

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018MO501
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Name of Service:	Lollipop Lane
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Address of Service:	Cordarragh, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo
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Eircode:	F12 W8Y7
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Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Kilbane
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/01/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	26	PM	20
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, 2nd Floor, St. Mary's HQ., Castlebar, Co. Mayo.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Farrell
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

Lollipop Lane is a service in Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo and provides full day care and sessional services to children aged from one to six years of age. The service is one of three services operated by the registered provider in County Mayo and Sligo. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm with sessional services running from 9am to 12midday. The service is situated in a purpose-built, two storey building. There are two playrooms, a separate sleep room, kitchen and sanitary areas. An enclosed outdoor play area is located to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are 12 adults working in the service. 11 adults work directly with the children including the centre manager who provides relief cover when needed. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. The service employs a chef and there is a cleaner who works in the service outside the service's operational hours.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under sections of regulations 9, 11, 15, 16, 23, 25 and 27; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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.

(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) There was a designated person in charge in the service and a named adult to deputise in her absence.
- (b) The deputy designated person in charge was available on the premises on the inspector's arrival and the designated person in charge arrived shortly afterwards. Both the designated person and deputy were available in the service for the remainder of the inspection. A sample review of records found that the designated person or deputy were always available in the service when children were present.

(2)

It was confirmed with the person in charge following review of documents and discussion with staff that there were 13 adults in the service including the registered provider. The following vetting documentation and qualifications were available for the 13 adults:

- (a) Two written validated references from past employers in particular the most recent employers for 11 adults and one written validated reference from a past employer for 1 adult.

- (b) Two written validated references from sources other past employers for one adult and one written validated reference from another source for a second adult.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 13 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) International police vetting was available for two adults who had lived outside of the State for more than six months as adults.
- (4) Evidence of the required qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or equivalent was available on file for 12 adults.

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 5 adults working directly with 25 children on the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service. A further child arrived later in the day bringing the total of children present to 26. Sufficient staff were available during the inspection to work directly with the children and provide relief cover for breaks ensuring that adequate numbers of staff were always available.
- (2) The minimum adult to child ratios were maintained during the unannounced inspection as follows:
- Seedlings playroom: One staff cared for three children aged one year old attending full day care services.
 - Buds playroom: Two staff cared for seven children aged two years of age attending full day care services.
 - Blossoms playroom: 2 staff cared for 16 children on the morning of the inspection and 13 children in the afternoon.

- (8)
- (a) There was always at least two adults on the premises during the inspection. Staff rosters showed that two adults were present during service opening hours.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
 - (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
 - (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
 - (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
 - (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
 - (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
 - (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
 - (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
 - (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*
- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
- A sample of ten children's records were randomly selected for review from the children currently attending the service.
- (a) to (i)
- The ten records were found to be compliant with the required details under the regulation.
- (3)
- (c) The children's records were made available to the inspector in the service on request.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;
- (e) the facilities available;
- (f) the opening hours and fees;
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

(5) For the purposes of operating the pre-school service, a record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises by an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that written records were available containing the following information in the service:

- (a) Information on the service type and ages of children that the service is registered to provide services to in the statement of purpose and function.
- (b) The adult:child ratios provided in the service.

- (c) The service's type of care/programme.
- (d) The facilities available in the service.
- (e) The service's hours of opening and fees.
- (f) The service's policies, procedures and statements as required under Regulation 10 were available on file.
- (g) Details of the daily attendance of each pre-school child recorded daily in an attendance book.
- (h) The staff roster detailing staff daily working hours was available in the office.
- (i) Records of any medication administered to a child while attending the service were kept on medication record sheets.
- (j) Written details of accidents, injuries and incidents involving children attending the service in an accident/incident record book.

(3) and (5)

The records were made available to the inspector on the premises by the designated person in charge on request.

