

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015RN035				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Rascals Day Care				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Circular Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon				
<b>Eircode:</b>	F42 XV57				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Catherine Mullaney				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day				
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	04/12/2024				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>54</td> <td>PM</td> <td>30</td> </tr> </table>	AM	54	PM	30
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, St Conals Hospital, Letterkenny, Co Donegal.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	L. Costello and N. McEndoo.
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

This full day care is in the town of Roscommon. The pre-school caters for children from 1 to 6 years of age. The service also provides an afterschool programme and holiday camp for school aged children. The service is registered to operate from 7:30hrs to 18:30hrs, from Monday to Friday. The premises is in a detached building, with four playrooms. There is a kitchen where children's meals are prepared, cooked, and stored on site. There are outdoor play areas to the front and rear of the premises for children's play and exploration. A carpark is provided to the front of the facility for staff parking and the safe drop-off and collection of children, by parents and guardians.

### Staffing

The registered provider works in the service. There are 14 staff including the registered provider. 12 staff hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 to 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education. There is a designated chef who solely works in the service kitchen and an administrator working in the office.

### 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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 16 (j) 16 (k) 21, 23, 24 and 27  
These 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, 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)

There was a person in charge and a person available to deputise as required.

(c)

Throughout the service there were designated room leaders and childcare workers. All adults were aware of the governance structure and lines of accountability within the service.

(2) (a) (b)

All 14 adult's files employed in the service were reviewed. 20 verified past employer references and 8 verified references from another source were available in respect of all 14 adults employed in the service.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 14. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)

International police vetting was available for the two adults that had lived outside of the state for a period of more than six consecutive months.

(4)

12 adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) There were 10 adults working directly with 54 children on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service.

The person in charge and an additional childcare worker also worked directly with the preschool children covering breaks.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

- Cubs room: 2 adults cared for 7 children aged from 1 to 2.8 years of age.
- Ladybird Room: 2 adults cared for 14 children from 2.10 to 4 years of age.
- Tigers Room: 3 adults cared for 19 children aged 3 to 4 years of age.

- Monkeys Room: 3 adults cared for 14 children aged 3 to 4 years of age.

In the afternoon at 13:20 the following ratios were observed:

- Cubs room: 2 adults cared for 5 children aged from 1 to 2.8 years of age.
- Ladybird Room: 2 adults cared for 14 children from 2.10 to 4 years of age.
- Tigers Room: 2 adults cared for 11 children aged 3 to 4 years of age.
- Monkeys Room: closed

## 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:*

*(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

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

*(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

### Compliance Information

(1) (j)

The service demonstrated that medication administration records were available with signed parental consent for occasions where medication had to be administered.

(k)

The service demonstrated adequate recording of all accidents and incidents in the service. An accident and incident book were available in each care room which documented the incident, immediate follow up including first aid and the remedial action taken to prevent a reoccurrence. All reports had evidence that parents were informed of same.

(2) (b)

The person in charge is aware of the statutory requirement to maintain records for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

(3)

These records were made available on the day to the authorised person.

### 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 service consisted of four playrooms each one assigned for use by different age group of children. There were adequate and suitable indoor play facilities available in each room for the age range of children attending. The rooms presented as bright and visually appealing spaces with an orderly arrangement of play equipment and materials set into clearly defined areas of interest. The cubs room caters for the younger child and was equipped with resources suitable to this age group including, small world toys, musical toys and instruments, kitchen play equipment, puzzles and jigsaws, wall activities, building blocks, cars and trucks, dolls and teddys. Resources were stored on low level shelving easily accessible to the children. The cub's room had a range of suitable chairs and tables to meet the needs of the younger child, chairs with harness were provided for mealtimes and low-level chairs for those children who could manage them. Ladybirds room catered for children aged 2.10 to 4 years was adequately resourced with equipment and resources to stimulate imagination and support play. This room was set up into various interest area, a home corner with Kitchen, dress up and dining table facilitated role and imaginative play, arts and crafts allowed for creativity, an array of tabletop activities and Montessori based

equipment facilitated fine motor development and introduced mathematical concepts. A rest area with library assisted in the development of language skills. All materials were in the children's reach and the children were observed to flow freely between activities. The Monkey room caters for children aged 3 to 4 years old. The room is filled with age-appropriate resources and clearly defined areas for different activities, including imaginary play, small world play, a home corner, dress-up, construction, and sensory play. The walls showcase the children's seasonal artwork, displayed at eye level. Also at eye level is a Focus board, which encourages discussions about topics like the weather, emotions, colours, shapes, and numbers. A cosy rest area with cushions is available next to the library, providing a quiet space for the children to relax. The Tiger room caters for children aged 3 to 4 years old. It features clearly defined areas of interest, including a kitchen area, construction zone, small world play, and sensory activities, all available for the children to explore freely. Tables are set up with a variety of activities, like puzzles and building blocks, allowing children to join in when they like or engage in free play. At eye level, there are display boards throughout the room, showcasing family photos, current interests, and seasonal art created by the 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 main entrance into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Chairs with harness safety straps were fitted and in good condition.
- Grapes in children's lunch boxes were observed to be cut in half to reduce the risk of choking.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The outdoor perimeter was secure with waste bins stored out of reach of children

## Infection Control:

- There were adequate handwashing facilities throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels available. Children were observed to wash their hands after toileting.
- Cleaning schedules were in place and the service was observed to be visibly clean on the day.
- Waste bins had the required foot pedal operation for the required safe disposal of waste.
- Cloths for cleaning the younger children's faces were colour coded and stored in individual containers.

## Administration of Medication:

- Staff members were knowledgeable with the service policy on administering of medication and documentation was available for review.

## Safe Sleep:

- There was one designated sleep room located off the cub's room with six standard cots.
- Cots were fitted with the required waterproof covers.
- Stackable floor beds were available for those children over two years of age. The older children slept at a structured sleep time in their care room.

## Fire Safety:

- Emergency doors remained free from hazards on the day of inspection.
- Evacuation plans were displayed on the walls throughout the service.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

- (1) Garda vetting was available for all 14 staff members. However, one of these vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'

### Infection Control:

- (2) Nappy changing was observed, and children's hands were not routinely washed after a nappy change, posing a risk of infection control.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

- (1) We have renewed the team member in questions garda vetting. We have also updated a check list in the HR folders, highlighting team members expiry due and noted in diary to process at beginning of expiration month.

##### Infection Control:

- (2) We have updated the nappy changing policy to ensure that all children's hands are washed after napping changing. Ongoing team training and daily spot checks while nappy changing cycles are taking place in the Cub and Ladybird rooms

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

Evidence of renewed Garda Vetting and checklist submitted.

##### Infection Control:

Evidence of updated Nappy Changing policy submitted.

#### Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted has been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

### Compliance Information

(1) The service demonstrated that all preschool children were appropriately checked in and out of the service.

(3) (a) (b)

The service demonstrated that any person other than a preschool child, parent, employee, or unpaid worker is approved prior to entry and a record of such entry is recorded.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

### Compliance Information

The registered provider demonstrated that the preschool children attending the service are supervised at all times. During mealtimes, staff members were observed to sit alongside the children, supporting, encouraging, and assisting if required. Throughout outdoor play staff members positioned themselves strategically to ensure children could be seen at all times. Communication was proactive between the adults, informing each other when one adult was leaving the room to collect an item or assist with nappy changing. Independence was promoted throughout in relation to toileting and staff members were in ear shot to prompt and support if required. Sleep was supervised both in person by staff members remaining in the room with sleeping children and by completing ten-minute physical checks.