

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK008			
Name of Service:	Brandon Community Playschool			
Address of Service:	Fairgreen, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny			
Eircode:	R95 EP95			
Name of Registered Provider:	Linda O'Brien			
Service type:	Sessional			
Date of Inspection:	12/11/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	9
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Child and Family Agency, Ferrybank, Wexford.			
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry			
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 is a community service. The service is registered to provide a sessional service to children aged 2 to 6 years of age. The service provides two sessions daily. It is open from 8.30am to 11.30am and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. The service operates from a purpose-built premises. There is a large preschool, toilets, a kitchenette, outdoor play areas and a separate building in the grounds used for storage for the service.

Staffing

There are five staff employed in the service. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. All staff working directly with the children held the minimum of level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

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.

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 10 Policies and Procedures,

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (3),

Regulation 15 Record of a preschool child,

Regulation 17 Information for parents,
Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,
Regulation 22 Food and Drink,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,
Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),
Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4).
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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, 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.

(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;
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

The manager was the person in charge on the day of inspection. The roster demonstrated there was a person in charge on all days the service was in operation over the past two weeks.

(2)(a)(b)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were five staff employed in the service. Written and validated references were available on file for all staff working in the service.

(c)

There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for all staff members. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for all staff.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as there were no staff who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

There were qualifications on file for all staff working directly with the children. These staff held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

There were policies and procedures in place in the service specified in Schedule 5 of these regulations. The policies reviewed for this inspection were the policy on healthy eating and the policy on infection control in the service.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

At all times there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children.

(3)

At 11.00am

There were 18 children in the care of 3 staff.

At 1.00pm

There were 9 children in the care of 3 staff.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

There was a registration form available in respect of each child enrolled in the service. A sample of forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

Prior to enrolling in the service, the parents were given a leaflet with information as required under regulation 17. The information provided for parents contained an outline the hours of operation, healthy eating information, facilities contact details and hours of operation within the service.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The main preschool room was resourced with a range of toys and equipment for the children’s learning and enjoyment. For example, there was a dolls house, a kitchen, dolls and buggies, and shelves containing a selection of jigsaws, books and plastic bricks. There was a display of artwork on the wall depicting space and stars which the children had been working on. There was a dress up area which had been resourced with a variety of dress up outfits. There was a family wall which staff had displayed the children’s family photos. The children took delight in showing the inspector their family members. There was a large easel situated at the children’s height where they could stand and paint.

The outdoor area was also resourced with stimulating play equipment for the children’s learning and fun. There was also a mud kitchen resourced with small utensils for children to play with. There was a large wooden play structure in the middle of the playground. There was a platform for children to stand on. There was a slide and a sloped wooden structure with foot holds for children to climb up to the platform. There was a small house where children could play.

There was a grassed area to the right of the main entrance. There was an obstacle course made of tyres for the children to play in. There were plants growing in the tyres. There was a large tyre embed in the grass for children to sit around in a circle.

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.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy which was shared with parents when they enrolled their child in the service. The children were observed having their morning snack. Parents had provided a variety of food for the children to enjoy. There were sandwiches, diced fruit and vegetables yogurts and rice cakes. Children were given water to drink and had their water bottles refilled as required.

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:

Access to the service was gained through a gate in the playground. The entrance door was secured to prevent children from leaving unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised people gaining access to the service. The large outdoor area to the front and side of the service was safe, suitable and secure. All cleaning agents were stored on shelves which were inaccessible to children.

Infection control:

The service had an infection control policy. The service appeared to be clean and well maintained. There was no maintenance requirements observed on the day of inspection. There was warm thermostatically controlled warm water available in all wash hand basins in the service. There was liquid soap, disposable paper towels and foot pedal bins available throughout the service. Children were observed washing their hands after using the toilet and after messy play.

Accidents and incidents

Previous records of accidents and incidents were reviewed in the service. The recording of the accidents and incidents was in line with the services policy. Parents had confirmed they were informed by signing the documents which were reviewed by the inspector.

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)

There was a person trained in first aid responder course available to the children. There were three staff employed in the service who were trained in a first aid responder course.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises and was available to the children.

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

There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was recorded as having taken place in service in October 2025.

(b)

There was a record stating the smoke alarm and firefighting equipment was last serviced in October 2025.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance hallway of 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 adequate insurance in place to cover the number of children the service was registered to accommodate.