

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LS055		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Giggles Crèche		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	95 Loughgate, Portarlinton, Co. Laois		
<b>Eircode:</b>	R32 PK12		
<b>Name of Registered Providers:</b>	Sinead Boland, Valerie Keating		
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/04/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	35	PM 15
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35 K1W4		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R. Flynn and S. Murray		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector and Inspection Registration Manager		

### 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

Giggles Crèche is located within a detached purpose-built building in a housing estate in Portarlington, Co. Laois. The service is registered to provide full day care, part time and sessional care for children aged from 0-6 years from 07.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday. The service comprised of three care rooms namely the Pre-Ecce room, Ecce room 1 and Ecce room 2. A sleep room was available. A large outdoor play area was available to the side and back of the service. The service operates a registered school aged service from 08.00-09.00am and 1.30-6.00pm.

### Staffing

The service is operated by two registered providers who work between this and another service they own and manage. The registered providers employ eight staff members including the six staff members who were providing direct care to the children and one staff member who was assigned to kitchen duties on the day of inspection. One of the two registered providers arrived at the service shortly after the inspection commenced and remained at the service for the duration 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 focused on an examination of compliance under;

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4) Management and Recruitment,  
Regulation 11 (1) (2) (8)(a) Staffing Levels,  
Regulation 19 (1)(a) Health, welfare and development of child,  
Regulation 23 Safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of child,  
Regulation 25 (1)(2) First aid,  
Regulation 26 (1)(4) Fire safety measures.

The 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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 had a named person in charge and a person to deputise as required. The person in charge facilitated the initial part of the inspection until one of the registered providers arrived onsite.

(b) The registered provider and the designated person in charge remained onsite for the duration of the inspection.

The files of ten staff members, including both registered providers were reviewed and the following was noted;

- (2)
- (a) (b) Two written validated references were available on file for each staff member, from either a past employer or a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the registered providers and for the eight staff members.
- The service also demonstrated compliance, with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (4) Documentation was available to show that the registered providers and seven staff members held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible 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 an adequate number of adults providing direct care to the children on the day of inspection.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times during the inspection.
- There was one adult providing direct care to five children aged from 15 months to 2 years in the Pre-ecce room.
- There were two adults providing direct care to ten children aged from 3-5 years in the Ecce 1 room.
- There were three adults providing direct care to thirteen children aged 3-5 years in the Ecce 2 room.

(8)(a) On review of the service roster it was observed that two adults were on the premises during the operation of the service.

### 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

##### (1)(a) Basic needs of children

Parents provided the morning snack for their child and the service provided the main hot meal and evening tea that was freshly prepared on site. Chicken casserole and mashed potatoes was the main meal served at lunchtime.

Prior to lunchtime, jobs such as setting the table and handing out drinks were delegated to the children, who enjoyed their roles of assisting. Water to drink was freely available in the pre-school rooms to the children throughout the day. The children were afforded plenty of time to eat their meals and were not rushed.

Children were observed being supervised with hand washing prior to eating their lunch and staff members sat with the children and engaged in conversations during mealtimes.

Children enjoyed freedom of movement within their care rooms and were provided with the opportunity for outdoor play in the morning and afternoon. The children were dressed appropriately for outdoor play and staff ensured the children had sunscreen applied and sun hats before going outdoors.

##### Supporting relationships around children

Staff members were observed to be warm, kind and respectful towards the children attending. This was evidenced by staff use of the childrens names, the use of gentle touch and soft voice tones.

The transitions between activities such as nappy changes, sleep time, mealtimes and outdoor play were observed to be calm and relaxed with staff available to care for the individual needs of the children.

Communication with parents was via phone and email. The staff also speak with parents at the drop off and collection times. A family wall was observed in the pre-school rooms which helped to keep the children connected to their home with pictures of their families displayed. Links with the local community were observed through a wall display of photographs of familiar sites from the local area.

### Physical and material environment

The care room environments provided the children with a variety of spaces to play, learn and develop.

The low-level shelving units in the care rooms ensured that the materials and equipment were easily accessible and available to children, enabling free choice of the equipment. There was plenty of art and craft materials including paper and crayons, paint and stickers. Other equipment included musical instruments, dress up clothes, dolls, trucks, cars, jigsaws, puzzles and books.

The children's individual artwork was on display in the rooms. Children in the pre-ecce room were observed carrying out a painting activity which involved the "Easter Bunny".