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 service's main entrance door was secured on the inspector's unannounced arrival to the service with a buzzer system in place to request access to the premises. The staff in the Buds playroom secured the half door in place at the entrance to the kitchenette to restrict access by the children. Following a safety risk assessment the service had been opening later in the mornings for the previous number of days in view of snow and icy weather. One section of the outdoor area was not in use at the time of the inspection and the staff informed the inspector that plans were in place for the redevelopment of this space. The outdoor area used by the children was secured to prevent them leaving the area unnoticed by staff. The outdoor space was covered with snow and ice during the inspection and following a safety risk assessment by staff the children did not play outdoors. Blind cords on windows were secured with securing devices. Cleaning products were stored at high levels out of reach of

children. The toys and play items in use in the playrooms on the day were in satisfactory condition and suitable for the developmental stages of the children using them.

Infection Control:

Visitors to the service were requested by staff to wear the blue plastic shoe covers provided and the staff changed their shoes on arrival to the service before entering the playrooms. The children in the Buds playroom were observed to wash their hands before their morning snack supervised by the staff. The children used warm water and liquid soap to wash their hands and dried them with paper towel which was disposed of in foot pedal operated waste bins. The staff were observed to wear the plastic aprons and gloves provided when changing nappies. Separate storage was available for storing children's personal items in the nappy changing area. Foot pedal bins were provided for the disposal of nappies. Child-friendly handwashing signs with prompts were displayed near wash hand basins to guide children on handwashing. Cleaning records were completed by staff following cleaning and disinfecting processes and were observed to be up to date.

Administration of Medication:

The staff informed the inspector that none of the children required medication to be administered to them in the service. The staff were aware of correct processes for the administration of medication and the service had a policy in place in relation to medication administration.

Safe Sleep:

A separate sleep room was provided off the Seedlings playroom and had five standard cots and two floor bed to cater for the younger children's sleep needs. Where children shared the use of a cot, the staff informed the inspector that the cots were cleaned down in between use with fresh cot linen used for the children. The air temperature of the sleep room was recorded at 18.0°C during the inspection. There was separate storage for the children's linen/blankets in labelled storage containers. Safe sleep guidance was displayed on the sleep room door for staff guidance. The staff observed resting/sleeping children at 10-minute intervals and made written records in relation to the children's colour, position and breathing patterns. The air temperature of the sleep room was also recorded on the sleep observation logs.

Fire Safety:

Emergency exit routes were found to be unobstructed during the inspection.

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) Certificates of the completion of First Aid Response (FAR) training courses with expiry dates ranging from 27 April 2025 to 4 October 2025 were available for six staff members in the service.
- (2) (a) Appropriately stocked first aid boxes were safely stored in easily accessible locations in the playrooms.
(b) The first aid equipment was readily accessible to the staff if children needed first aid treatment

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 required adult: child ratios were adhered to during the inspection. The children were supervised by the adults mainly by sight, but older children were out of view remaining within earshot of the adults if using the toilet independently. A child in the Blossoms playroom was heard to call for assistance from a staff member when using the toilet and the staff member responded immediately to the child. When sleeping the children were observed by staff at the minimum of 10-minute intervals. The staff in the three playrooms were observed to sit with the children at mealtimes and supervise them closely. The children did not play in the outdoor area on the day following a service risk assessment in view of snow and icy weather.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Non-Compliance Information

- (e) 1. Up to 15 children in the Blossoms and Buds playrooms used one nappy changing unit. This did not meet the requirement of one nappy-changing unit provided for every 11 children in nappies.
2. A nappy changing mat placed on the floor in the Seedlings sanitary unit was used to change a child's nappy/pull up during the inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(e) 1. and 2.

The service has purchased and installed a second nappy changing unit in the Buds sanitary area. The service will keep up to date with all regulations, so this does not happen in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of a new nappy change unit.

Summary Comment

The actions taken and evidence submitted by the service have addressed the non-compliance found on inspection under this regulation. This will be reviewed on future inspection.