

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016FL012
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Name of Service:	Little Rainbows (Baldoyle)
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Address of Service:	16 Red Arches Avenue, The Coast, Baldoyle, Dublin 13.
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Eircode:	D13 WR99
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Campbell
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	23/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	94	PM	95
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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, Dublin 8 D08 X01F
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Inspection undertaken by:	E. Griffin and T. Nelson
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Title:	Early Years Inspectors
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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 Rainbows (Baldoyle) is a privately run service located in a residential area in North Dublin. The service provides full-time, part-time, and sessional care and education to a maximum of 99 children aged 0-6 years. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme and operates a morning session from 09:00am to 12:00pm. The service is registered to provide a school aged childcare service. At the time of the inspection, the service did not have children under 1 years old, or school aged children registered to attend. The service is based in a two-storey purpose-built building and is comprised of eight care rooms. On the ground floor there is a kitchen, a designated cot room and three care rooms: Wobbler room 1 catering for children aged 1 to 1 ½ years, Wobbler room 2 catering for children aged 1 ½ to 2 years and Wobbler room 3 catering for children 1 to 2 years. On the first floor there is five care rooms: Toddler room 1 catering for children aged 1 ½ to 2 years, Toddler room 2 catering for children aged 2 to 3 years, Toddler 3 room catering for children aged 2 to 3 years, Junior ECCE room catering for children aged 2 ½ to 3 ½ years and the Senior Montessori room catering for children aged 3 to 6 years. There is an enclosed outdoor play areas located to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The registered provider employs twenty-three adults to work in the service including a deputy person in charge, twenty-one childcare staff and one auxiliary a cook. The registered provider also works in the service in a supportive capacity. In addition, there are two students who are on college work placement providing support in a supernumerary capacity the care rooms.

On the day of inspection, there were twenty-two adults present including the registered provider, the deputy person in charge, eighteen childcare staff, one student and the cook.

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.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. As a result, the scope of the inspection included all care rooms.

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.

Additional Information

This inspection was triggered as a result of information received to the inspectorate.

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider in relation to a significant concern identified relating to Garda Vetting. A response which adequately mitigated the concern was received the following day. Further details are available under Regulation 9.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff, student 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*
- (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.*

(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.

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
 - (b) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.
- (2) A review of paperwork and conversation with the deputy person in charge confirmed that nine staff and the two students were new to the service since the last inspection on 7 May 2025. The files of these adults were reviewed along with the file of a staff member whose file was not reviewed on the previous inspection and a garda vetting disclosure for an adult whose file was reviewed previously. The registered provider had completed the following checks:
- (a) There were 19 written and validated references available from past employers.
 - (b) There were five written references available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the 12 of the 13 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available in relation to the six new adults who had lived outside of Ireland for a period of more than 6 months as an adult.
- (4) The ten staff who worked directly with children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2) (c) A garda vetting disclosure was not available for a staff member who was observed working with the children on the day of inspection. This posed a significant safeguarding risk. An immediate action notice was issued and a response which adequately mitigated the concern was received the following day.
- (3) The registered provider did not ensure the checks required under (2) were completed prior to staff commencing employment in the service. For example, discussion with staff and documentary evidence

indicated that four adults began working in the service prior to receipt of a Garda Vetting disclosure. This posed a safeguarding risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (c) The staff member in question, did not attend work again until the Garda Vetting Disclosure was received.

The service will ensure that staff will not commence employment in the future until the Garda Vetting Disclosure is received.

(3) In future no staff will start work without the office ensuring that their Garda Vetting Disclosure is on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2) (c) Documentary evidence of vetting disclosure dated 2 March 2026.

(3) No supporting documentation required garda vetting disclosures reviewed on the day of inspection.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliances under Regulation 9.

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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working with the children throughout the inspection. In the morning there were 18 adults working with 94 children and during the afternoon there were 18 adults working with 95 children. In addition, the registered provider and the deputy person in charge were available to provide support where required.

(2) The adult child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and throughout the inspection. Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children in the rooms.

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 premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The two outdoor play areas were securely fenced reducing the risk of children from exiting unsupervised.
- There were no trailing flexes or wires observed to be accessible to children.
- Toys and equipment used by the children were observed to be well maintained and in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen door remained closed and inaccessible to children throughout the inspection.

