

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2017LH501
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Name of Service:	Liana Lally Preschool
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Address of Service:	Tuites Lane, Old Golf Links Road, Blackrock, Dundalk, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A91N253
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Name of Registered Provider:	Liana Lally
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	27/02/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	13	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child Wellbeing Centre, Castleblayney Co. Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	M. Flood
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

Liana Lally Pre-school is a privately-owned and operated sessional pre-school service that has been in operation since 2017. The service is registered to cater for a maximum of 14 pre-school children and to operate from 9.00am - 12.00pm Monday-Friday.

This service operates from a purposely developed playroom within the registered providers own home, in a residential area of Blackrock, Co. Louth. The service has parking onsite for drop off and collection. The premises consists of a playroom, an adjoining sanitary area and access to an outdoor play area. The children also have access to a 2nd sanitary area in the main domestic dwelling.

Staffing

The registered provider and 2 staff are employed to work directly with the pre-school children. One additional staff member provides relief cover in the service as required.

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/ premises and facilities. 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 would like 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

(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.

(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) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. The person in charge and deputy person were on the premises when the inspector arrived at the premises and were present throughout the inspection.

(c) When questioned staff were familiar with the management structure within the service and the roles and responsibilities of the various staff members.

(2) Four staff files were reviewed including; the registered provider, 2 childcare staff and 1 additional staff member who provides relief in the service. The following was observed:

(a) & (b)

- There were 2 written and validated references from a past employer or an alternative source available for the registered provider and 2 members of staff.
- One written and validated reference was available for one staff member who provides relief in the service.

(c) A processed Garda Vetting Disclosure was available for all 4 members of staff. However, the registered provider did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) Documentary evidence was available of the required international police vetting for one staff member in the service.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the registered provider and 2 members of staff who were observed working directly with the children on the day of inspection held at least the minimum required level 5 childcare qualification on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent

Non-Compliance Information

The following documents were not available for inspection:

(2)(a)(b) One staff member who provides relief in the service did not have documentary evidence of a suitable 2nd written and validated reference.

(4) Documentary evidence was not available to confirm that one staff member who provides relief in the service held at least the minimum required level 5 childcare qualification on the National Framework of Childcare Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff member that provided relief is no longer a member of staff within the service and all staff files have been removed from our files.

We will add emergency staff or relief staff to our yearly mandatory staff check in September. This will include checking all staff files are up to date with regulations i.e. vetting, photo ID, references, qualifications, or training programmes. By completing mandatory staff checks in September, it means we can plan for upcoming first aid or re-vetting.

Supporting documentation submitted

Written and validated reference.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances together with documentary evidence. The inspector accepts the registered providers response that the relief staff member is no longer working in the service.

Based on the information submitted, the non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 have been adequately addressed. This will require assessment at the next inspection.

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 was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced at 10.10am and remained so throughout the inspection. There were 3 adults including the registered provider working directly with the 13 pre-school children present.

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,*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the service:

Basic Needs

- A rolling snack time is facilitated in the service. This involves the children choosing when they have snack and serving themselves. This supports independence and facilitates choice for the children.
- The children were observed to move freely between the care room and outdoor area and were dressed appropriately to go outside.

- The children were encouraged to be independent with toileting. Discreet supervision was also provided by staff as required. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children after toileting.
- The staff were observed to interact with the children in a warm and supportive manner e.g. at the end of the session the staff were observed down on the floor with the children and having said *“thank you all for another lovely day...will we say goodbye to our friends”*

Supporting Relationships

- Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the children and staff present. The staff were supportive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours. Minor behavioural issues were addressed and not allowed to escalate e.g. *“do you not want ...to do that? Just say no thank you ...well done.....!” “Use your words...and ask your friends...well done”*
- Communication with parents was mainly at drop of and collection times. The staff also confirmed that photographs and information are shared through small media messaging service and email. Phone calls are also reported to be used if required. Scrap books are in development for each child in the service and are a collation of the child’s learning and experiences in the service. These are sent home as a ‘keepsake’ at the end of the year.
- Individual plans for children who required additional supports in the service were available and were being implemented. The plan reviewed during the inspection, detailed a multidisciplinary plan for a child and the strategies being implemented to promote the child’s learning and development in the service.
- The staff report regular staff meetings and a staff messaging group are used to share information with each other and also to plan activities and learning plans for the children.

Physical and Material Environment

- A variety of age-appropriate materials and equipment was available in the care room. Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in the room which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children.
- The children were observed to engage in a variety of activities that promoted many areas of development for example, song time and a discussion about their day, sensory play included trays with playdough and the children were observed to prepare pancakes in preparation for upcoming ‘pancake Tuesday’. A variety of tabletop activities including blocks and magnets and art activities were also observed.
- The children’s artwork was evident in the care room for example; ‘our community’ and also free colouring and free painting pictures.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

The Inspectorate is not assured that adequate steps have been taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pre-school children attending the service based on the following observations made during the inspection:

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for 3 staff members and 1 staff member who provides relief in the service. However, 1 of these vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. No evidence was available to demonstrate that the ground surface under the climbing frame and swing set in the outdoor area is appropriate or safe.
3. A free-standing barbeque was accessible to the children playing in the outdoor area and is a potential injury hazard if pushed or pulled over by a child.
4. A number of pieces of sharp wire netting were protruding at a low level along the hedge and oil tank in the outdoor area. This is a potential injury risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Actions

1. The registered provider will update one of the staff members re-vetting in adherence to the renewal of garda vetting. By introducing a mandatory staff check that will take place every September, this will involve checking on staff vetting and planning in advance for that year if any staff member needs their vetting updated or first aid in adherence with the regulations. As the owner this will be a priority.
2. The registered provider contacted the company on 2 occasions to get the correct safety details. They have provided the correct information regarding the climbing frame and swing.
3. The BBQ has been removed. A monthly garden risk assessment has been created in addition to the daily risk assessment, to undertake a more in depth look at the toys, ride along's, identify hazards such as broken trees, thorns, and sharp objects.
4. The wire fence has been completely removed with immediate effect.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Documentary evidence from the company relating to ‘the installation of the climbing frame in compliance with Irish safety regulations.
- Photographic evidence that BBQ and wire netting have been removed.
- Daily risk assessment template for outdoor area and equipment.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted details of the corrective and preventative actions taken in the service to address the non-compliances. Documentary evidence was also submitted and as such, the non-compliances 2, 3 and 4 have been adequately addressed.

In relation to non-compliance 1, no documentary evidence has been submitted to confirm that the required Garda Vetting has been updated therefore this information under Regulation 23 remains outstanding.

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 maintained of the monthly fire drills which had been completed in the service. The last recorded on 25/02/25.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises dated the 11/2024 and 09/09/2024 respectively.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentary evidence was available of adequate insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. This had an expiry date of 27/03/2025.