

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD021
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Name of Service:	FerryFun Childcare & Afterschool Centre
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Address of Service:	Hillsfield Community Centre, Belmont Road, Ferrybank, Co. Waterford
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Eircode:	X91 W9YY
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Purcell
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	01/10/2025
	02/10/2025

No of pre-school children:	AM	44	PM	6
		48		N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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

Ferry Fun childcare and afterschool centre is a community based childcare service located on the outskirts of Waterford city. The service is governed by a management committee. Opening hours are from 08:45 to 18:00 for 50 weeks per year. The service offers full day, part-time and sessional care to children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. A registered school age service is also provided. The premises is a two-storey purpose-built facility. The service is based on the ground floor. The first floor is used by community groups and a local state organisation. The service consists of five preschool rooms, catering kitchen, two sleep rooms, sanitary accommodation, a nappy changing room, a staff room, an office and a parent's room. There are two outdoor play areas which are adjacent to the childcare facility.

Staffing

There are 15 staff employed in the service, including the registered provider, a chef, a maintenance person and a third level student of childcare. All staff who worked directly with the children held the minimum of level 5 in Early childhood Care and Education and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 the following regulations:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 15 Record of preschool child,

Regulation 17 Information for parents,

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,

Regulation 22 Food and Drink,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety, and welfare of child,

Regulation 25 First aid,

Regulation 26 Fire Safety,

Regulation 28 Insurance.

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

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
- (c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

The manager was the designated person in charge on both days of the inspection and remained in service for the duration of the inspection. There was also a person available to deputise if required. The registered provider was also in the service to facilitate the inspection on both days.

(2)(a)(b)

Following a discussion with the manager and a review of documents in the service it was established there were 15 staff employed in the service. All staff files were reviewed on the second day of the inspection.

All required written and validated references were available on file for all staff working in the service.

(c)

There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for all staff members. The service demonstrated partial compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate regulatory notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for 11 staff. Please refer to regulation 23.

(d)

Police vetting was available on file for 2 staff members who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

There were qualifications on file for all staff working directly with preschool children. These staff held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

(7)

The manager had ensured that all employees were supervised and provided with appropriate information. Staff who spoke to the inspector were clear in their understanding of the policies and procedures in place in the service. There was an induction policy in place for new staff. There was evidence that new staff were given all required training prior to starting work in the service.

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 at all times an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the preschool service on both days of the inspection.

(2)
Day 1
At 11:00 there were 44 children aged from 2 to 6 years of age in the care of 7 staff.
At 14:50 there were 6 children in the care of 4 staff.
Day 2
At 10:20 there were 48 children aged from 2 to 6 years of age in the care of 9 staff.

The manager and the registered provider were in service on both days of the inspection and were available to assist in the rooms as required.
There was a student available to assist the qualified staff in caring for the children on both days of inspection also.

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

There was a registration form available in respect of each child enrolled in the service. A sample of 10 forms completed by the parents were reviewed as part of the inspection process and were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The service provided parents with a handbook containing information for whose children were attending the service. The inspector reviewed the information in the handbook. The service provided parents with information as required under regulation 17. The information provided for parents contained an outline of the curriculum, the hours of operation, contact details and the facilities available within the service. There was also information included on funding schemes available for parents to apply for.

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 equipment and materials provided throughout the service were presented and maintained to provide for the play and learning needs of the children attending the service. For example, in preschool room 1 there was a supply of arts and crafts materials in the room for all the children to use. There was a collage of autumn leaves made by the children. There was a dolls house with miniature furniture, a home corner with a kitchen and utensils. There was a supply of books for children to read. Preschool room 5 had a large blackboard with chalk for the children to draw. There was a nature display in the room to stimulate the children’s interest in the autumn season. The outdoor play areas had a supply of ride on toys balls and skittles for children to play with.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy. All meals and snacks were supplied and cooked on the premises by the chef from the onsite kitchen in the service. The service had a 3-week rotating menu which was available for parents to view in the service. The dinner served at mid-day was chicken curry and rice. The children were given freshly made scones and fruit in the afternoon. Water was served to all the children from large jugs in all preschool rooms. Children were served extra portions when they requested additional helpings.

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:

Access to the service was gained through the door which had an intercom system to admit people to the service. The entrance was secured on arrival and remained secure for the duration of the inspection. The outdoor areas in the service were safe, suitable and secure.

Infection Control

The service was clean. The service had an infection control policy. Staff were vigilant in attending to children's personal hygiene during the day. The staff were observed to be attentive in supporting the children in washing their hands before meals, after using the toilet and after messy play. There was warm water to support hand washing, liquid soap, disposable hand towels and foot pedal operated bins provided across the service. Children were encouraged to cough into their elbows to prevent cross infection in the service. The nappy changing area was well organised and clean.

Safe Sleep

The service had two designated sleep rooms. Individual bed linen was available. There were no children observed sleeping on the day of inspection.

Administration of medication:

The service had an administration of medication policy. The policy was reviewed by the inspector and was found to contain the required aspects for the safe administration of medication in a preschool setting.

Outings

The service did not facilitate outings.

Non-Compliance Information

The service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years. There were Garda vetting disclosures on file for all staff members, however the vetting disclosures for four staff members were not dated within the previous 3 years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The renewed garda vetting disclosures for all four staff are now available on file in the service in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting. The manager will ensure all staff files are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure compliance with the requirement to renew Garda vetting for all staff working directly with the children every 3 years.

Supporting documentation submitted

All required up to date vetting for the four staff members were received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted is satisfactory to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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)
There was a staff member trained in first aid responder course immediately available to the children attending the service. There was evidence that there were 10 staff trained on a first aid responder course which was sufficient to cover across the rota in the service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position to the staff on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool service.

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)

There was a record of fire drills which had taken place in the service. The last fire drill was carried out in September 2025.

(1)(b)

There was a record available to demonstrate the numbers, types and maintenance of the firefighting equipment in the service. This was carried out in November 2024. The smoke alarms were last serviced in September 2025.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the hallway of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance in place to cover the number of children the service who were present on the day of inspection.