

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017DS501
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Name of Service:	Mrs Giggles
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Address of Service:	Bawnogue Community Centre, Bawnogue, Clondalkin, Dublin 22
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Eircode:	D22 DY68
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ingrid McDonnell
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Service type:	Sessional
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Dates of Inspection:	06/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	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, Dublin 8
Inspection undertaken by:	H Sutherland
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

Mrs Giggles is one of two pre-school services operated by the registered provider. The service is located in Bawnogue Community Centre, Clondalkin, Dublin 22 and comprises of two care rooms. A small outdoor space is available to the children at the side of the premises. A morning session is provided from 9am to 12pm Monday to Friday. The service accommodates children aged 2 to 6 years and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme.

Staffing

There are currently four staff employed in the service to work directly with the children including the person in charge. On the day of inspection four staff were present. The registered provider does not work in the service and was not present during the inspection.

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 and records. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focussed on an examination of compliance under the following area:

- Regulation 9 (1) (a-c), (2) (a-d), (3), (4) Management and recruitment
- Regulation 11 (1), (3) Staffing levels

Regulation 19 (1)(b) Health welfare and development of child
Regulation 23 Safeguarding health safety and welfare of child
Regulation 25 (1), (2) (a) (b) First Aid
Regulation 26 (1) (a)(b), (4) Fire safety measures
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 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
- (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 a named person to deputise.
 - (b) The designated person in charge was present when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service which was confirmed with staff members and the person in charge during discussions with the inspector.

(2)
Following discussion with the person in charge it was confirmed that one adult commenced employment in the service since Regulation 9 was last inspected on 25 October 2022. Documentation required under Regulation

9(2)(3)(4) was reviewed in respect of the adult as detailed below. The requirements of Regulation 9(2)(c) relating to Garda Vetting was reviewed for all adults employed to work in the service.

- (a) Two written and verified references were available from past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for four 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 not required.

(3) Documentation reviewed evidenced that the procedures specified above under 9(2) had been carried out prior to the adult commencing employment in the service.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the adult who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children to meet their care needs. There were 4 adults available to 18 children.
- (3) The minimum adult to child ratio was maintained for the duration of the inspection.

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

During the inspection staff were observed implementing appropriate and suitable care practices. Children brought their lunch from home and were encouraged to eat at their own pace. The atmosphere during snack time was calm and unhurried and staff sat with children, encouraged independence and provided support as needed. Drinking water was stored on low level shelves and children were observed to access it throughout the morning. Staff continuously engaged in conversation with children, demonstrating attentive listening and genuine interest in what children were discussing. Interactions were warm, positive and responsive and staff were aware of children's individual needs.

Story time was observed to be an interactive experience. Staff included children and encouraged their participation supporting language development. Staff sang songs with children and children enthusiastically joined in dancing along with their peers. Play was child led and staff were observed to extend children's learning in the moment. They spent time sitting on the floor with children while they played, encouraging imaginative play and acknowledged and praised achievements. Children were encouraged to use the toilet independently and were supported to develop healthy hygiene practices, including handwashing before lunch, following nasal care and after toileting. Rest areas were available within the care room, providing children with the opportunity to relax when needed. Children were observed taking time out during the morning to sit in the rest areas while observing the activities within the room.

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:

- A care plan was available for a child with a serious medical condition and stored in a prominent position in the care room. Staff demonstrated clear understanding of the medical requirements for the child.
- All toys and equipment observed on the day of inspection were in good condition and free from any pinch or crush points.
- Daily inspection of indoor and outdoor play equipment takes place in the service which was evidenced by documented risk assessments.
- Staff were observed to actively check children's lunch boxes to ensure grapes and small pieces of fruit were halved.
- The entrance doors into the service were adequately secured when the inspector arrived to the service.

Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available to support hand hygiene practices.
- Staff were observed to disinfect the tables before lunch time.
- Pedal operated bins were in use in the bathrooms and care rooms.
- The care rooms were visibly clean and cleaning schedules were available for review.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated clear understanding of the procedure to administer medication to a child if required and documented records were available for review.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were unobstructed for the duration of the inspection.
- Staff demonstrated awareness of the procedure to safely evacuate children from the service in the event of a fire.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. During the inspection, it was observed that a mud kitchen positioned beside a low-level boundary wall created a potential foothold that could enable children to climb onto the wall. The opposite side of the wall led directly to a carpark, presenting a potential safety hazard, risk of injury or unauthorised access.
2. A drawer containing hazardous objects in the kitchen area of the playgroup room was not secured. The child lock was unlocked and the drawer contained sharp implements posing a risk to children's safety. It is acknowledged that staff were observed to continuously guide children away from the kitchen area during the inspection.

Infection Control:

3. A vinyl child size sofa was observed to be torn exposing the inner foam. The exposed tear posed an infection control risk, as the surface cannot be effectively cleaned or sanitised.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A fence has been erected to raise the height of the boundary in the outdoor area, preventing children from climbing the wall and unauthorised persons gaining access.
2. Double child locks have been placed on the drawers and there is now a baby gate in place preventing children from gaining access to the kitchen area. Checks to ensure the drawers and baby gate are locked have been added to the daily risk assessment and staff have been advised to check locks regularly.

Infection Control:

3. Waterproof patches have been placed on the exposed areas on the children's sofa. Additional patches have been purchased and staff have been advised to replace the patches as soon as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photograph of fencing
2. Photograph of lock and baby gate in kitchen area and a risk assessment

Infection Control:

3. Photograph of repaired sofa

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted by the registered provider have adequately addressed the non-compliance.

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) There was evidence to show that four adults hold certification in First Aid Responder training, and all four were available for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

(a) Suitably equipped first aid boxes were available and stored safely in easily accessible and prominent positions in the kitchen presses in the care rooms.

(b) The first aid boxes were observed to be easily available to the adults caring for the children attending the service.

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) A record was available for review detailing fire drills that had taken place in the service. The record showed that the most recent fire drill had taken place on 22 September 2025.

(b) Records were available to show that maintenance on firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm were carried out on 4 December 2024 and 7 August 2025.

(4)

The procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed next to the exits in the care rooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information