

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MH063		
Name of Service:	Giggles Childcare Centre		
Address of Service:	Woodgrove, Ballivor, Co. Meath		
Eircode:	C15 EH67		
Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Daly		
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	30/01/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	49	PM 38
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath		
Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray & AM. Cunningham		
Title:	Early Years Inspectors		
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		

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Description of service

Giggles Childcare Centre is an established childcare facility within the local community and is operated by the Crann Support Group. The service provides a sessional, part-time and full day care service from 7am to 18:15pm for children from 0 to 6 years. Eligible children participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) from 9am to 12 mid-day. A school aged service is also provided on the first floor of the building. The service is located in a purpose-built facility and consists of the following rooms:

The **Caterpillar** room which facilitates the care of children from 6 months to 1 year.

The **Ladybird** room which cares for children from 1 to 2 years.

The **Butterfly** room provides care for children from 2 to 3 years.

The **Busy Bees** room cater for children from 2 to 4 years.

The **Honey Bees** room consist of two interconnecting rooms which cater for children from 3 years to 5 years.

The **Den** which is the outdoor pre-school room provide care and education to children from 2 years 8 months to 5 years, however during the summer term this area is available to the older children attending the full day care service.

Staffing

Employed to work in the service was a manager, 2 assistant manager, 22 childcare staff, 5 school aged staff, 1 receptionist, 1 housekeeping staff, 2 cooks and 1 maintenance staff member.

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

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- 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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 9,10,19,21,22 & 29. As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms name Caterpillar room, Ladybird room, Butterfly room and Busy Bees room. 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.

Additional Information

The inspection was carried out following receipt of a concern received to the Early Years Inspectorate on the 27/01/2026. A response was received on the 10/02/2026 which was accepted by the Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, manager, assistant manager, 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
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(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.

Compliance Information

- (1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.
- (c) A clear management structure that identified specific roles of each employee was displayed at reception.

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(2) (a)&(b) The recruitment files were reviewed for the assistant manager, 1 school aged staff member, 1 transition year student (TY) and 1 Community Employment (CE) worker. All remaining files were reviewed on the last inspection and met compliance at that time.

Eight validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for the 4 staff members. 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 the staff members had not resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) The assistant manager had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(7) (a) All new staff completed induction training on the services policies and procedures and receive a "Staff Handbook". Regular supervision meetings and staff meetings are conducted between management and staff member.

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

1. The registered provider ensured that the following written policies specified in Schedule 5 were comprehensive to ensure the welfare and safety of the children attending the service.

- Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Behaviour Management Policy.
- Staff Training/Supervision Policy.

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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) Present on the morning of the inspection was the manager, 2 assistant manager, 13 childcare staff, an additional childcare staff commenced work at 10:56am working directly with the 49 children attending the service. There was also 1 CE worker and 1 TY student present.

The registered provider arrived at 11:10am.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at capacity on the day of inspection:

- The **Caterpillar room** there were 2 adults with 4 children ranging in age from 6 months to 1 year all attending on a full day care basis.
- The **Ladybird room** there was 1 adult with 5 children ranging in age from 1 to 2 years all attending on a full day care basis. Relief was provided to this room as needed.
- The **Butterfly room** there were 2 adults with 5 children ranging in age from 2 to 3 years all attending on a full day care basis. A TY student was also present.
- The **Busy Bees room** there were 2 adults and 1 adult providing additional assistance with 6 children ranging in age from 2 to 4 years, 4 children attending on a full day care basis and 2 children attending on a part time basis.
- The **Honey Bees room** had 2 adults with 11 children ranging in age from 3 to 5 years, 9 children were attending on a full day care basis and 2 children were attending on a sessional basis. A CE worker was also present.

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- The **Den** had 4 adults with 18 children ranging in age from 3 to 5 years, 11 children were attending on a full day care basis and 7 children were attending on a sessional basis.

The manager and 1 assistant manager were able to provide assistance and relief to the rooms as needed.

(8) The registered provider ensured that there were always two adults on the premises when the service was in operation, as evidenced in the staff roster maintained in 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, and
 - (2) A registered provider shall ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on a pre-school child whilst attending the service.
 - (3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- The staff members sat with the children at snack and dinner time helping the children when required whilst encouraging conversation and extending interactions.
- In the Caterpillar, Ladybird and Busy Bees rooms any child who became upset were nurtured and cuddled until they settled. Sleep was child led with the younger children placed to sleep as required. The older children availed of sleep after dinner.
- Following discussion with the staff members it was evident that they were aware of the service "Illness Policy" regarding children becoming ill with vomiting or loose nappies while attending the service. A member of the management team was always informed if a parent needs to be contacted to bring their child home.

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- Children's nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner with warm one-to-one interactions during direct care. Staff members were responsive to the children's cues should they need to use the toilet, with discreet supervision provided and assistance given if required.

(2) There was no evidence that corporal punishment was inflicted on any child on the day of inspection and this was confirmed upon discussion with staff.

(3) In the care rooms inspected children's behaviour was managed in a positive way, and it was observed that minor problems were handled promptly and appropriately by the adults who were observed to engage respectfully with the children in their care. The children showed confidence around the staff members and an eagerness to engage with them in conversations and play. During activities children were offered choices and sought out staff members who readily acknowledged and encouraged the children's efforts and accomplishments.

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 care rooms were well resourced with play materials and equipment which were laid out in interest areas which were spacious and uncluttered. The play materials and equipment incorporated natural/sensorial materials, art and crafts, a range of suitable toys and books which were easily accessible on shelving where children could select and become involved in meaningful sustained play.

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 4-week menu plan for the children attending the full day care service with a variety of dishes ranging from meat, fish and poultry cooked on site. All children attending the sessional service brought their own lunch. In the Caterpillar room pre-made bottles were available in the fridge and given to the children as required.

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At mealtimes drinks were placed on the tables beside the children. On the day of the inspection the children had chicken curry and mash potatoes for their main hot meal.

Non-Compliance Information

In the Ladybird room children's drinks were not accessible and were stored in the fridge.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Where drinks had previously been stored in the fridge in the Ladybird Room, they are now stored outside of the fridge and are fully accessible for the children at their level. Educators in all rooms have been advised that drinks need to be accessible to children at all times. Daily room checks will be conducted by management to ensure that this procedure is implemented in practice.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of children's drinks on a shelf in the Ladybird room.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required.

Compliance Information

(d)The care rooms and sanitary facilities were clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.

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Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a)(b)&(c) A Complaints Policy and a Complaints Log were available to record any feedback and concerns.