

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE069
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Name of Service:	Chuckles Crèche & Playschool Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Rathangan Business Centre, Rathangan, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	R51 W562
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Name of Registered Provider:	Helen Buckley Duffy
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	08/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	18
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child & Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Ballymore Eustace road Naas, Co. Kildare W91 X38W
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Maher
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Authority to Inspect

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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).

Description of service

Chuckles creche is a private full day care service also offering part time and sessional care and education to children aged from 1-6 years in Rathangan Co. Kildare. Opening hours are from 08:00am -18:00hrs, Monday-Friday. The service is registered to provide school age care.

The service is located in an adapted unit in a small business park in the town centre and comprises of four pre-school rooms, two located on the ground floor and two on the first floor of the premises. A sleep room, kitchen and office are also provided; a large play area is located to the rear of the service and includes two covered play areas. Parking is available outside the building.

Staffing

Fifteen adults are employed in the service and includes the registered provider. On the day of inspection, four adults were working directly with the children; also present was one workplace student, the registered provider, person in charge, deputy person in charge and the cook.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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, persons in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and*
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major

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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

Following a review of previous inspection information and information available on inspection, eleven staff files were assessed.

(2)(a), (b)

Two written and verified references from a past employer or a reputable source were available as required in respect of the staff members whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all employed staff members and one workplace student. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was on file for one employed staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six months as an adult whose record was reviewed.

(4)

Nine adults whose records were reviewed and were employed to work directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher or a recognised equivalent qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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,

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Compliance Information

(1)

There were 18 children attending the service being supervised directly by 4 adults.

(2)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

(8)(a)

There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the 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:

The entrance door to the service was secured to allow staff to control entry to and exit from the service. The children did not have access to the kitchen and any cupboards the children had potential access to were secured with child safe locking mechanisms.

The windows on the first floor were fitted with fire safe restricted opening devices and a stair gate, at the top of the stairs on the first floor, was observed secured at all times during the inspection. Daily indoor and outdoor risk assessments were being completed; this ensured a safe environment was maintained for children and staff on a daily basis.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal and containment of used tissues and soiled nappies.

The staff members were familiar with the importance of handwashing practice as a means to control the spread of infection in the service and children's handwashing routines were well established and observed in practice.

One nappy change procedure was observed and carried out hygienically in accordance with the nappy change policy displayed.

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Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection; written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. The staff members were familiar with required practices when administering medication and medicine was safely stored in the service.

Safe Sleep:

There was one sleep room with a total of five cots. Low level sleep beds were available for all children aged over 2 years requiring a period of sleep. It was observed that 10-minute sleep check observations were completed on all sleeping children and the staff documented the colour, position and breathing pattern of sleeping children in their care.

Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out, and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service. The fire exits were not obstructed and were clearly signed.

Outing:

Parental consent was required for any outing that may be conducted from the service as advised by staff and an outings policy was in place to guide practice.

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)
Staff members present were trained in first aid response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)

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The first aid equipment was safely stored, in conspicuous positions on the ground and first floors.

(b) Suitably equipped first aid boxes for children were available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-

(a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and

(b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 30 March 2026.

(b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment and the fire detection alarm were last serviced 20 November 2025 and 28 October 2025 respectively.

(4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2027. The insurance provided cover for 102 children which included the school age children.