Infection Control:

- Windows in the care rooms were observed to be open which allowed for circulation of air and reduced the risk of cross infection.
- Nappy changing mat was in good condition.
- Waterproof mattress covers were used for the sleeping children and staff were familiar with the washing schedule.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was stored safely out of the reach of children.
- A sample of twenty administration medication forms showed that all the required information including written consent was completed by staff and parents/guardians.

Safe Sleep:

- The sleep needs for children between the age of one to two years of age, were facilitated with access to cots and sleep mats for sleep.
- There was documentary evidence to show that the registered provider followed Tusla's "Guidance for the Early Learning and Care sector on sleep provision for children under 24 months". An individual sleep plan

was available for children under 2 years of age who were provided with a mattress with a minimum depth of 6cms to sleep on.

- Shoes and clothing were removed from children while they slept.
- An ambient temperature of 18-22 °C was maintained in the cot room Wobbler 2 and Wobbler 3 room when children over 1 years old sleep.
- Children were observed to be monitored while sleeping at intervals of 10 minutes or less and staff recorded the breathing, position, and colour of each child at each check.

Fire Safety:

- The children's attendance book was monitored to ensure staff knew how many children were present in the care room and emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction. This helped to ensure the safe effective evacuation of children and staff in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The door handle to the utility room on the ground floor was observed to be broken. This door could be easily pushed open by the children. There were detergents stored in this room. This posed a potential risk of injury to the children. A similar non-compliance was observed during the previous inspection on 7 May 2025, and the preventive action had not been sustained.
2. Bind cords were observed to be unsecured in the Wobbler 2 and Toddler 2 room. It is acknowledged that the blind cords were not directly accessible to the children. However, this posed a potential risk of injury if the children were to climb on surrounding furniture and access the blind cord. This posed a potential risk of injury to the children.
3. The surface temperature of a radiator located on the corridor of the first floor was recorded at 49.3°C at 10.17am. This radiator could be easily accessed by the children due to a broken panel on the radiator cover leaving a gap of 6cm. This posed a risk of injury. It is acknowledged that the temperature of the radiator was immediately reduced mitigating the risk to children when the identified risk was brought to the attention of the registered provider.
4. There was no documentary evidence to show that parents/guardians had been informed on the day of an accident/incident involving their child. From a sample of twenty accident and incident records made available and reviewed on inspection, ten of these records did not include a date beside the parent/guardian signature. This posed a safety risk. It is important that parents/guardians are informed of any accident/incident relating to their child on the same day so they can monitor their child appropriately.

Infection Control:

5. The service did not ensure the safe disposal of waste materials. This posed a risk of cross infection. Evidenced by the following:

- The foot pedal operated bin in the Wobbler 3 room was difficult to open and could only be opened using the foot pedal if the bin was placed against a wall. This was not suitable for the children aged 1 to 2 years.
- The foot pedal operated bin in the sanitary accommodation on the ground floor was observed to be not working, and children were observed to use their hands to dispose of used hand paper towels after handwashing.

A similar non-compliance was observed on the previous inspection on 07 May 2025, and the preventive action had not been sustained.

6. The service did not ensure there were effective control measures to reduce cross infection for the children using the Toddler 2 sanitary accommodation. Evidenced by the following.

- There were no hand paper towels available for use of the children after hand washing.
- There were loose clothes observed to be stored behind the doorway.
- There was a build-up of dust and dirt observed by the radiator and on the floor of this area.

Administration of Medication:

7. The service did not ensure the safe administration of medication. Evidenced by the following.

- There was no documented care plan for one child outlining the procedures for the administration of two medications.
- The prescribed emergency medication for another child was not in its original box stating the child's name and dosage required.

This was not in line with best practice and was at variance with the service policy. This posed a risk of safety.

Safe Sleep:

8. Two cots with sleeping children aged 1 to 1 ½ were observed with toys present. This is not in line with best practice and was at variance with the service safe sleep policy. It is acknowledged that the children were supervised at all times during sleep time. However, this potential safety risk should have been picked up during the 10-minute physical checks of children by staff.

