

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX097
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Name of Service:	Peek-A-Boo Playschool
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Address of Service:	Monageer, Ferns, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford
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Eircode:	Y21 D728
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Name of Registered Provider:	Anne Butler
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	12/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	Non-applicable
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Primary Care Centre, Castle Park, Arklow, Co. Wicklow Y14 AE10
Inspection undertaken by:	L O' Connor
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

Peek-a-boo is a sessional service in Monageer, a small village on the outskirts of Enniscorthy town. It a purpose-built premises adjoining a residential dwelling. The service caters for 22 children aged 2 to 6 years old. It operates Monday to Friday from 9am to 12pm and from 12.15pm to 3.15pm. The service provides the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme for 38 weeks of the year.

There is one care room in operation within the service. The outdoor area is adjoining the care room at the rear of the property.

Staffing

The service employs three staff members, including the registered provider. The registered provider works within the service directly with the children. One adult was employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). The staff members working directly with the children had at a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or higher.

On the day of inspection, there were three adults working 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.

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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The designated person in charge of the service and a named staff member appointed to deputise, when required, were present in the service.
- (b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced at the service and was present for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) A total of three files were reviewed and the following was noted:
- (a)(b) Written validated references were available for the three adults from a previous employer and/or a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) The required Garda Vetting disclosures were in place for the three adults. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was required for two adults, and it was available for review.
- (3) Recruitment and vetting procedures were carried out in advance of appointment for all staff.
- (4) The adults working directly with the children held 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.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1)(3)

The adult to child ratio was maintained throughout the inspection. On arrival to the service, there were three adults working directly with twenty-two pre-school children. There was an adequate number of adults working with the children to provide support, encouragement and guidance to the children when required during the day. For example, during the transition to snack-time, two adults provided support and direction to the children as they arrived at the table with their lunchboxes. During this time, the third adult provided individual support to children with the transition. This included asking if the child would like to sit at the table and have something to eat, encouraging the children to wash their hands and providing support, as required.

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

The interactions between the staff members and the children were warm, responsive and unhurried. During each interaction, the staff members provided children with time to respond. This was done through the staff members remaining with the child and non-verbal cues including eye contact, smiling and nodding. The children were supported to develop their skills of problem solving and negotiation throughout the inspection. For example, on the day of inspection, there was unseasonal rain. During the morning, one child asked a staff member if they were going outside, and the adult replied playfully that it was ‘spilling outside and the rain was really heavy’. The child smiled at the staff member and said with exaggerated hand movements, ‘I know it is raining, but is it really heavy rain?’. The staff member responded playfully to the child confirming the child’s observation of the rain, opened the window and asked the child to listen. There was a moment of silence between the staff member and the child while listening to the noise of the rain falling outside, the child excitedly responded, ‘It’s lashing!’ and ran into the main area of the care room. The staff member responded through smiling at the child. This supported the child’s decision-making skills as the staff member recognised the child’s observations of the weather, awareness of the morning routine and then supported them to problem solve.

The staff members outlined the relationships which children have developed with the local community. On the day of inspection, the children were invited to a celebration in the local hall with a community group. After the snack time, the staff members explained to the children that they were invited to a party, what the party was for and who would be there. The children excitedly responded as the staff members called out names. Staff members outlined that children were going to bring the card which they made during that week. A number of the children individually looked at the card and recognised their own contribution to it. In conversation while walking to the local hall, the staff members outlined that the children were familiar with the people at the party through seeing them while on outings to local amenities in the community. In observing the children walking into the local hall, they appeared excited through asking questions to see if particular people would be there, if there would be music and if there was cake. During the party, the children were observed to engage in various conversations, with the staff members present providing them with prompts and assurance, as required. These links with the community support children with a sense of belonging and connection. This supports children’s independence and positively impacts on their well-being.

The snack time at 11am was calm and at the children’s pace throughout. The registered provider explained that snack time was recognised as a social experience for the children. They outlined how the children helped to get the tables ready, which included tasks such as helping to give out the lunches and water bottles. This sense of

involvement and collaboration was observed during the snack time. The staff members participated in the snack time through eating with the children. The unhurried pace of snack time supported children to have conversations with their friends and share stories. These conversations were plentiful between the children and their curiosities were extended by staff members. When children finished their food, the routine as outlined by the staff members, was for the children to tidy away their lunchboxes and return to their play. This child led transition supported other children who continued to eat or talk to their friends. The staff members were available throughout to provide support to children as required. Staff members continued to encourage children's independence and involvement through providing prompts or direction. For example, one child explained to the staff member that they were finished eating their yogurt. The staff member prompted the child by asking, do we have anything we could cover it with? The child looked into their lunch box, smiled at the adult saying 'no'. The staff member kneeled to the child's level, inquisitively asked the child while looking at the lunchbox and yogurt 'do you know what would happen if we put the yogurt into your lunchbox?' The child replied, looking at the yogurt that it would spill. The staff member warmly agreed by nodding and smiling. The staff member and the child then came up with a solution. This provided the child with an opportunity and supportive environment to problem solve.

The children were provided with choice and autonomy within their own environment, which included the location of equipment and materials. It was outlined that the children spend much of their day outdoors. And during this time, the children enjoyed moving materials, such as stones, with the pedal tractors and trailers and building pretend campfires with wood. During the inspection, the registered provider explained that the children and staff members eat their lunch outside on a regular basis in the sheltered area. It was explained that during the previous week, the children noticed there was a bird nest with two eggs at a low level in sheltered area. Within a couple of days, two chicks were born. It was explained that the children, together, decided that the tables for their lunch which were inside the sheltered area needed to be moved. The children explained to the inspector that if they had their lunch close to the chicks, there would be noise which might scare them. This child-led environment supports children's confidence and independence.

The children had access to another room adjoining the hallway which was known during the inspection as the 'space room'. It was explained that the darkened room provided all of the children with a quieter space when they needed it. The room on the day was themed with solar system ceiling decorations, wall displays of space, and calm lighting.

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

Compliance Information

The children had access to an outdoor area adjoining the care room of the service. The outdoor area provided children with a space for challenging, diverse and natural play experiences. The outdoor area had varying areas of interest to promote child led play.

Children had access to natural materials throughout the area including flower box with lavender and herbs. The registered provider outlined that the children enjoyed using these as part of their role play in the kitchen with the real-life pots and pans. Within the outdoor area, there was natural materials which promoted risky play including tree stumps which were laid out in steps and a section of a tree for children to climb. Staff members outlined that children enjoyed using the tree stumps to develop their balance and coordination. The children had access to with a timber box filled with stones of varying sizes and shapes. Children’s enjoyment of these materials was outlined, including the transporting of the stones using tractors and diggers. It was explained that some of the stones were painted with designs including food items such as fruit and vegetables and designs, and that the children use these in the kitchen area. The children had access to a sheltered area with sand and supporting equipment including tractors, buckets and spades.