

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY123		
Name of Service:	Little Rascals Playgroup		
Address of Service:	Rackhill, Carrickbeg, Carrick-on-Suir, Co Tipperary		
Eircode:	E32 D634		
Name of Registered Provider:	Lillian Clery		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	26/01/2026		
No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM 18
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y		
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher		
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	N/A		

Description of service

Little Rascals Playgroup is a privately owned parttime service in an urban area of Carrick-On-Suir. The service operates from 09:15 to 13:00 for parttime children and 09:15 to 12:15 for children attending under the sessional Early Childhood Care and Education scheme. The service is located in a building on the grounds of the registered providers private residence. The service consists of two classrooms, with a loft area in one, sanitary accommodations and a roofed outdoor area. There is also a large enclosed outdoor play area.

Staffing

The service currently employs four staff and the registered provider. There were five adults working directly with the children on the day of inspection.

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 and safety. 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.

Additional Information

A referral was made to the fire officer to assess fire safety in the service. Further information is available under Regulation 23 of the report.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, registered provider and staff 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)
- (a) The registered provider was the person in charge on the day of inspection and there was a named deputy in the service that could deputise as required.
- (b) The person in charge and the deputy were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy were on duty at all times during the hours of operation.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to five adults, four of whom were employed in the service and working directly with the children and the registered provider were the subject of inspection.
- (a) Of the 10 required references, 7 were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.
- (b) Of the 10 required references, 3 were from another source other than a previous employer with a record of validation on file.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained and were on file for each of the five adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was required and available for one of the five adults as they lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) Records demonstrate that the five adults had achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 6 to level 8 as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) At the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care of the children in attendance at all times.

(2) The adult to child ratio were observed to meet the minimum requirement over the duration of the inspection.

The ratio was as follows:

- The Ladybird room had 18 children being cared for by 3 staff members in the morning and 4 children being cared for by 2 staff members in the afternoon.
- The Bumble bees room had eight children being cared for by two staff members in the morning and four children being cared for by two staff members in the afternoon.

(8)

(a) The service operated with at least two adults present at all times. This was observed on the day of inspection and was evident through examination of the roster.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) Thirty four early years children were registered in the service and a sample of 10 records were inspected. They were found to contain the required information as listed (a) through to (i).

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.*

Compliance Information

(j) The person in charge informed the inspector that no child in the service was currently prescribed medication. An administration record book was available to use if medication administration was required.

(k) The inspector reviewed the accident and incident record book from December 2024 to the date of the inspection and five accidents or incidents had been recorded. These records contained all the required information.

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

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of the relevant documents:

Basic needs:

- Snacks provided by the parents/guardians was observed to be healthy and nutritious in both the morning and lunchtime snacks. Children were observed eating filled sandwiches, wraps, rice cakes, yogurts and a variety of fruits.
- Staff sat at the tables during snack time, interacting with the children and were observed helping and assisting the children where necessary.
- Supervision was provided for the older children, as they accessed the adjacent sanitary facilities, which were located separately from their care rooms.
- Spare sets of clothing were observed to be stored in a labelled storage box and were available in the event of a child requiring changing.
- The weather on the day of inspection was wet and children were observed playing in the outdoor play area. Each child was appropriately dressed in rain gear.
- Children had the opportunity to rest or relax in the loft area with soft seating in the form of a child size vinyl sofa and a bed was provided in the Bumble bees room.

- Appropriate seating was available in the form of low-level tables and chairs.
- Children's independence was promoted by staff in the care room. An example of this was children put on their own coats and tidying up after play.
- Outdoor play was promoted and the service used a roofed play area on the day of inspection due to the weather.
- There was also a large concrete area with a shed which contained ride on toys available for use.

Supporting relationships:

- The atmosphere was observed to be relaxed in the two care rooms at all times during the inspection and teamwork was evident between the staff and the children.
- The staff were observed to sit with the children and interact with them through play and artwork which supported positive relationships with the children and language development.
- The staff were seen to promote positive behaviour among children when a minor disagreement happened between two children.
- Social and emotional development was promoted in the Bumble bee room through the use of bucket filling, each child had their name on a little bucket and they could place pompom's in it symbolising their feelings. This was used to explore feelings with the children.
- The staff were observed to be warm and caring in their interactions with the children. For example, the children were observed to enjoy when the staff sang and danced in the care room with them.
- Family photos and birthday calendars were displayed on the walls which promoted a sense of belonging for the children.
- A variety of communication methods were stated as being used to communicate with parents/guardians. Examples included email, text messages and meeting parents at drop off and pick up. The parents also attended an open evening prior to the children starting.

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 was secured appropriately. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care rooms were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition.
- The outdoor area was a safe and secure space for the children with a metal gate and concrete walls. This prevented children gaining unsupervised access to an unsafe area.
- The first aid box was stored out of reach of the children. There were no cables or trailing flexes accessible to the children on the day of inspection.

Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before snack times and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available in the Ladybird room for the storage of perishable foods.
- Lidded, foot pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste during the inspection.
- Staff were observed sanitising the tables before and after the serving of food and sweeping the floor ensuring the areas were kept clean and hygienic.

Administration of medication:

- The registered provider informed the inspector that no regular medicine was being administered to a child currently in the service.
- Temperature reducing medicine was stored out of reach of the children and was in date.

Fire safety:

- Fire extinguishers were secured to the walls.
- The service had four exit doors available to use. Two doors were labelled as fire exit doors in which one was alarmed with a push bar handle and the other had a key lock. This door was not locked on inspection. The other two potential exits also had a key lock. A referral has been made to the fire officer.

Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection. The registered provider informed the inspector that they may occasionally take walks with a risk assessment completed prior to this occurring. On discussing the risk assessment with the registered provider, the risk assessment had a number of strategies in place to mitigate identified risks to the children.

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.*

(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) Fire drill records were reviewed. Evidence was available to show fire drills were practiced and recorded on a monthly basis. Records showed that the last fire drill was completed 17 December 2025.
 - (b) Written records were available of the servicing of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms. The firefighting certificate was dated 22 August 2025, and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 20 August 2025.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

(4) The services fire evacuation procedure was clearly displayed on the wall.