staff members in the afternoon.

Montessori (4 years – 5 years)

There were 21 full day care and 3 sessional children in attendance with 3 staff members in the morning and 20 children in attendance with 3 staff members in the afternoon.

- (8)
- (a) The staff roster was available to evidence that there were two adults available while the pre-school children were on the premises.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) Details of attendance were available on a digital application for the five care rooms sampled which indicated that each child had been signed in after the opening time of 07:15.
- (i) The staff roster was furnished to the inspector with the following details recorded- all staff on duty, hours of work and lunch breaks.
- (3) The details of attendance were available on the premises and were available for 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

Basic Needs:

- The food requirements for a full day care service; that at least two meals and two snacks, one of which must be a hot meal were provided by both the service and the parents/guardians. Both breakfast of oat and wheat-based cereals and the hot meal during the day of pasta bolognese with carrots, peas and corn, observed being served in the Junior Playschool care room at 11:40, were provided by the service. Staff in the Montessori care room stated that children's individual food preferences were facilitated as requested.
- Children sitting in highchairs and on age and stage appropriate chairs in the Nursery care room at 10:10 were observed eating healthy and nutritious snacks provided by parents and guardians. Examples included pancakes, bite sized pieces of fruit, cheese and toast. They were all given time to finish their snacks without being rushed and adults were nearby to assist, if required.
- Prepared milk bottles provided by the parents/guardians for two children in the Nursery care room were stored in the care room fridge preventing the milk from spoiling. In conversation, staff were aware that the babies milk bottles should not be left out at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Children's individually labelled water bottles were available from easily accessible trays and children were observed drinking from these throughout the day. Staff were observed refilling the bottles and cups as required.
- Each care room had appropriate cutlery and crockery based on the age and stage of development of the children present.
- Nappy changing was observed to be carried out regularly by staff. Adults carrying out nappy changes in the Nursery and Senior Nursery care rooms were observed to be sensitive to each child's needs.
- Children in the Montessori care room were escorted to the sanitary area and encouraged to manage health practices independently including handwashing.

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- Rest/quiet areas fitted with soft furnishings including vinyl sofas and corner units were available in each care room. Children in the Senior Nursery and Playschool care rooms were observed sitting in these areas for story time away from noisy activities.

Supporting children's relationships:

- Staff in the Playschool and Montessori care rooms were observed sitting with the children and engaging in social conversation during mealtimes and tabletop activities. They were noted to listen to the children's conversations and use strategies such as open questioning, feedback and explanations to extend the children's thinking and learning.
- A key person approach was stated as being in place in the Montessori care room with staff assigned responsibility for the observations of a designated group of children.
- Various forms of communicating with parents/guardians was stated as being in use, including a personal messaging application and a digital application where staff inform parents of the children's daily routines including eating, sleeping and toileting. Staff stated they communicate with parents at drop off and collection.
- Staff stated that staff meetings with management take place every 3 months and that staff appraisals took place yearly.

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:

- Internal doors including the kitchen, adult toilets, office and staffroom were secured to prevent children from accessing unsafe areas.
- The outdoor areas, facilitating access to the play areas from the front to the back of the service, were secured with number access codes preventing access by unauthorised adults.
- Blind cords were secured with hooks which were inaccessible by the children.
- All highchairs in use were fitted with safety harnesses ensuring the children could not climb out of them.
- Flexes and cables were stored out of reach of the children.
- Flexes and cords were secured and inaccessible to the children.

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Infection Control:

- Windows in care rooms and sanitary areas were open providing a flow of fresh air into these areas, helping to reduce the spread of infection.
- Fridges were available in each care room for storing perishable food sent in by the parents/guardians preventing the food from perishing.
- Wash hand basins in use by the adults and children were supplied with thermostatically controlled hot water ranging in temperature between 29°C and 40.1°C. Sanitary facilities were also supplied with dispensing soap, paper towels for drying hands and pedal operated bins for the disposal of paper waste.
- Staff from the Nursery and Senior Nursery were observed to follow the service's nappy changing procedures. Disposable gloves and aprons were used for each nappy change and mats and units were sanitised after use preventing cross contamination.
- Cleaning checklists for each care room were completed and up to date indicating that each care room had been cleaned on a daily basis preventing the spread of germs.

Administration of Medication:

- Temperature reducing medication, stored in original bottles, was available for each child in the Playschool care room if required.

Safe Sleep:

There were 4 sleep areas in operation on the day of inspection namely- Designated Nursery sleep room, Junior Nursery 1, Junior Nursery 2 and Senior Nursery.

