

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN023				
Name of Service:	Grovelands Childcare Ltd				
Address of Service:	Corran Riada, Monksland, Athlone, Co. Roscommon				
Eircode:	N37 W3Y1				
Name of Registered Provider:	Regina Bushell				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Dates of Inspection:	27/06/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>44</td> <td>PM</td> <td>38</td> </tr> </table>	AM	44	PM	38
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.
Inspection undertaken by:	A.Kennedy and S.Killeen
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

Description of service

This privately owned preschool service is located on the outskirts of Athlone town, in Co Roscommon offering full day care, part time and sessional ECCE care. The service offers a childcare service from 8:00 am to 18:00 for children aged between 0-6 years each day from Monday to Friday. This service has 6 playrooms, two designated sleep rooms and a kitchen area and dining area. Five of the care rooms are on the ground floor, the sunflower room, bluebell room, mulberry room, sycamore room and chestnut room. The willow playroom is on the first floor. There is a large well-resourced outdoor play area at the rear of the building. The service is registered to cater for 114 preschool children. It is also registered as a school aged service.

Staffing

The registered provider is supernumerary and not on the premises daily. There is a person in charge and deputy person in charge. There were 28 adults employed in the service.

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 an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,16(k),19 and 23.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations 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 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.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that.

- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
- (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection..

(2) On the most recent inspection dated the 14/11/2024 ,28 staff files were reviewed and satisfactory.

It was advised by the person in charge that one additional staff had commenced in the service since the inspection conducted on 14/11/2024.

The file was reviewed

- (a)(b) Two written validated references were on file from past employers for the adult.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were on file for all adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another state was available for the adult who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.
- (4) The adult had evidence they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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) On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service. There were 13 adults working with 44 children in the morning and 12 adults working with 38 children in the afternoon.

(2) The ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times throughout the inspection.

On the morning of the inspection;

In the Sunflower room, there were no children in attendance as they were transitioning a child to the bluebell room.

The willow room was not in operation on the day.

In the Bluebell room, there were 9 children aged between 12 months to 2 years been cared for by three adults.

In the Mulberry room, there were 14 children aged between 2 to 3 years been cared for by three adults

In the Sycamore room, there were 11 children aged between 3-4 years been cared for by three adults.

In the chestnut room, there were 10 children aged between 4-5 years been cared for by four adults.

On the afternoon of the inspection;

In the Sunflower room there were no children in attendance.

In the Bluebell room there were 7 children aged between 12 months to 2 years been cared for by three adults.

In the Mulberry room, there were 12 children aged between 2 to 3 years been cared for by three adults

In the Sycamore room, there were 12 children aged between 3-4 years been cared for by three adults.

In the chestnut room, there were 7 children aged between 4-5 years been cared for by three adults.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises when children were present in the service.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

A sample of accident and incident records were reviewed in the service which detailed any accident or incident occurring in the service and measures taken to reduce the risk of recurrence.

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)

- Adequate and nutritious food and snacks were provided on the day of the inspection. A healthy eating policy was in place within the service, and a three-week menu plan was in place.
- There was evidence of healthy eating practices, with children consuming a variety of nutritious foods throughout the day.
- At 10:45hrs the children were observed eating apples, yogurts, ham, crackers, and cheese, with water readily available.
- At 12:20 hrs the children were served pasta with chicken and bolognese sauce; a vegetarian alternative (soy chicken) was provided for a child who did not eat meat. Water was available throughout the meal. Later in the At 15:30hrs the children were observed enjoying homemade scones, fruit, and yogurts.