The outdoor area was divided into two, to provide space for the older and younger children. The outdoor space had an artificial grass surface and was fully enclosed with a high-concrete block wall and gates to each side. Equipment included a small picnic bench, a climbing frame, balls, a large sand table, ride on equipment and swings.

Children from the pre-ecce room who required a period of sleep were facilitated to sleep in this room following their lunch.

### 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 pre-school rooms were adequately resourced, bright and comfortable for the children to move about, work and play during their time in the service. There was a variety of play and learning equipment easily accessible on low level open shelving and tables that children could easily see and choose.

(b) The service had a designated sleep room which contained five cots. Children from the Pre-ecce room who required a period of sleep were facilitated to sleep in this room following their lunch. Six low level beds were available should children over the age of 2 require a rest or sleep during the day. Rest areas such as couches, cushions and soft mats, were available in all rooms for children to relax and take a break throughout the day if 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:

The main entrance door to the service was secure and had a bell entry system which was controlled by staff to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.

The person in charge documented the inspectors visit to the service in the visitor's book on arrival.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents which were stored high up out of reach of children.

##### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and paper hand towels dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hand washing. The staff members supervised older children's handwashing. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues, paper towel and waste in the pre-school rooms. Single use plastic aprons, disposable gloves and nappy sacks were available for nappy changes.

##### Administration of Medication:

Staff were aware of the procedures to be followed to administer medicine safely to a child if required while attending the service. Individual and emergency care plans were in place for any child who required a specific medication or emergency medication while attending the pre-school room; these care plans were in a conspicuous position in the room.

##### Safe Sleep:

Evidence of sleep checks logs were available to demonstrate that staff maintained 10-minute sleep checks to include their colour, breathing and position on children attending the pre-ecce room who required sleep during their attendance in the service.

The temperature of the cot room was maintained at the recommended ambient sleep room temperature of 18°C to 22°C for children over one year old.

Cots were positioned with enough space for staff to easily move around the cot to provide for the children's care needs which facilitated staff providing assistance to and checking on sleeping children.

### Fire Safety:

Fire evacuation signs were present above doorways, fire exit routes were unobstructed, and a fire assembly point was located to the front of the premises.

### Outing:

The manager informed the inspectors that outings are not undertaken by the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### Infection Control:

1. It was observed that children were not assisted to have their hands washed under warm running water following nappy changes observed.
2. A staff member did not use the foot pedal on the nappy disposal bin but used their hands when placing soiled nappies into the bin. This increased the risk of cross contamination.
3. The nappy changing mat was torn and therefore could not be effectively cleaned which increases the risk of cross contamination.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### Infection Control:

1. New nappy changing procedure documents have been placed at eye level in the nappy changing area.
2. Staff have completed refresher training on the nappy changing procedure and the use of pedal bins. Visual aids for the nappy changing procedure have been placed at wash hand basins for instruction on nappy disposal and pedal bin use.
3. The changing mat has been replaced.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### Infection Control:

1. Photographic evidence of the nappy changing procedure was submitted to the Inspectorate.
2. Evidence of refresher training completed by staff was submitted to the Inspectorate.
3. Photographic evidence of the replaced nappy changing mat was submitted to the Inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective action taken, photographic evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate, reviewed by the Early Years Inspector and deemed to meet the regulatory requirement.

## 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

(2)(a) A first aid box was available in the service.

(b) The first aid box was available to the staff caring for the children attending the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1)  
While it is acknowledged that there was one staff member present on the day of inspection who had current first aid responder (FAR) training, the staff roster commencing 07/04/2025 indicated that there was no person trained in FAR available on the premises on 07/04/2025, and during the hours of 07.30- 08.00am and 5.00-5.30pm on the 10/04/2025.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)  
The registered provider submitted evidence on the 07 May, to demonstrate the corrective action had been carried out with regards to the non-compliance identified under Regulation 25. First Aid Responder (FAR) training has been scheduled for 29 and 30 May.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the email confirming same was submitted to the inspectorate by the registered provider.

#### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive action taken will address the outstanding non-compliance once the FAR training for additional staff has been completed and certification submitted to the inspectorate.

## 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) A record of monthly fire drills carried out in the service was maintained, the last fire drill carried out in the service was recorded as having taken place on 6 March 2025.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment in the premises. Certification reviewed indicated that both the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in October 2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the reception area of the service.