

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2017KE507

**Name of Service:** Gatelodge Childcare

**Address of Service:** Gatelodge B, Green Road, The Curragh, Co. Kildare

**Eircode:** R56 PC82

**Name of Registered Provider:** Josephine Ryan

**Service type:** Full Day

**Date of Inspection:** 04/11/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	7	PM	3
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency, Suite 7 Vista Primary Care Ballymore Eustace Road Naas, Co. Kildare
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F. Maher
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not applicable.
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### Description of service

Gatelodge Childcare is a private full day care service also providing part-time and sessional education and care to children aged 1 to 6 years. The service opens from 08:00am - 18:00pm, Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the pre-school/school year. The service is registered to provide school aged care.

The service operates from a refurbished and extended two storey building; two pre-school rooms, one on the ground floor and one on the first floor are in the original building and two further pre-school rooms, a sleep room and kitchen are located in the extension. The pre-school room on the ground floor of the original building was the only room currently in operation. Outdoor play areas are located to the rear and side of the premises.

Car parking is available at the front of the building.

### Staffing

There were three adults employed in the service and includes the registered provider and one staff member who work directly with the pre-school children and one staff member who works with school age children.

The registered provider, one staff member and one transition year student were present on the day of 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 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 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 member 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.*

*(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), (b)

There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required; the registered provider was the person in charge on the day of inspection.

The records for three staff members employed and one transition year student were reviewed.

(2)(a), (b)

Two written and verified references from a past employer or a reputable source were available as required in respect of the three staff members and one student whose records were reviewed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all employed staff members. Garda vetting was not required for the transition year student.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff employed.

(d) Police vetting was available for one employed adult who had lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)

Two adults employed and working directly with pre-school children, held a qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher 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.*

*(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.*

*(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*

*(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)  
There were 7 children attending the service being supervised directly by 2 staff members throughout the inspection.
- (2)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day as specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6.
- (8)(a)  
There were at least two adults on the premises at all times for the duration of the inspection and throughout the day as verified by the staff hours rostered.

### 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

##### (1)(a) Basic Needs

Parents provided a pre-packed snack for their child which was in line with the healthy eating policy for the service. Snacks provided included a variety of filled sandwiches, fresh fruit, cheese, yoghurts and fromage frais. Staff sat with the children during snack time ensuring it was a social and enjoyable occasion and an opportunity to discuss healthy and non-healthy foods. Each child had their own bottle of water/juice and drinking water was also freely available in the service.

Children's behaviour was managed in a positive manner with an emphasis on praise and encouragement. Staff were observed to be consistent and respect the maturity and level of understanding of individual children.

Self-toileting was both supported and encouraged by staff and nappy changing facilities were available should they be required.

A comfortable rest area with a floor mat and a child sized couch was available for the children to sit, rest and read a book as they wished.

The children were observed to be supervised and assisted with hand hygiene prior to eating snack.

A free flow system between the indoors and outdoors ensured all the children moved freely within the pre-school environment and children were dressed accordingly when in the outdoor area.

##### Supporting relationships around children

All children were observed relaxed and comfortable as they engaged in their daily routines, play and activities, while among their peers and with the staff caring for them throughout the day. The atmosphere was friendly and child centred. Frequent positive interactions were observed between the staff members and the children, both verbal and nonverbal and all interactions with the children were respectful, warm and kind. One child, who was settling, was receiving one to one care and attention in a gentle comforting manner by the staff member to reassure and assist them with the transition from home into the setting. A family wall, with a photograph of each child's family was also in place to ensure the children felt connected to home when attending the service.

Information was shared with parents and guardians at the drop off and collection times. The registered provider also uses a mobile phone application as an alternative method of communication with parents and guardians.

Parents are invited into the service at the end of the pre-school year for the children's graduation.

Meetings can be arranged by appointment as necessary.

### Physical and Material Environment

The pre-school room and covered outdoor area were well resourced, planned and considered from a child's perspective with materials and equipment easily accessible on low level open shelving units.

Both areas were equipped with child sized tables and chairs. Interest areas in the pre-school room included a rest area with library, a home corner, small world play with a large doll house and props, dress up, mark making/art area and a variety of natural materials including cardboard for craft activities. A water wall was positioned in the covered outdoor area along with a kitchen and utensils, a mark making area and library, a set of low level shelving contained a variety of puzzles and manipulative equipment.

The outdoor play equipment included wooden climbing frames, a covered sand pit, ride on and push pull equipment and a mud kitchen with a variety of props.

## 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 to the service was secure and controlled by the registered provider to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the pre-school. Internal doors from the entrance lobby were secure with electromagnetic locking systems that were out of the children's reach. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. Storage cupboards throughout the service were observed secured with locking mechanisms for safety. During conversations with the staff member, they advised they were very observant of any food provided that had the potential risk of choking and immediately removed or cut the food into smaller pieces. The staff members also advised the inspector they would remove any beaded necklace if observed that a child may be wearing them.

Daily outdoor risk assessments were carried out and documented.

### Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap, electric hand dryers and paper hand towel, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying and handwashing routines were well established and observed.

Foot pedal operated bins were provided for the disposal of used tissues, paper towel and waste.

Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environments which were observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

### Administration of Medication:

Medicine was not given at the time of the inspection; written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child. No child attending the service required regular or emergency medication; this was confirmed by the staff member.

### Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service. The internal fire exits were not obstructed, and the assembly point was easily recognisable in the outdoor area.

### Outing:

Outings were not conducted from the service; this was confirmed by the staff present.

## 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)

The registered provider was trained in in first aid response (FAR), expiry date, September 2026 and was immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)(a)

The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the service.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available at all times to 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 in writing was kept of all fire drills that took place in the premises, the last recorded fire drill was dated 21 October 2025.

(b) There were records available detailing the maintenance of the firefighting equipment and fire/smoke detection system in the service dated August 2023 and 27 September 2025 respectively.

(4)

Notices were displayed detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of fire.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

The children were observed being supervised at all times throughout the inspection by the adults caring for them including, indoors, during transitions going to and coming from the outdoor play area, while in the outdoor play areas, when using the sanitary facilities and during snack time.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover valid until 27 March 2026. The insurance provided cover for 40 children.