

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015RN005

**Name of Service:** Buttercups Community Playgroup

**Address of Service:** Lock Road, Tarmonbarry, Co. Roscommon

**Eircode:** N39 HK81

**Name of Registered Provider:** Mary Burke

**Service type:** Sessional

**Date(s) of Inspection:** 19/09/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM	n/a
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. Kennedy
<b>Title:</b>	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

Buttercups preschool was established in 2004 as a community service operated by a management committee. The service caters for children from 2 years 6 months to 6 years on a sessional basis. The service operates weekdays from 9.15am to 12.45pm. The service caters for a maximum of 34 pre-school children at any one time.

The service is located from a purpose-built childcare facility close to the village of Tarmonbarry, Co. Roscommon. There are two preschool rooms, an office space, a kitchen and sanitary accommodation provided on the ground floor of the building. Each preschool room has direct access to the outdoor play area to the rear of the building.

### Staffing

The registered provider does not work directly with the children and has employed a manager and four Early Childcare Educators to work with the children. The manager acts as relief in event of staff absence. The staff working directly with the children in the service have completed a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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 Regulations 9,11,23,25,26 and 28. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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*
- (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.*

### Compliance Information

(1)(a) There was a designated person in charge and a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.

Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.

Five staff files were reviewed.

(2)(a) &(b) Ten of the ten validated written references on file in respect of the five staff, were from a past employer, or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the five staff. 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 on file for one of the staff who had resided outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years

(4) The five staff working directly with the children had evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 to Level 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education.

## 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)(a) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(3) On the morning of the inspection, there were 18 preschool children present with 4 staff working directly with, caring, and supervising these children.

### 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 of the premises had a system of security to prevent unauthorised access by a person or the unsupervised exiting by a pre-school child.
- The external outdoor play area to the rear of the premises was secured so that unauthorised persons could not access or enter the area.
- All cleaning agents and equipment were stored inaccessible and out of children’s reach.
- The water temperature was thermostatically controlled to facilitate hygienic hand washing without risk of scalding the children. The water temperature in the sanitary areas was 41.2°C.
- In the playrooms, all toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Daily records of attendance were kept for all of children attending the playrooms.
- Blind cords were securely fastened thereby preventing any potential risk.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were wall mounted and secured to prevent any trip or strangulation hazard

##### Infection Control:

- There was liquid soap at the wash hand basins to facilitate hygienic hand washing. There were disposable paper towels in the dispensers in the sanitary areas used by the children to facilitate hygienic hand drying.
- There were cleaning schedules and records for the playrooms, sanitary areas, and the outdoor area.
- Tabletops and work surfaces were cleaned with disposable paper towels and disinfectant spray, the early years inspector observed this practice on the day of inspection.
- The playrooms were observed to be kept adequately ventilated with the windows left open whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playrooms.
- The outdoor play equipment was cleaned after each child’s use, and prior to each child’s use with documented records maintained.

##### Administration of Medication:

- There were no medications administered to the children on the day of the inspection.

- The staff demonstrated knowledge of safe practices with regards to the safe storage and administration of medication should it be required.

### Fire Safety:

- All exit routes in the service were free from obstruction.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

- Two handle grips were missing from a tricycle, and a pedal was missing from a tractor which could pose a potential risk of injury to a child.
- A wall mounted chalk board in the outdoor area was broken and could pose a potential risk of injury to a child.
- Two radiator covers in preschool room 1 and preschool room 2 were not secured to the wall and could prove risk of injury to a child.

#### Infection Control:

- Children's snacks that were provided from home including perishable food items such as ham, cheese and yoghurts were observed to be stored in the hallways with an air temperature recorded at 20.6°C and 20.7°C and therefore not kept below 5°C as recommended by the Department of Health and Children. Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Service (2013) This was also a non-compliance on two previous inspections.
- The large newly constructed sand play area was not covered in the outdoor area which could pose a risk of animal excrement and infection to a preschool child.

### Fire Safety:

- It was noted that the last fire drill was carried out on 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2025. Fire drills must be carried out monthly to ensure the children are familiar with the procedure in event of an emergency.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

The manager of the service submitted a written response to advise

- New handles grips were fitted on the tricycle. The tractor that has a pedal missing has been removed
- The mounted chalk board on the fence has been removed.
- The radiator covers in room 1 and room 2 are secured to the walls.

**Infection Control:**

4. All perishable foods are stored in the refrigerator.
5. The large sand play area is not presently been used until a suitable cover has been fitted,

**Fire Safety:**

6. Fire drills are done on a monthly basis.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**General Safety:**

Photographic evidence was submitted of the following

1. The new handle grips on the tricycle and the removed tractor from the outdoor play area.
2. The chalkboard removed from the fence.
3. The secured radiator covers in room 1 and 2.

**Infection Control:**

4. Perishable foods stored in the refrigerator.
5. The alternative sand play area.

**Fire Safety:**

6. Documentary evidence of the fire drill carried out on a monthly basis.

**Summary Comment**

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.

**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 service provided evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Four adults had current training in first aid responder training.

**Non-Compliance Information**

(2)(a)(b) The saline and antiseptic wipes had past their expiry date and required replacement

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

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The manager submitted a written response to state the saline and antiseptic wipes have been replaced

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence has been submitted of the saline and antiseptic wipes

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the action taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 25 has been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.

## 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 written record was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service.  
The last recorded fire drill was on 29/05/ 2025

(b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service dated October 2024.  
The smoke and fire detection alarm system for the premises had the last annual service dated 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2025.

(4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

## Part VI – Safety

### Regulation 28 – Insurance

*A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.*

### Compliance Information

The service's insurance with an expiry date of 27/03/2026 covered 34 sessional children and included the following,

- public liability,
- personal accident,

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- insurance against fire and theft,
- outings undertaken as part of the service