

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO048
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Name of Service:	Rainbow Road
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Address of Service:	Mullaghroe National School, Mullaghroe, Monasteraden, Co. Sligo
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Eircode:	F52 AK84
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Name of Registered Provider:	Bridget Taheny
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	11/11/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	9	PM	n/a
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello
Title:	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
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Description of service

Rainbow road is a sessional service located in Mullaghroe National School which ceased operation as a national school in June 2023. The service operates from 09.00 to 12.00 each weekday and currently accommodates a maximum of 22 preschool children aged from 3 to 6 years. The preschool service operates from a former national school. The premises consists of one large care room, lobby area, storage area and sanitary accommodation. The service has a designated and secure outdoor play area on the premises adjacent to the care room.

Staffing

On the day of inspection two adults were employed to work directly with the children, this included the registered provider and one other adult. An adult student was also present.

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 and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28. 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 inspector wishes 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 designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(2) (a) (b).

The records of the two adults employed and one student in the service were reviewed.

Four written and verified past employer references were available in respect of two adults employed in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for all three adults in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years

(d)

International police vetting was not required as all the adults employed in the service that had not lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Two 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, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) (b)

There were no written and verified references available for one adult.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the registered provider stated:

Two references have been sourced and validated. References will be sourced prior to employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

Two references submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the Registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection.

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)
There were an adequate number of adults working directly with children attending the preschool service. There were two adults working directly with the nine children in the morning of the unannounced inspection. There was an additional adult student and a student under 16 years on work experience, who were supervised throughout.

(3)
The minimum ratio of adults to children ratio were provided on the day of the inspection in accordance with the required ratio considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

(2) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the particulars specified in subparagraphs (a), (d), (e) and (f) of paragraph (1).

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in 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.

Compliance Information

1) (a-i)

The records of all eleven children attending the service were reviewed. The required information including the authorisation to collect the child, details of illness or special needs of the child, emergency contact and record of immunisations were fully completed for each child.

(3) (a)

The records in writing were available for inspection by the early year's inspector.

(4)

The person in charge confirmed that the records are retained for a period of two years as set out in regulation.

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

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) (b)

Physical and Material Environment:

The large care room was a bright open space carefully laid out to stimulate the child's imagination. The children's colourful artwork decorated the walls and allowed the parents to see what the children had been working on daily. The large care room was laid out to allow for free movement. Low level accessible shelving allowed the children to choose what they wished to play with. Child size table and chairs provided the appropriate space for arts and crafts and tabletop activities. Interest areas were designed to support the children's imagination and opportunities for creativity and role play. Home corners, construction areas and dress up supported role play. Reading corners provided an opportunity for language development. Arts and crafts and tuff tables supported creativity and sensory play. A large screen was used to introduce song and movement at circle time and was used as a visual learning aid.

The outdoor area while not used on the day due to heavy rain, provides an alternative source of play and an opportunity for gross motor skill development. Ample resources of ride on toys, climbing frames allows children to risk take. A grass area and planting area supports learning in nature. On discussion with staff members and observation of daily routines children get access to the outdoors regularly. Wet gear and wellies are provided to ensure the where possible children experience the outdoors.

Programme of Activities:

Ongoing observations and assessments were documented which helped create a well-rounded picture of each child and their learnings. Observations were individual to the child and recorded tasks completed and goals for the future identified. Children's language development was observed to be supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling and circle time. Where needs were identified, the service took measures working alongside the parents to ensure that the preschool children had access to any support they required, for example on the day of inspection a speech and language therapist was present to support a child. On the day of inspection, the children were facilitated to make their own choice in selecting play equipment and activities that they wished to engage with. Turn taking and sharing was promoted, and staff intervened where minor disagreements occurred and explained the importance of sharing toys.

Basic Needs:

The children brought in their snacks from home in line with the service healthy eating policy. On the day snacks were observed to include a variety of sandwiches, fruit, cheese and crackers. All snacks were stored in the service fridge ensuring perishable items were kept cool. Drinking water was available throughout the session.

All children present were toilet trained, and independence was promoted with children being prompted and supervised from a distance.

A rest area in the corner of the room with a tepee and soft cushions provided an area to rest or opt out of an activity.

Supporting Relationships:

Staff members were observed to be respectful, gentle, and kind in their interactions towards the children in their care. Staff members were observed to be engaging with the children laughing and joking. The preschool children appeared happy and content with their peers and staff members.

During activities staff sat alongside children engaging in conversation and promoting a relaxed atmosphere. Similarly at mealtimes, staff members were observed to enjoy their snack alongside the children creating a pleasant dining experience.

The service took measures to support the children’s relationships including keeping parents and guardians informed of daily activities. This was completed verbally both on drop of and collection and by regular telephone conversations. Pictures of the children’s families were displayed on the walls in the care rooms ensuring the children’s connection to home was maintained.

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.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- There were three highchairs with harness safety straps fitted in good condition.
- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The outdoor perimeter was secure with waste bins stored out of reach of children

Infection Control:

- Children were observed to wash their hands prior to snack time, after messy play and using the bathroom.
- Liquid soap warm water and paper towels were available for effective hand hygiene.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to meal times and after messy play.

Fire Safety:

- The assembly point was clearly identifiable in the outdoor playground.
- Evacuation doors remained free from obstruction on the day of 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 registered provider ensured that one adult trained in first aid for children was available to the preschool children throughout the hours of the operation.

(2) (a) (b)

A suitable sufficiently stocked first aid box was stores safely in the service and available to the preschool children when required.

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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation

(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)

Documentary evidence provided demonstrated that the service completed monthly fire evacuation drills the most recent being completed on the 20 October 2025.

(2) (c)

Evidence of fire drills were made available to the inspector on the day.

(3)

The registered provider is aware of the statutory requirement to retain these records for a period of five years.

(4)

Emergency evacuation procedures are clearly displayed on the walls of the care room.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (b)

The service could not demonstrate that the fire fighting and smoke alarm system was adequately maintained with certification of annual maintenance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the registered provider stated:

(1) (b)

The fire fighting and smoke alarm system has not be seen serviced and will be maintained annually.

Supporting documentation submitted

Certification of annual service submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now complaint.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of a current insurance cover valid until the 27 March 26. The insurance provided cover for 22 Children availing of a sessional service.