

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015KE161 |
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| Name of Service: | Fun Times Preschool |
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| Address of Service: | Scrouthea, Goulyduff, Athy, Co. Kildare |
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| Eircode: | R14 E704 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Cathy Ryan |
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| Service type: | Sessional |
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| Date of Inspection: | 06/05/2025 |
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| No of pre-school children: | AM | 9 | PM | N/A |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|----|-----|

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| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency Suite 7, Vista Primary Care Centre Ballymore Eustace Road Naas Co. Kildare, W91 X38W |
| Inspection undertaken by: | F. Maher |
| 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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| Conditions if applicable | Not applicable. |
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Description of service

Fun Times pre-school is a privately owned sessional service located in a rural setting outside the town of Athy, Co. Kildare. One pre-school room with sanitary accommodation is provided and is part of the registered provider's home. A large secure play area is located to the rear of the premises.

Sessional care and education is provided to children from 2-6 years of age. Opening hours are from 9:00am-12:00pm for 38 weeks of the pre-school year.

Staffing

The service employs two staff members and includes the registered provider. One staff member was on leave and the registered provider was present and working directly with the children.

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.

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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under,
Regulation 9 (1),(2)(a)(b)(c), (4) - Management and Recruitment
Regulation 11(1),(2) Staffing Levels
Regulation 16 (h)(j)(k) – Record in Relation to Pre-school Service
Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and Play
Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child
Regulation 25 – First Aid
Regulation 26 – Fire Safety

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 and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge, the deputy person in charge was on leave. An emergency person was available to assist in the event of an emergency occurring.

(b) The registered provider remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

The records of three adults, including the registered provider and the emergency person listed were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and verified past employer references or verified references from a reputable source other than a past employer were available in respect of two adults whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for three adults whose records were reviewed.

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 not required as no adult had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Both adults employed and/or present working directly with the children, held a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and verified references from a past employer or from a reputable source other than a past employer were not available in respect of one adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

Two outstanding references have been received, verified and placed on file.

Preventive Action

Ensure that the references remain in the staff file and are filed in an easily accessible place.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documents x 2

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b) has been met.

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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.

Compliance Information

(1)

There were 6 children attending the service being supervised directly by the registered provider.

(3)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the inspection as specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6.

(8)(c)

It is acknowledged the service is not a single-handed service, however, on the day of inspection the registered provider was the only adult present. The emergency person was called at 10:00am and arrived to the service at 10:02am; this reassured the inspector the emergency person was immediately available should they be required in the event of any emergency occurring in the service.

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;

(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(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)

The attendance record for the service was reviewed and children's attendance in the morning and on leaving the service at the end of the session were recorded in real time; any child who was absent was recorded as such in the attendance record.

(j)

No medication had been administered to any child attending the service, however, an administration of medicine book recording the details of the child and any medicine administered with staff and parental signatures to be recorded was available if required in the service.

(k)

The accident and incident record book was reviewed.

A sample of two recorded incidents, over the course of the previous three years, were inspected and contained the relevant information and details.

(3)

The records as outlined above were open to inspection by the authorised person.

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-

- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
- (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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The indoor environment was constructively planned to engage each child present. Materials and equipment were plentiful and varied and easily accessible for the children to choose and engage in an activity of their choice. There were plenty of resources to encourage and promote children’s numeracy, literacy and language skills with a variety of books, pictures and mark making materials. The outdoor environment was an extension of the indoor environment and provided areas of interest to encourage imaginary play and learning, experience sensory play and develop their gross motor skills, for example, sand and water play, ride on and push pull equipment, climbing frames, a swing set, a play house, a planting area and a covered area with further areas of interest such as a play kitchen and other play items and props.

(b)
A comfortable rest area, with soft child sized chairs and soft matting were available indoors should a child wish to sit and rest or read a book during the session.

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 secure and controlled by the registered provider to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school.

The outdoor area was surrounded by a wooden fence and gates.

The registered provider advised any food items provided for the children's snack that may potentially cause a risk of choking would be immediately cut/halved. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents which were observed out of children's reach.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. No child attending the service required continuous medication or emergency medication; this was confirmed by the registered provider.

Fire Safety:

Regular monthly fire drills were carried out. All fire escape routes were clearly signed and unobstructed.

The fire assembly point was clearly visible in the outdoor area.

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 registered provider was trained in first aid response and was immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)
(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adult caring for the children attending the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)
The first aid box was not in a conspicuous position in the pre-school room.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(2)(a)

Corrective and Preventive Action

A laminated first aid sign has been affixed permanently to the wall adjacent to the first aid box.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph x 1

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 25 (2)(a) has been met.

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 record in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises. The last recorded fire drill was dated 11 April 2025.

(4)

A notice was displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

There were no maintenance certificates for the firefighting equipment and smoke/fire detection equipment in the service. The firefighting equipment was last serviced April 2023 and the smoke/fire detection system was last serviced 16 June 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b) Servicing completed 29 May 2025. A contract is in place with the company to receive a reminder two weeks in advance of servicing. The firefighting equipment has been serviced 4 June 2025.

Supporting documentation submitted

Document x 2

Summary Comment

The requirement for Regulation 26 (1)(b) has been met.