- The indoor environments were comfortable, pleasant, and thoughtfully arranged to meet the developmental needs of the children attending the service. A wide variety of play equipment and materials were available to support all areas of a child's development
- In the sunflower room there was space for the children to lie, roll, creep, crawl and pull themselves up and learn to walk in a safe space
- Within the preschool rooms, an extensive selection of resources were provided, including an arts and crafts area stocked with paper, markers, chalk, glitter, paint, and gluing materials; tabletop activities featuring a large selection of jigsaws; a home/kitchen area furnished with child-sized furniture, dolls and accessories, play food items, and utensils; a role play area with a play shop, food items, a child-sized trolley, dress-up clothes, and a vanity unit; a music area; a construction area offering wooden and plastic blocks, tools, and helmets; a reading/rest area with a wide selection of books; fine motor activities such as threading, pegging, and sorting exercises; and small world play including miniature animals, cars, trucks, and a dolls' house with accessories. The playrooms were observed to be comfortable and inviting, providing a suitable and engaging space for preschool children. Child-sized tables and chairs were appropriately provided to support age-appropriate activities. Highchairs were provided for the younger children.
- A cosy library area was present, in each of the rooms and staff were observed reading to the children after lunch and before rest time, promoting language development and a calm, nurturing atmosphere.
- Free movement of the children was facilitated in the daily routine of the service. Short periods of adult initiated activities were interspersed with free play so that children could choose their own activity and move between the different interest areas in the rooms at their leisure. Children's need for rest was also appropriately accommodated in the care rooms. Rest areas were available in the older children's room with child size couches and soft matting. There was designated sleep rooms for the younger children in the sunflower, bluebell and mulberry rooms.
- Older children were supported and encouraged to take responsibility for their personal care, in ways that match their individual level of independence. This included toileting, wiping their noses, dressing themselves for outside and getting their plate and cup from the shelf as snack and dinner time. The service fostered an understanding of healthy habits such as regular handwashing and using tissues when required. Staff were at hand to guide and support when necessary.
- Staff in the care rooms were attentive and caring in their approach and interacted well with the children. They were observed coming down to their eye level and kept up the flow of conversation with them throughout the session. Children were observed to be praised and encouraged as they engaged in different activities.

- Nappy changing was observed on the day of inspection. The staff were observed talking and singing to the children while carrying out the nappy change.
- Children were offered a sense of belonging through the provision of individually named places for their personal belongings outside each playroom and by displays of artwork and photos of each child with their families. Children were enabled to engage positively with each other and were encouraged to be helpful, to take turns and share play resources with other children.
- Good teamwork was observed among staff, who worked collaboratively and supported one another effectively. Staff communicated well, ensuring that important information was documented and shared appropriately.
- During transitions from outdoor play to toileting, staff demonstrated clear communication by informing each other about which children were going inside to use the bathroom. Additionally, staff showed the inspectors the digital app used for daily communication with parents, highlighting their commitment to transparency and ongoing parent engagement.
- The outdoor play area is located at the rear of the preschool and is directly accessible from the preschool rooms. It is securely enclosed with walls and large wooden fencing, ensuring a safe environment for children.
- The area is well-equipped and features a combination of artificial grass, shock-absorbent surfacing, and tarmac. It is divided into three separate sections to accommodate the different preschool rooms. Play equipment includes a large climbing frame with slides, a playhouse, a mud kitchen complete with kitchen accessories, and a seating area with benches and picnic tables. A variety of bikes, trikes, and scooters were also available for the children.
- Each section of the outdoor area has a partially covered space, allowing children to engage in outdoor play during inclement weather.

Non-Compliance Information

1. Individual toilet cubicles were not provided for the children using the mulberry sanitary accommodation. Two child-sized toilets were positioned adjacent to each other without any form of partition or cubicle, resulting in a lack of privacy if both toilets were used simultaneously.
This was a non-compliance on the previous inspection and remains outstanding.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The Director of Operations submitted a response to advise that a partition has been placed between the two toddler toilets

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographic evidence was submitted of the partition placed between the two toilets in the mulberry sanitary accomodation.

Summary Comment

The inspectors have reviewed the action taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 19 has been adequately addressed.

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 was found to be secured on arrival preventing unauthorised access or exit from the premises.
- Wooden gates were present in the hallway to prevent children from accessing the stairs and the kitchen unsupervised.
- Materials and equipment were observed to be in a good state of repair.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C.in each of the sanitary areas and handwashing sinks in the preschool rooms
- Cleaning products and equipment were stored out of the reach of children
- Highchairs within the sunflower room were fitted with a 5-point safety harness and were in good sate of repair.
- The outdoor area was secured with tall wooden fencing and a bolted gate.
- Grapes were observed to be cut in half, reducing the risk of choking to the child

Infection Control:

- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to and after mealtimes in all of the care rooms.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available within the service for safe disposal of waste and leak proof foot operated pedalled nappy disposal bins were provided in the nappy changing areas
- There was adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap.

and paper towels. Older children were observed to wash their hands with support, before snacks, meals, after messy play and outdoor play.

