

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD028
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Name of Service:	It's A Childs Life
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Address of Service:	Barron Hall, Chapel Road, Stradbally, Co. Waterford
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Eircode:	X42 Y398
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ruth Crowley
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	27/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	Not applicable
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Community Care Building Cork Road, Waterford City
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Bradshaw
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).

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Description of service

It's A Child's Life is based in a community building, located in the village of Stradbally, Co Waterford. The service has a dedicated area in the building, with a large grassed outdoor area at the rear of the premises. The service is registered as a part-time service and operates from 09:00 to 14:00. They care for up to 22 children aged from 2 to 6 years.

Staffing

The registered provider employs four staff, and they work directly with the children.

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.

Regulation 9 – Management and Recruitment;

Regulation 11 – Staffing Levels;

Regulation 15 – Record of a Pre-School Child;

Regulation 16 – Record in Relation to Pre-School Service;

Regulation 25 – First Aid;

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Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures;

Regulation 27 – Supervision.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15 – Record of a Pre-School Child and Regulation 16 – Record in Relation to a Pre-School Service.

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, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

(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 was on the premises on the inspector's arrival. Through discussion with the staff, it was determined that the registered provider or the person in charge is always on the premises during the hours of operation. A short information piece on each staff member including their roles in the service was on display in the hallway.

(2)

All staff files were reviewed by the inspector.

(a)(b) Validated references were available for review.

(c) Garda vetting was available for four staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.

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(d) Police vetting was available for a staff member who had lived outside the jurisdiction for six months or more as an adult.

(4)

On review of the staff files, evidence was available to demonstrate that all staff working with preschool children had achieved 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.

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)(2)

During the inspection, there was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children. There were 3 staff caring for 22 preschool children. The registered provider was rostered to work directly with the children.

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;*

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- (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

A sample of 12 children's enrolment forms completed by the parents was reviewed as part of the inspection process. These were found to contain all the information required under parts (a) – (i) of this regulation.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (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.*

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Compliance Information

- (1) Information required under parts (a) to (k) were available on the day of the inspection. This information was included in the staff files, the services statement of purpose and function, attendance records, the service policy document and daily records reviewed.

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) Three staff members had up to date first aid training to the level of a first responder and were available to the children at all times.
- (2) (a)(b) The first aid kit was stored on the filing cabinet in the room and was conspicuous and accessible if 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.*
- (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) There was a record of fire drills which had taken place. The maintenance records demonstrated that smoke alarms were serviced in September 2025 and the firefighting equipment was serviced in April 2026.
- (4) Evacuation procedures were displayed on the walls of the care room.

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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 service has ensured that all children were appropriately supervised at all times throughout the inspection. All staff were suitably qualified, had extensive experience and the registered provider had over 15 years experience working directly with children. The child staff ratios exceeded the requirements for care needed under the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

The toilet facilities were adjacent to the childcare room and were for the sole use of the children; staff were noted to verbally check on children to see if they required help when toileting. This gave the children the autonomy for self-care while staff maintained the necessary supervision requirements of children in their care.

The layout of equipment and furniture in the room allowed staff the to monitor children's activities during the morning. Staff were observed to place themselves in the care room where they could see and hear the children. For example, one staff was observed to sit on the floor with children who were engaged in building a train track. This staff was noted to look around the room and check in with children if they felt they required help or support.