

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK085
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Name of Service:	The Rower Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Coiste and Robhair, Farrantemple, The Rower, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
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Eircode:	R95 T289
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Name of Registered Provider:	Betty Gannon
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	29/04/2026
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N/A	AM	17	PM	N/A
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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).

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Description of service

This sessional service is in the village of The Rower in south county Kilkenny. The service is registered to provide a sessional service to 22 children aged 2 to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 12.30pm. The service operates from a community hall in the centre of the village. There is a preschool room, toilets, and outdoor play area. The children have access to a large indoor hall with a stage area which has been renovated in recent years.

Staffing

There are four staff, including the registered provider employed in the service. 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.

The inspection focused on the following regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment

Regulation 10 Policies and procedures

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of the child,

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Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child,
Regulation 25 First aid,
Regulation 26 Fire Safety,
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 registered provider, 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, 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)(b)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge on the day of the inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection. There was also a person available to deputise if required. The roster in the service demonstrated that these staff were generally on duty to cover the roster in the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Following a discussion with the registered provider and on review of documentation, it was established that there were four staff employed in the service including the registered provider.

All required written and validated references were available on file for all staff working in the service.

(c)

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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 no staff member 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 preschool 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 outings, and the policy on healthy eating 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.

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Compliance Information

(1)

There were at all times an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the early years service.

(3)

During the morning session there were 17 children in the care of 3 staff. The registered provider was also in the service and was available to assist in the preschool room as required.

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

(1)(a)

The following observations and discussions with staff reflected the children's experience within the service on the day of inspection:

Staff were observed to be kind and attentive to the children in their care. Snack time was observed in the service. Children were given time to enjoy their snacks at a leisurely pace. Staff sat with the children ensuring it was a relaxing and sociable time for them. Children who required additional support were given the time and space they required to join in the free play activities with their friends.

The preschool room was resourced with a variety of materials and equipment for the play and learning needs of the children. There was a home corner, a large playhouse, a dolls house and a supply of paints, crayons and paper for the children to enjoy.

Children were observed enjoying free play in the large hall accessed directly from the service.

There were ride on toys, balls and hoops for children to play with. Staff were attentive initiating games and encouraging the children to share and play with their friends.

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Staff were observed at collection time. Parents who were collecting their children were given information on how their children enjoyed their morning in the service by the staff who were looking after them.

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 the door which was secured on arrival and remained secure for the duration of the inspection. The outdoor area in the service was safe, suitable and secure. All cleaning agents were stored on shelves which were not accessible to the children.

Infection Control

The service was clean. The service had an infection control policy. The staff were observed to be attentive in supporting the children in washing their hands after using the toilet and after messy play. There was warm water to support hand washing, liquid soap, disposable hand towels and foot pedal operated bins provided across the service.

Outings

The service facilitated outings. There was a policy in place outlining the measures staff were required to practice, to ensure the safety of the children on the outing.

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.

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Compliance Information

(1)

There was a person trained in first aid responder course immediately available to the children.

(2)(a)(b)

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

There was only one staff member trained in a first aid responder course employed in the service. This number was not sufficient to cover the roster in the service. Preschool services are required to have a staff member trained in a first aid responder course available to the children attending the service at all times.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider has planned to reserve a place on the next available first aid responder course with the services regular provider when a space becomes available. The registered provider will ensure there are two staff members qualified in a first aid responder course when the service reopens in September 2026.

Supporting documentation submitted

Not received.

Summary Comment

The response is adequate to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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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)

There was a record of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was carried out in March 2026.

(1)(b)

There was a record of the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service which was last maintained in December 2025. The smoke alarms were last serviced in March 2026.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the 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.