

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016DY020
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Name of Service:	Playpals
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Address of Service:	131 Glasnevin Avenue, Glasnevin, Dublin 11.
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Eircode:	D11 V3H7
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Name of Registered Provider:	Caitríona Kenealy
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	14/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	4	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Floor 7 Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, St John's Road West, Kilmainham, D08 X01F
Inspection undertaken by:	JA. McKimm
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

The service is in the registered providers home which is in a residential area of Glasnevin. The preschool room is located on the ground floor with direct access to the outdoor play area which is at the rear of the house. Sanitary accommodation is located beside the entrance door.

The service provides a morning sessional service for children aged 2 to 6 years old. The service operates from Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE). Opening time is from 9.15am to 12.15pm daily.

Staffing

The registered provider is the sole operator of the service.

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 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

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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.

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,

(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

(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

(2) A review of paperwork and discussion with the registered provider showed

(a) There were two written and validated references available from past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for one adult. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) The registered provider held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality.

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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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (c) a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that, where the person in charge operates the service single-handedly, a second person familiar with the operation of the service and in a position to provide assistance to the person in charge in operating the service is, at all times, within close distance of the service and available to attend the service to assist the person in charge in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider is the sole operator of this sessional service and works directly with the children.
There were 4 children in attendance on the morning of inspection.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained. Attendance records were available for inspection.
- (8) (c) The registered provider is the person-in-charge and operates the service single-handedly and has the contact details of a named agency who can provide staffing assistance in the event of an emergency.

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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.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured a full record (1) (a-k) was maintained for the preschool service.

(3) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

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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-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1) (b) The following practices were observed to be in place to support the children attending.

- The registered provider interacted with the children in a respectful, warm and sensitive manner. They engaged children in conversations about home life, their interests and activities within the room supporting the development of relationships and a sense of belonging
- Snack time was a sociable event children were observed to eat healthy snacks from home and drinking water was available.
- The registered provider was observed to give children verbal reminders in advance of moving from one activity to the next activity. The transition from activity time to snack time to story time was smooth and the children appeared familiar with this routine.
- Children's language development was observed to be supported through storytelling and the registered provider engaging in conversations with the children throughout the inspection.
- Children were observed to move freely around the care room which was laid out in thematic areas selecting materials of their own interest to play with. Children used the tables and play areas for example they played with playdough and building blocks throughout the morning
- The children were observed to play outdoors during the inspection. This supported their social, cognitive, and gross and fine motor development.
- At collection time the registered provider was observed to chat informally with parents

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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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspector, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection
- The enclosed outdoor play area was secured reducing the risk of unauthorised access.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary accommodation was equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, and hand drying facilities. Both staff and children were observed to show familiarity with routine handwashing, before mealtimes and outdoor play.
- Foot operated pedal bins were in use for the appropriate disposal of waste in the care rooms and sanitary facilities. These were observed to be in good working order.
- Windows were open in the service to allow fresh air to circulate.

Administration of Medication:

- No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection.
- Medication was observed to be stored safely out of the reach to the children.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency and fire exits were signposted and unobstructed

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The garden area contained a number of items which posed potential risks to children's safety. The following was observed:
 - The back section of the garden contained an area that contained splintered wood and building blocks which posed a risk to safety.
 - One balance bike was rusted and posed a potential risk of injury.
 - A children's playhouse was damaged and posed a splinter risk.

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- A private area attached to the main residence was not screened off. It contained pots paint which posed a risk if ingested, a lighting fitting with trailing flex and a laundry area which posed safety hazards.
- A trailing flex on the back wall of house which posed a safety risk.

Infection Control:

2. The covering on the sofa in the care room was ripped with foam exposed which did not allow for adequate cleaning and posed a risk of infection.
3. A radiator in the main entrance area was rusted and soiled and posed a potential risk of infection.

Administration of Medication:

4. A comprehensive care plan outlining clearly the steps to follow in the event of a medical emergency for one child was not available. This posed a potential risk to safety.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The registered provider has taken the action listed below:
 - The back section of garden has been cleared and screened off with fixings to both walls.
 - One rusted balance bike has been dismantled and disposed of.
 - Playhouse has been fully refurbished.
 - Household items have been removed from side passage, and this is screened off with fixings to both walls.
 - Loose flex on back wall of house has been removed.

Infection Control:

2. The sofa has been repaired.
3. The radiator in the main hallway has been reconditioned.

Administration of Medication:

4. A signed medical administration form has been completed to confirm the administration of emergency medication.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence has been submitted of all changes.

Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence of repaired sofa.

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3. Photographic evidence of radiator submitted.

Administration of Medication:

4. Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the corrective and preventive actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under regulation 23 have been addressed.

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)
 (a) The records available demonstrated that fire drills are held monthly within the service and the service conducted a fire drill on 14 April 2026.
 (b) Records demonstrated that the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms had been serviced annually, with the last service taking place on 2 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 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 until 27 March 2027 for a sessional service for 11 children.