

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY161		
Name of Service:	Millbrook Creche		
Address of Service:	37 Millbrook, Milltown, Tuam, Co. Galway		
Eircode:	H54 YY45		
Name of Registered Provider:	Phyllis Reddington		
Service type:	Full Day		
Date of Inspection:	02/10/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	38	PM 24
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A (1st Floor- Green Corridor), Merlin Park, Galway.		
Inspection undertaken by:	F Kelly		
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

This service opened in 2016. It is located in Milltown, a village in north county Galway. This service operates a full day care early years' service for children aged from 6 months to 3 years. The service operates from 07.30 to 18.30, Monday to Friday and can cater for a maximum of 46 children.

Staffing

There were 12 staff employed in the service, which included a part-time cleaner, 1 manager, 1 deputy manager, 1 maintenance manager, 1 registered provider and 6 childcare workers and a childcare student. The registered provider does not work on the premises on a daily basis. There were 9 staff members present on the day of the inspection.

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.

On inspection additional non-compliances which posed a risk were identified under regulations 11, 20, 23, 26 and 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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 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

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The service manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the service manager was the person in charge and was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.

(2) Following a review of the service files and discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that there were 12 members of staff employed in the service, which included a student on work placement, the maintenance manager, a cleaner and the registered provider.

(a) Of the required 24 references required, there were 20 written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer.

- (b) Of the required 24 references, there were 4 written and appropriately validated references available from a source other than recent employer for the adults working in the service.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all the staff working in the service. The service did adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew garda vetting every 3 years.
- (d) Police Vetting disclosures were available for 4 adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) There were 9 adults working directly with the children who had evidence of an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education or qualifications 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.*
- (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) There were 7 adults working directly with children on the day of inspection.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the day of inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:
 - Baby Room: One adult cared for 3 children aged between 10 months and 18 months.
 - Toddlers Room: Two adults cared for 10 children aged between 23 months and 2 years 5 months old.
 - ECCE room 1: One adult and 1 student cared for 9 children aged between 3 and 4 years of age.

- ECCE room 2: Two adults cared for 16 children aged between 2 and 4 years of age.

The service manager provided relief cover for breaks.

Non-Compliance Information

(8)(a) The service manager did not demonstrate that a minimum of 2 adults were on the premises at all times when pre-school children were present.

On the morning of the inspection, the attendance records stated there were 8 children signed in between 07:50 and 07:58. The staff records indicate that the first staff member arrived on the premises at 07.36 and the second staff member did not sign in electronically till 07:58. The manager stated that the staff member arrived on the premises at 07:45 but the roster indicated this staff member was not rostered to start work till 08:00 on the day of inspection. This posed a safety risk to the children as there was not an adequate number of staff available to the children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective and Preventive Action

There are 2 staff members on the premises each morning before children arrive on the premises. Staff are aware of the importance of signing in each day, when they arrive on the premises.

Supporting documentation submitted

On the 07/11/2025, the registered provider submitted a copy of the staff's sign in which indicated that 2 staff were on the premises in the morning.

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 11 has been adequately addressed.

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.

Compliance Information

- Children's drinks were left on a low-level shelf and were available to the children at all times throughout the day. The children had access to their drink without the need for adult assistance.
- The children had access to the outdoor space at numerous times throughout the inspection. Two of the playrooms had direct access to the outdoor space and could play indoors or outdoors. The staff were able to supervise the children both by sight and sound at all times.
- The children were encouraged to be as independent as possible in relation to self-care. The children were asked to go to the sanitary area to wash their hands prior to snack and lunch time. This activity was supervised by an adult, but the children were encouraged to do this exercise on their own. The hand washing sinks were conveniently located in the playroom and the sanitary area was located adjacent to the playroom.
- Throughout the inspection, the staff members were sensitive to the needs of the children in their care. They spoke to the children in low tones, staff were heard giving praise for completing tasks, such as tidying away after activities and putting their snacks back in their bag after snack time. Staff were observed giving occasional hugs of reassurance throughout the session.

Non-Compliance Information

1. There was no evidence that staff members were using ongoing observations and interests of the children to create an effective programme of activity for the children in the playrooms. This may have a negative impact of the wellbeing, learning and development of the children attending.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective & Preventive Action

We have had staff appraisals to inform the staff of how important ongoing observations are in the development of the children. The staff are working on the interests of the children to create an effective programme of activities

which relate to the children. The staff have commenced these ongoing observations. Staff will be observed on a more regular basis and we will carry out regular appraisals to ensure the staff get support to enable them to achieve the goals we need them to be working towards.

