

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WH018			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Rathganny Pre-school			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Rathganny House, Multyfarnham, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath			
<b>Eircode:</b>	N91 XE3F			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Madeline O'Neill			
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional			
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/12/2025			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	43	PM	30
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	T. Duignan and F. Maher			
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors			
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>				
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.			

### Description of service

Rathganny Pre-School provides full day care, part-time and sessional care to children aged 0 – 6 years in the rural setting of Multyfarnham, Co. Westmeath. It operates from 8:00 am – 18:00 hours Monday to Thursday and 8:00 am – 14:00 hours on Friday.

The service is located in an adapted two-story premises in the grounds of the registered provider's home. The toddler room, junior preschool and school age care room, sleep room and kitchen are located on the ground floor.

The senior pre-school room and office are located on the first floor. There are two large secured outdoor play areas at the rear of the premises. Onsite parking and set down facilities are available.

The service is registered to provide an after-school care service for school aged children.

### Staff:

Twelve adults including the registered provider are employed in the service. There were eleven adults including the registered provider present on the day of the inspection. Of the eleven adults present, eight adults and one student were working directly with the children, the registered provider was available for additional support if needed and also to freshly prepare food for the children. The office administrator was present.

The adults working directly with the children had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education 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 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.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

*(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

Twelve staff records were assessed.

(2)

(a)(b) Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of all adults employed and one student.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults and one student working 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) Not applicable as no adult had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months whose records were reviewed.

(4) Ten adults employed, including the registered provider and working directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher 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) There were forty-three children attending the service being supervised directly by nine adults.

(2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

(8)(a) There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the Inspection. This was confirmed following review of the staff roster for the service.

### 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 to the service was secured and managed by the staff to ensure the safety of the children within the service. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. There was documentary evidence available that daily indoor and outdoor risk assessments were completed daily and reviewed by the registered provider to promptly identify and manage any potential risks in the care rooms. The service had a system in place to manage maintenance issues.

##### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members were familiar with the importance of handwashing practice as a means to control the spread of infection in the service. They supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines

were well established. The staff were observed washing their hands also. Nappy changing practices were consistent with the nappy change procedure for the service. Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal and containment of used tissues. The soiled nappies were removed to the outdoor bin following nappy changes being completed. Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

**Administration of Medication:**

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. The staff members were familiar with the required practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored. A detailed health care plan was in place for a child requiring medication to be administered.

**Safe Sleep:**

There was one sleep room with four cots available for children less than 2 years of age; Two low level sleep beds were available for all children aged over 2 years requiring sleep. There was an adequate number of cots and low-level beds available to provide needs led sleep for young children. The staff members were familiar with current safe sleep guidance and the required care of sleeping children including 10-minute sleep check observations for all sleeping children which was recorded in the sleep log.

Comfortable rest areas were available for the children in each care room if they wished to take a break from activities and rest.

**Fire Safety:**

Monthly fire drills had been carried out, and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service. The fire exits were not obstructed. Fire assembly signage was observed in the outdoor area at the rear of the service.

**Outing:**

The registered provider stated that service does not conduct outings.

### 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.
- (2) Where there are more than 15 children attending a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of children.
- (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 registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in each care room.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) (a), (b) The registered provider ensured that any person entering the service was approved and a record in writing was maintained. The inspector's visit to the service was documented in the visitor's book on arrival.
- (4) The registered provider confirmed that the records were retained in storage for the required period.

### 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) Staff members present were trained in in first aid response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.
- (2)
- (a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the main reception area in the service.
  - (b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the children attending the 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) A written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 1 December 2025.
  - (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. Firefighting equipment was serviced in February 2025, and the smoke alarm was last serviced in August 2025.
- (4) Notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the service.

## 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

Children were observed being supervised at all times throughout the inspection by the staff caring for them both indoors in their care rooms, in the sanitary areas, during transitions from indoors to outdoor play area, on the stairs and in the outdoor play area.

## 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 current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date was noted to be 27 March 2026.