

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021WW003
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Name of Service:	Ray of Sunshine Morning and Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Block 32, Hazelbrook Rise, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A67 HX39
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Name of Registered Provider:	Amanda Spiteri
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	31/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	31	PM	31
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke
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	N/A
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Description of service

Ray of Sunshine Morning and Afterschool opened in September 2021. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 1 years and 6 years of age, on a sessional, part-time and full-time basis.

The hours of operation are from 07.00am to 07.00pm Monday to Friday and the service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme for 38 weeks of the year.

The pre-school is located over two floors of a two-storey building, which has been modified to accommodate a childcare service. There are three pre-school rooms. The Creche is located on the ground floor with its own sanitary accommodation and nappy changing area. In addition, on the ground floor, there is a kitchen and staff office and a separate sleep room.

On the second floor there is the Junior pre-school room and Senior pre-school room both with their own sanitary accommodation.

The service also provides an afterschool service. There is a large, enclosed outdoor area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work directly with the children and has appointed a designated person to manage the pre-school service. There are ten full time staff members working in the service, plus a manager from a second service who covers leave. Eight adults 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under

Regulation 9 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4) - Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 (1)(2)(8)(a) - Staffing levels

Regulation 15(1) – Record in relation to a pre-school child.

Regulation 16 (1)(a)(h)(i)(j)(k) - Record in relation to pre-school service

Regulation 19 (1)(b) - Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 25 – First Aid

Regulation 26 – Fire Safety Measures

Regulation 27 – Supervision

however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under

Regulation 19 – (1)(a) Basic needs

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

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, 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

Following a discussion with the manager and inspecting the staff roster it was confirmed that ten adults are employed in the service, this includes the manager and assistant manager. The staff file for a manager from a second service was also reviewed. On the day of inspection, eight adults from the service were present.

(1)(a)

The manager was the person in charge and a named person was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The manager was on the premises at the time of the arrival of the inspectors and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

There was a clear management structure within the service.

(2)(a)(b)

Written validated references were available in respect of eleven adults.

(c)

The required three-year Garda Vetting Disclosures were available for eleven adults.

(d)

International police vetting was available for seven adults working in the service had lived outside the jurisdiction for more than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)

Eleven staff members held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed 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)
Throughout the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2)
The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were eight adults employed and present with 31 children on the day of inspection.
- (8)(a)
The manager ensured that there were two adults on the premises at all times. This was confirmed by reviewing the staff roster.

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)-(i)

The manager ensured that a record in writing of the above particulars, was kept in respect of each child attending the pre-school service.

(3)(c)

The manager ensured that these records were available for inspection by an authorised person.

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;

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a), (h)-(k).

The manager made sure that a record in writing was kept of the above information in relation to the service.

(3)

The manager ensured that these records were available for inspection by an authorised person

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

(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

(1)(b)

The manager ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place. Children were asked what activity they wished to pursue, and children's participation was encouraged in all activities throughout the morning.

The transition between one activity and the next was smooth and unhurried, aided by the language used by the adults to the children. One to one attention was given to a child if it was required.

The staff in both rooms knew the names of all the children attending the service, and a strong sense of teamwork was evident throughout the day while observing the adults and children interact with each other.

There was an area in each care room where the children's belongings were stored, this was within easy reach for the staff and children but did not impact on the available free space in the room.

Snack time and lunches were well organised and happy events.

There was fresh drinking water available to the children throughout the morning. The snack time was relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience for children as adults engaged with them helping when required.

Children were addressed by their name and were given plenty of time to eat their food. The staff sat with the

children during snack time and lunch time. All food was provided by the parents of the children attending the service.

Children's parents are spoken to on an individual basis at collection time.

Children were supported to be independent with looking after their belonging, in the tidy up process and with using the toilet. All with adequate supervision.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs

It is acknowledged that the Creche room was being decorated on the day of inspection and the children from that room were being accommodated in the Junior pre-school room.

1. The cosy area in the Junior pre-school room was not an inviting or suitably equipped area for the children in the room. There was only a cushion and a thin blanket in the cosy area and two children were observed trying to sit on the cushion at the same time, which could not accommodate them. The cosy area should be laid out in a way that encourages children to use the area should they need to rest or take a break from activities during their pre-school day.
2. The Junior pre-school room was not constructively planned to reflect clearly defined areas of interest and well-presented environments to provide a range of developmentally appropriate, challenging, diverse, creative and enriching experiences for the children.
3. On the day of inspection, no provision was made to move a selection of age-appropriate toys from the Creche to the Junior pre-school room, to meet the needs of the children who were using the room on that day.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(a)

1. The cozy corner area in the preschool junior room has been updated with a new colourful, mat and more cushions for the children for resting, weekly checks will take place in all of the classrooms by managers.
2. We have redone our classroom areas with more defined layouts for our cozy corner, dress up and construction areas. Weekly check ins will be done with all staff to ensure that they understand the non-compliances, will help prevent them in the future.
3. We have noted for the future if we are using a different room the different age groups to risk assess the rooms and bring in materials that are age appropriate.