- Child friendly handwashing posters were placed beside the sinks. Handwashing was supervised by the adults to ensure all hands were cleaned effectively.
- Staff were observed wearing aprons and gloves while serving food in the rooms.
- Additionally, appropriate aprons and gloves were used during child/nappy changing procedures.
- The sanitary facilities were observed to be mechanically ventilated.
- The sanitary facilities were observed to be kept maintained and clean.
- It was advised during the inspection that presently no child is on powdered infant formula and if they were to be consumed, the bottles would be prepared by the parents/guardians at home and stored in the refrigerator in the sunflower room.

Administration of Medication:

- There were no medications administered to children on the day of the inspection.
- Medicines were stored in their original labelled container in a safe and secure way
- The adults knew the requirements and had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on administration of medication.
- The adults demonstrated knowledge of safe practices with regards to the storage and administration of medication should it be required, to be administered in the service.
- Sunscreen lotions were suitably consistently clearly individually labelled,
- On discussion with staff in the pre-school rooms staff informed the inspector of a child on medication. Staff were aware of instructions and storage requirements of the medication
- Detailed care plans for the children who require them are kept by the service and were available on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- There were two designated sleep rooms, one off the sunflower room and one of the bluebell room with cots for children under 2 years of age. Additionally, there were stackable beds available for older children's sleep provision in the mulberry room,
- The cots were in good condition; with the mattresses having a recognised safety standard and cots were at least 50cm apart.

- There was a safe sleep policy that detailed temperature, lighting, ventilation, space between cots and child safety requirements
- Cellular blankets were used for children under two years of age. All linen provided was clean,
- Rest / quiet areas were provided in each of the playrooms to facilitate a child to rest or opt out of an activity if he/she chose to.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.

Outing:

- There were no outings on the day of the inspection, however when asked staff were aware of the requirements and had a clear understanding of the outings policy and procedure.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. There were two tricycles and a wheelbarrow in the outdoor play area with evidence of rust and flaked paint which could pose a potential safety concern.

Infection Control:

2. In the toilet adjoining the sycamore room, a large section of the lino flooring was missing. This damage compromises the ability to clean the area effectively and may pose infection control issues.
3. In the chestnut room, two child-sized chairs were observed to have splits in the upholstery, exposing the foam underneath. This damage prevents the chairs from being cleaned effectively and may pose infection control issues.

Safe Sleep:

- 4 On the day of the inspection, it was observed that measures to maintain a safe sleeping temperature between 16–20°C were not in place. The dedicated sleep rooms off the sunflower and bluebell room used for children's rest did not meet the recommended temperature range.

The following room temperature recordings were taken on the day of the inspection:

At 13.02hrs the room temperature reading was 20.7°C

At 13.04hrs, the room temperature reading was 21.8°C.

At 14.46hrs the room temperature reading was 22.6°C

At 14.56hrs the room temperature reading was 21.4°C

At 14.58hrs the room temperature reading was 22.3°C

It is acknowledged, that on the day of the inspection, when staff were advised by the early year's inspector of the high temperatures, the staff opened windows and the doors and adjusted the air conditioning units to enhance cross ventilation to reduce the temperature of the rooms during the sleep period.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The trikes and wheelbarrow have been removed from the garden and discussed with the staff that while the bikes were in working order the presence of rust and flaking paint should have been noted on their site safety inspection.

Infection Control:

2. The flooring has been replaced in the sanitary area off the sycamore room and flooring has been included on the monthly room checklists.
3. The cushions on the couch have been replaced.

Safe Sleep:

4. Precautions were taken on the day. A staff member sat in both sleep rooms as the children were asleep, the air conditioning was on, and any heavy clothing was removed from the children prior to the children going for a sleep. The staff supervised and monitored the children for the duration of their sleep.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence was submitted of the

2. Newly fitted flooring in the sanitary accommodation off the sycamore room.
3. The newly fitted cushions on the couches in the chestnut room.

Summary Comment

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