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 19 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 requirement has been met. The registered provider had evidence that 3 staff had current paediatric First Aid Responder training completed.
- (2)(a) The registered provider had ensured that the service was equipped with first aid boxes.
- (b) The first aid boxes were available to children when required.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Non-Compliance Information

- The sleep room contained 5 cots for the children under 2 years of age that required sleep, however 2 of these mattresses did not contain a wipeable cover or have a waterproof covering to ensure that they could be easily cleaned.

A third mattress was not firm or covered in a waterproof material and was not presented in a good condition and may pose a risk of cross infection to the sleeping children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered providers stated the following in their reply:

Corrective and Preventive Action

New mattresses have been purchased. They will be checked on a regular basis to ensure high quality.

Supporting documentation submitted

On the 07/11/2025, the registered provider submitted a receipt for 3 cot mattresses.

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under regulation 20 have been adequately addressed.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

ECCE Room 2

- The children's lunch boxes were stored on a low-level shelf. Perishable foods such as cheese, yogurt and meat sandwiches were not stored in the refrigerator as per safe food guidelines and thus posed a food safety risk to the children.

2. The healthy eating policy of the service listed several foods that were prohibited for the children to include in their lunch box. On the day of inspection, the following foods were included in 4 of children's lunches- jelly sweets, high sugar cereal bars, marshmallow sweets, mini cookies, chocolate pastry and grapes.
- This practice was at variance with the healthy eating policy of the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered providers stated the following in their reply:

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Perishable foods are now placed in the fridge and staff have been informed that this is the correct action going forward.
2. A notice was sent to all parents again regarding our Healthy Eating Policy together with a copy of the Policy. Staff will monitor the contents of the children's lunch boxes going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

On the 07/11/25, the registered provider submitted a copy of the letter that was sent to the parents.

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under regulation 22 have been adequately addressed.

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) Written records of the fire drills undertaken in the service were kept by staff with the last fire drill recorded as having been undertaken on the 02/09/2025.
- (b) A certificate of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment was dated the 05/12/2024 and was available for inspection.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the

playrooms.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) The registered provider was unable to provide evidence that a record of the type of fire alarm system and a maintenance record of the fire alarm system was updated and that it was maintained as per the manufactures instructions. This could pose a safety risk to the children and staff in the event of a fire.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The fire alarm system was recently serviced. The servicing company will maintain the alarm on a regular basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

On the 07/11/25, a copy of the maintenance record was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate for review

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 26 has been adequately addressed.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General safety.

1. The staff doing the sleep checks on the day of inspection were unable to demonstrate that the temperature of the sleep room was accurately recorded and maintained at a temperature between 16 °C and 20°C.

At 12.03 pm on the day of day of inspection, when the staff member recorded the 10-minute sleep check, she was observed taking the temperature of the room by plugging in the electronic thermometer and instantly recording the temperature without first letting the reading stabilise. The thermometer sensor needed time to adjust to the ambient temperature of the room, before an accurate temperature was recorded. This posed a risk for the children sleeping in this cot room.

Infection Control:

- At 13:45 pm on the day of inspection, the nappy disposal bin in the nappy changing area was overflowing with soiled nappies which resulted in a mal odour in this sanitary area and posed a risk of cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective & Preventive Action

- The staff are aware that the thermometer must be plugged in at the start of each day so it can be regulated to the required room temperature when the children are going to sleep.
- Staff have been informed that it is very important to empty the nappy bin on regular basis and especially when it is full to avoid cross infection.

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions and the evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Non-Compliance Information

On the day of inspection at 12:30pm, the temperature of the water for handwashing in the children's sanitary area was recorded at 48.1° C and 47.1°C. The temperature of the water in the nappy changing area was also recorded at 47.4°C. The temperature of the hot water for hand washing should not exceed 43°C as this may pose a scalding risk to the children using these wash hand basins.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The registered provider stated the following in their reply:

Corrective and Preventive Action

The water temperature was adjusted to below 43 °C and will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that it does not exceed 43°C in the future.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School

Summary Comment

The inspector reviewed the actions submitted. The non-compliances identified under regulation 29 have been adequately addressed.