- In line with the service's sleep policy 9 sleep beds were in place along with sleep plans for children aged from 12-24 months in the Junior Nursery 1 care room. The sleep room temperature was recorded as 20.2°C within the recommended temperatures of 18°C to 22°C for children aged over 12 months.
- Cots in the Nursery care room and mats in use in the Junior Nursery 2 and Junior Playschool care rooms were placed 50 centimetres apart ensuring the safety of the sleeping children.
- Ten-minute sleep checks, recorded on digital applications, were furnished to the inspector for each sleep area. These contained the required details including each child's sleep position, colour, breathing, room temperature and the adult who recorded the sleep check.

Fire Safety:

- In date fire extinguishers were secured to the walls with brackets throughout the service ensuring functionality in the event they may be required.

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- The fire assembly points were visible in the Senior Nursery play area at the rear of the service and in the front car park ensuring that the children and adults could gather at a secure location, a safe distance from the service.
- Fire doors were noted to be unobstructed aiding the quick evacuation of adults and children in the event of an emergency.
- All fire doors were fitted with thumb twist cylinders or push bars aiding the quick evacuation of adults and children in the event of a fire.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Three of 10 adults- 2 existing staff whose garda vetting required renewal and 1 new staff member, did not have garda vetting disclosures dated within the previous 3 years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice "EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting" posing a potential safety risk to the children. It was acknowledged that copies of applications submitted for garda vetting for the 3 adults was received on 29/04/2026.
2. Children in the Junior Playschool and Nursery sanitary areas had access to plastic gloves, nappy sacks and plastic aprons positioned beside the nappy changing mats, posing a safety risk to the children. It was acknowledged that when informed the staff member from the Nursery care room repositioned the items out of reach of the children.
3. Three children were observed crawling under the highchairs which were positioned in the Nursery care room, posing a risk of them tipping or falling onto the children. In conversation, an adult in the room stated that the highchairs were stored in the room at all times.

Infection Control:

4. The corners of the vinyl sofas and corner units, in both the Senior Nursery and Junior Playschool care rooms, had perished preventing effective cleaning.
5. A pedal on a nappy changing bin in the Junior Playschool sanitary area was not working, posing a risk of cross infection from the number of adults using their hands to insert the nappies into the bin.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting submissions have been made in respect of the three adults for whom they were required. A checklist table has been created to ensure that all garda vetting renewals and course expiry dates are renewed

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prior to expiry. Management will review the checklist table on a monthly basis and to ensure any required documentation is in date and will follow up with staff to submit prior to expiry to ensure compliance.

2. Storage shelves have been added in the Nursery and Junior Playschool nappy changing areas to prevent children from accessing plastic gloves, nappy sacks, and plastic aprons.
3. The highchairs in the Nursery care room have been removed while the children are playing. They are put in place for mealtimes only and removed when the children have finished eating.

Infection Control:

4. New soft furnishings have been ordered for the Senior Nursery and Junior Playschool care rooms.
5. A new pedal operated nappy bin has been ordered for Junior Playschool sanitary area. Staff have reminded to complete risk assessment of these areas daily and inform management of any broken equipment or areas of concern.

Supporting documentation submitted

The following documentation, photographs and receipts were received in the office of the inspectorate from the manager.

General Safety:

1. The checklist table was furnished to the inspector on the day. The statement from the manager has been accepted.
2. Photographs of the newly installed storage shelves in the Nursery and Junior Playschool nappy changing areas
3. Photographs of the chairs in place while the children are eating and removed thereafter. The statement from the manager has been accepted.

Infection Control:

4. Copies of receipts for the order of the soft furnishings.
5. A copy of the receipt for the new pedal operated nappy bin.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence received from the manager have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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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) Certificates were available to evidence that two adults had first aid responder for children (FAR) training completed. The staff roster evidenced that one adult was available while the pre-school children were on the premises.
- (2) (a)(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available in each care room. These were accessible to the adults while the early years children were present 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.*
- (2) *The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*
- (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) Written records were available of the monthly fire drills that took place in the service. The record of the most recent fire drill was dated 15 April 2026 with the previous monthly fire drills noted as 09 March and 16 February 2026.
- (b) Written records were available detailing the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service along with the smoke alarms. The firefighting equipment certificate was recorded as February 2026 and smoke alarm certificate was dated 26 June 2025.
- (2)

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- (c) Both the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm records were open to review on the premises.
- (4) The notices of the fire drill procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency were located on the wall of each care room.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation was available to evidence that the registered provider had insurance for the number of children attending the service and the type of services in operation.