

TUSLA PRE- REGISTRATION REGULATORY INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Due to a Proposed Change of Circumstances

Tusla I.D.: TU2016LH002

Name of Service Rachael's Room

Address of Service: Shelagh, Hackballscross, Dundalk, Co. Louth.
A91 Y744

Email Address: rachaelroomdlk@gmail.com

Name of Registered Provider: Rachael Conlon

Type of Proposed Service:	Full Day Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sessional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Drop-In	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed change: The registered provider proposes;
To change the type of service from sessional and part-time to a full day care service.
To change the hours of operation from 09:15 – 14:15 hrs to 08:00 to 17:00 hrs

Proposed Number of Children: 22

Recommended Change Following Inspection: The application to operate as a full day care service and change the hours of operation can be approved. As per the space available as outlined under Regulation 30, 22 children can be accommodated in the service on a sessional basis; 17 children can attend on a part-time/ full day care basis.

Registered change: Change in service type from part-time & sessional to full day, part-time & sessional
Change in hour of operation from 09:15 – 14:15 hrs to 08:00 to 17:00 hrs
Change in number of children from 22 to 22(Max 17 full day/part-time) children

Date of Inspection:	1	5	1	2	2	0	2	5
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Inspection undertaken by: M.Flood

Title: Early Years Inspector

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Address: Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre, Castleblayney Co. Monaghan

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Rationale for Inspection: Proposed Change of Circumstance

Note: For Office use only, to be completed by Registration Office

Registration Status:	Registered Full Day, Part-Time & Sessional Service for 22(Max17 Full Day/Part-Time) Children
Date of Registration	9 th January 2026

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(D) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Description of Service	Rachael's Room has been operating in its current location since May 2016. The service operates from 09:15 - 14:15 Monday to Friday offering part time and sessional care and education to preschool children aged 2½ - 6 years. The service is currently registered to cater for a maximum of twenty-two preschool children. The registered provider proposes to operate as a full day care service and to change the hours of operation to 08:00 to 17:00 hrs.
Premises	The service operates from a single storey modular building on the grounds of Scoil Bhríde National School in Hackballscross, Co. Louth. The premises consists of a specifically developed playroom, a kitchenette, storage area and adjoining sanitary facilities. An enclosed outdoor area is located to the front and side of the premises.
Staffing	The registered provider and three staff will be available to work directly with the pre-school children on a daily basis. One additional staff member is also available to provide relief in the service.
Methodology	The inspection was an announced inspection to assess compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016. The Inspection focused on regulations under the following themes: Governance, Health, Welfare and Development of the child, Safety and Premises. The findings on inspection based on information obtained through examination of documentation, direct observation, and discussion with relevant staff are documented in the inspection report and taken into consideration when making a decision in relation to registering the change in circumstance. 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.

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Additional Information	The service was found to be operating full day care hours prior to approval from the Registration Office.
Acknowledgements	The Inspector would like 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.

Requirement met:

(1)(a) The requirement has been met. The service has a designated person in charge who is also the registered provider and a named deputy person.

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.

Requirement met:

(1) The requirement has been met.
It is proposed that 4 staff members including the registered provider will be available to work directly with the pre-school children. One additional staff member is also available to provide relief in the service. The registered provider is aware of the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in Part 1 and 2 of Schedule 6.

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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.*
- (2) *A registered provider—*
- (b) *of a full day care service, a part-time day care service, a sessional preschool service or a childminding service that moves premises on or after 30 June 2016, shall ensure that a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the preschool children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.*

Requirement met:

- (1)(a) The requirement has been met.
The preschool children have access to adequate and suitable facilities for play both indoors and outdoors on the premises. The playroom is spacious and purposively developed with specific areas of interest e.g. a home area, a construction section, role play area, art and tabletop activities section. The areas are adequately supported with play materials and equipment. Tables and chairs are suitable for the proposed age profile of the children attending the service.
- (b)
- The children have access to a soft /rest area which is located within the playroom and consists of a couch and soft mats and cushions.
 - Soft green mats are available for the children to access for sleep if required. A system is in place for the management and laundry of linen.
- (2) The pre-school children have access to a partially covered and enclosed outdoor area on the premises that extends to and the front and side of the modular unit. The area is gated and fenced and has a variety of surfaces including grass, tarmac and a stoney area. A variety of age-appropriate play equipment is available including, a mud kitchen, some ride on toys, a wooden pirate ship with seating, an age-appropriate slide and sand trays and tables and chairs are located in the partially covered area to facilitate tabletop activities.

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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

- It is proposed that a hot meal will be provided by an external catering company and reheated in the service. A 2-week menu is available, and the registered provider advised that parents have been provided with a copy.
- All snacks and lunches are provided by the parents for the children attending the service. A refrigerator is available in the care room for the appropriate storage of perishable items. Potable drinking water is available in 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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met:

The following are examples of appropriate measures that have been undertaken in the service to ensure the safety of the children including:

- The external doors are appropriately secured to prevent children exiting from the service unsupervised or to prevent unauthorised access to the service.
- The designated emergency exits are clear and unobstructed.
- The electric heat pump system is wall mounted and out of the reach of the children.
- A supply of thermostatically controlled hot water to a maximum of 43 ° C is available in the service.
- Cleaning products and medication are stored within a locked press in the playroom and therefore are inaccessible to the children.
- No trailing cables, wires or flexes are accessible to the preschool children.

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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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1) Documentary evidence was available to indicate that the service had 3 members of staff with up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training. This provides that a staff member with up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training will be available to the preschool children in the service at all times.

(2) (a)(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available in the service and stored in a safe and conspicuous location.

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.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.

(1)(a) A recording system is in place to maintain a record of monthly fire drills. The last recorded fire drill was dated 19/11/2025.

(b) A maintenance record for the fire- fighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises was available and was dated 09/2025 and 07/2025 respectively.

(4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was available in the service. The fire assembly point was clearly identified and visible.

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Part VI – Safety

Regulation 28 – Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met.
Documentary evidence was available of adequate insurance cover for 22 pre-school children for full day care and included an expiry date 27/03/2026.

Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are—

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met:

(a) On visual inspection the building appeared to be sound and stable.

(b) The service is appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access. The outdoor play area is secured with latched gates and fencing.

(c)

- The premises was adequately lit by means of natural lighting and supplemented by artificial lighting. All lights were fitted with protective covers.
- The premises was heated by means of an electric heat pump system.
- Ventilation was provided by means of open able windows and doors and an additional mechanical ventilation fan in the sanitary areas.

(d)

- The premises was found in a clean condition and in good repair.

(e)
The service is equipped with an adequate number of toilets and wash hand basins for a maximum of 22 preschool children at any one time. A nappy changing mat was also available should nappy changing facilities be required. One toilet and accompanying wash hand basin is provided for use by staff members.

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Part VII – Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 30 – Minimum Space Requirements

- (1) *Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) *A registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that the minimum amount of clear floor space specified in column (3) of Schedule 7 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Schedule in respect of the age range of children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is available for each child in that age range attending the service.*

Requirement met:

The requirement has been met:

(1) Adequate clear floor space for the proposed 22 preschool children is available in the pre-school service for the children's work, play and movement.

(2) The following clear floor space is available in the care room:

A total of 40.5 m² clear floor space is available to cater for a maximum of 22 preschool children aged 2½ - 6 years on a sessional basis. A maximum of 17 preschool aged 3-6 years can attend this room on a part-time/ full day care basis.