Supporting documentation submitted

(1)(a)

Points 1-3 photographic evidence of new room layouts with additional furniture and signed checked sheets were submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances found on the day of inspection in relation to regulation 19 (1)(a) has been addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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 main door to the service was securely locked on arrival of the inspector to the service.
- All toys examined were in good condition and equipment was suitable, age appropriate and in good working order.
- All cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- The emergency exit route from each pre-school room was free from obstruction and clearly marked.

Infection Control:

- There were sanitary areas located in each pre-school room. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels available.
- Cleaning schedules were present and maintained in the service.
- Cleaning of both pre-school rooms was observed after snack time and lunch time.

Administration of Medication:

While the administration of medication was not observed on the day of inspection, past records were reviewed and were found to be in order and completed correctly.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

On the day of inspection, during the walk through of the pre-school, it was noted that the room temperature in the Junior Preschool room was 23.3°C at 11.15am. The room windows were fully open, but this did reduce the room temperature to a safe range between 18°C and 22°C.

This was brought to the attention of the manager, and at 11.45am an air conditioning unit was brought to the room. While this managed to bring the room temperature down to 22°C by 12.05pm, the room temperature continued to fluctuate between 22°-23°C throughout the day.

Infection Control:

1. The bin for the safe disposal of soiled nappies or food waste in the Junior Pre-school room was not operated by a foot pedal. Foot pedal bins are needed for infection control purposes.
2. Both adults and children were observed opening the soiled nappy bin with their hands and not washing them afterwards.
3. In the Junior Pre-school room there was no effective system in place for the sterilisation of mouthing toys. An adult in the room observed a mouthed toy being dropped on the floor by a child and ignored it. Effective sterilisation of mouthed toys is essential for infection control purposes.
4. During the walk through the service, clean, spare clothes were noted lying on the floor underneath a cot in the sleep room. Clean clothes need to be stored in a suitable area off the floor for infection control purposes.

Safe Sleep:

While there was written evidence that staff recorded the position, colour and breathing of children who were sleeping in cots, on the day of inspection, between 11.40am and 12.20pm, no sleeping children's observations were documented.

Safe sleep practices require that sleeping children's observations need to be recorded at 10-minute intervals.,

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Fans have been installed in all rooms to maintain the correct temperature.

Infection Control:

1. A foot pedal bin has been put in place in the preschool junior room and at the staff meeting it was talked the importance of foot pedal bins for nappies.

2. Pedal bins are in all the rooms and the staff have been retrained in our nappy changing policy, the use of foot pedal bins and handwashing.
3. We spoke about infection control during our staff meeting and all the rooms now have and use their mouthed toy box throughout the day and make sure all the materials are sterilised at the end of each day.
4. We moved out spare clothes into our storage room on a shelf to keep them clean and ready to use if needed.

Safe Sleep:

Training has been carried out with all the staff on safe sleep and there is a new system in place in the sleep room. The first staff member in the sleep room is in charge of the sleep checks and if they are going on lunch, they hand the clipboard straight to the person in charge. Sleep checks to be carried out every 10 minutes and recorded.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence of electrical fans in each of the care rooms was submitted with the CAPA response

Infection Control:

Points 1-4 Photographic evidence of signed staff sheets for infection control revision, a new mouthing toy policy and foot pedal bins in care rooms was submitted with the CAPA response.

Safe Sleep:

Photographic evidence of reviewed sleep guidelines with staff signatures was submitted with the CAPA response.

Summary Comment

The non-compliances found on the day of inspection in relation to regulation 23, General safety, Infection Control and Safe Sleep have been addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The manager ensured that all children attending the pre-school were checked in and out on the service register.

(3)(a)(i-iv)

The manager ensured that no other person other than the agreed list of people had access to the pre-school.

(b)

The manager had a record in writing in the form of a visitors' book of all such persons who accessed the pre-school.

(4)

The manager was able to demonstrate that the visitors' book was kept for a period of one year from the dates to which it

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 manager ensured that an adult was trained in FAR (First Aid Response) and available to the children throughout the inspection.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was located in an accessible place within each pre-school room.

(b)

The first aid box was available to the children attending the service at all times

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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(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)

There was evidence of regular fire drills taking place within the service. The last fire drill took place on the 9th of July 2025.

(b)

There was a maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the premises dated September 2024 and 12th of May 2025 respectively.

(2)(c)

These records were open to inspection by an authorised person.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, displayed within the pre-school rooms.

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

During the day of inspection, the manager was able to demonstrate that there was an adequate number of adults present in the pre-school to ensure that the children attending were supervised continually during their day.