9. There was documentary evidence which indicated that the daily sleep risk assessment was not carried out in Wobbler 2 room where children under 2 years of age were sleeping on sleep mats. Staff discussed how they

carried out a visual risk assessment of the sleep environment in the morning. However, safe sleep risk assessments should be carried out just before sleep time to ensure they capture all potential risks.

Fire Safety:

10. The layout of the sleep mats in the Wobbler 2 room did not support the safe evacuation of children aged 1 to 2 years of age in the event of an emergency evacuation. Four of the sleep mats did not have adequate space between. Two of the sleep mats had no space in between them and two of the sleep mats had between 10cm and 15cm between them. It is recommended that a 50cm space is left in between sleep mats to ensure the safe evacuation of children in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The door handle to the utility room on the ground floor has been replaced. All door handles will be checked by staff in future, and a sign has been attached to the door highlighting the importance of keeping it locked at all times.
2. Both blind cords in the room will be secured properly and safely going forward. Staff were alerted to the importance of securing access to blind cords and future risk assessments of rooms will include the securing of blind cords.
3. The temperature of the radiator was adjusted immediately. A nearby bed had knocked against the temperature dial which altered the temperature as a result of the broken panel on the radiator cover. This cover has now been replaced as shown in the attached photo. Regular inspections of the radiators in all the rooms will be added to future risk assessment plans.
4. Parents are always informed of any incident/accident on the day and asked to sign a form. The missing element highlighted in the inspection was that some of the forms were not dated. In future, staff will check that parents complete both signature and date on a form before leaving the premises. Staff have been reminded of the importance of parents both signing and dating of the incident/accident forms in future.

Infection Control:

5. The foot pedal bins in the Wobbler Room 3 and the ground floor bathroom have been replaced with new ones as shown in photos sent to the inspectorate. The staff have been reminded to monitor all pedal bins in the future to ensure that they are in full working order.

6. Hand paper towels were replaced, loose clothing removed from behind the doorway and the radiator and floor areas were thoroughly cleaned. The adequate provision of hand towels for the use of children will be strictly monitored by staff going forward. The storage of clothing or any other material behind the doorway will be strictly forbidden and monitored in future. The area by the radiator will be highlighted to the staff regarding hygiene and cleanliness and the danger of cross infection to children.

Administration of Medication:

7. The first two medications described were an antihistamine and eye drops bought over the counter by the parent. These two medications were provided by the parent purely as a precautionary measure, were never used and have since been removed. The other medicine described was a prescribed inhaler in a pouch which was labelled with the child's name. The parents have been asked to provide the original packaging for the inhaler. Staff have been reminded of the importance of the safe administration of medicine as stated in the service policy, particularly as regards the dosage instructions.

Safe Sleep:

8. The importance of removing comforters from cots when children are asleep has been highlighted to staff regarding the potential safety risk posed. The staff were reminded that the presence of comforters in the cot of a sleeping child was at variance with the service's safe sleep policy which they were advised to read again and sign.

9. Staff in the Wobbler 2 room were reminded that a visual risk assessment of the sleep environment was not sufficient and that a safe sleep risk assessment must be carried out daily in future. Staff were advised to read the service's safe sleep policy again and sign.

Fire Safety:

10. The layout of the sleep mats in the Wobbler 2 room has now been altered to ensure that there is at least 50cm space between mats to ensure safe evacuation of the children in the event of an emergency evacuation. It has been highlighted to staff the importance of maintaining at least 50 cm distance between mats for safety reasons.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence of door handle repaired and a sign on door to remind staff to keep door closed.
2. Photographic evidence of blind cords secured.

3. Photographic evidence of the radiator cover repaired.

4. No supporting documentation submitted.

Infection Control:

5. Photographic evidence of two new pedal bins.

6. No supporting documentation submitted.

Administration of Medication:

7. No supporting documentation submitted.

Safe Sleep:

8/9. No supporting documentation submitted.

Fire Safety:

10. No supporting documentation submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions provided by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:

(d) a serious injury to a pre-school child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner whether in a hospital or otherwise;

Compliance Information

(d) The registered provider ensured that the procedures specified under Regulation 31 was completed within 3 working days regarding a recent notifiable incident which occurred on 1 February 2026.