

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX081
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Name of Service:	Little Rascals Playschool
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Address of Service:	C/o Riverchapel Community Centre, Riverchapel, Gorey, Co. Wexford
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Eircode:	Y25 X4X0
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Name of Registered Provider:	Brigid Doyle
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	14
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford
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Inspection undertaken by:	C. Ryan
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Title:	Early Years Inspector
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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

Little Rascals Playschool is a privately operated preschool service. It offers a play-based programme to children from 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates a part time service that can accommodate up to 57 children. The service is located within the community hall in the village of Riverchapel. It consists of an entrance hall, three play-rooms and sanitary accommodation. An outdoor garden and play area are available to the front and side of the premises.

Staffing

The service employs 10 staff to work in the service including the registered provider. The registered provider is the designated person in charge on the premises daily and works with the children in the rooms as needed. All the staff working directly with children in the service held the minimum of level 5 and above qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education.

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 (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 20 Facilities for Rest and Play,
Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,
Regulation 22 – Food and Drink,
Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,
Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),
Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4) and
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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

The manager was the designated person in charge of the service on the inspector's arrival. There was a second named staff member available to deputise as needed. The registered provider arrived to the service shortly after the commencement of the inspection.

The files for all staff, including the registered provider and student were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a)(b)

There were validated references for each of the employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years.

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were available on file for staff who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

There were certificates of qualification for all staff members working directly with the preschool children available on file.

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)

There was an adequate number of staff working with the children for the duration of the inspection.

During the morning, there were 34 children being directly cared for by 7 staff.

During the afternoon, there were 14 children being directly cared for by 6 staff.

A student was present on placement on the day of inspection and was supernumerary to the adult to child ratios.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The indoor play environments provided the children with a space which supported their play ideas, choice and varying types of play. The three playrooms were bright, warm and spacious. The interest areas were resourced with a variety of materials that included open ended, natural and loose parts.

The children had use of the large indoor community hall that was used by the children from the butterfly's room on the morning of inspection. The space was large enough for running and use of ride on toys.

Outside, children had access to a soft surface and grass areas and an enclosed covered area. There were sufficient toys and materials available to the children in the outdoor area.

(b)

Each of the three playrooms had well developed rest areas available to the children. The rest areas were cosy and inviting to the children and consisted of small sofas, armchairs, mats and cushions. The service had stackable mattresses and bed linen available should a child wish to sleep or lie down if feeling unwell.

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 three playrooms reflected the individual age groups using them. Each of the rooms had interest areas that were well thought out and resourced. There were home corners/kitchens, sand play, activity trays, dress up clothes, art materials, birthday walls, family walls, dolls and car toys for the children.

There was a good range of open-ended play-based materials, natural materials, loose parts and sensory items were offered. Children's literacy development was promoted with plenty of reading materials. Children's identity and belonging was fostered through the display of works of art and personalised touches such as individual named hooks for their coats and bags. Low-level open shelving units were used so children could freely access materials and resources from the labelled shelves, promoting independence and choice making.

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 snacks were supplied by parents and stored in fridges in the playrooms. The children had access to their water bottles throughout the day. The parents were asked to ensure a second snack was provided for children who attended part time. The service ensured a supply of additional food and snacks were available if a child was hungry, forgot their snack or wanted an alternative food to eat. During their mid-morning snack, the children ate a variety of foods including sandwiches, fruit, yogurt and cheese.

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 leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. The outdoor garden located to the rear of the premises was fully enclosed. Children were fully supervised in the outdoor area.

Infection Control:

There was warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels available to facilitate hygienic handwashing for both staff and children. Good hand washing practices were observed during the morning with children washing their hands before eating and after toileting.

The premises was clean and well maintained, with the playrooms and hallways freshly painted since the last inspection.

Administration of Medication:

Staff detailed the procedures for administering medication if required during discussions with the inspector. There was currently no child attending the service requiring administration of medication.

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 had ensured that a person trained in first aid responder was available to the children at all times.

(2)
A suitably equipped first aid box was in the service and were safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position.

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)
Fire drills were completed monthly. The last fire drill completed was recorded on the 27 September 2025.

(b)
A record was maintained when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system were serviced in December 2024 and August 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

The registered provider had a valid certificate of insurance for 57 children.