

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2024DY001
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Name of Service:	Little Rainbows Ltd
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Address of Service:	The Grove, Griffith Woods, Griffith Avenue, Dublin, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D09 A25C
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Name of Registered Provider:	Anne Campbell
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	99	PM	94
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne E Hosford
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Little Rainbows Ltd is a private service one of three operated by the registered provider. The service offers sessional, part time or full day care to children aged between 1 to 6 years, from 7:45am to 6pm Monday to Friday. The service operates from a two-storey purpose-built premises in a residential area on the north side of Dublin city and has eight care rooms and one separate sleep room for use by the children. The care rooms on the ground floor are: Little Chicks (1 year to 1 year 6 months), Little Bunnies (1year 6 months to 2 years), Little Cubs (2 years to 2 years 6 months), Little Bears (2years 6 months to 3 years), Little Monkeys (2years 6 months to 3 years 6 months), Busy Bees (3 to 4 years) and Little Explorers (3years 6 months to 4 years). On the first floor is Little Voyagers (3-5 years). An enclosed outdoor area is situated to the side of the building.

A service kitchen is provided for the preparation of meals for the children, sanitary facilities for staff and children and an administration office were present. On the day of inspection all care rooms were in operation.

Staffing

The registered provider employs 32 adults who work in the service to include the person in charge, area manager, 27 childcare staff working directly with the children to include one relief childcare staff member from another branch, a cook, a cleaner and an administrative assistant. The service is currently facilitating one student for work experience who was present on the day of inspection The registered provider does not directly work in the service.

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 the regulations 9, 11, 23, 26, and 28.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child. Regulation 11 Staffing levels was assessed across all rooms. As a result, the scope of the inspection included four care rooms – Little Chicks, Little Cubs, Busy Bees and Little Explorers rooms and did not include Little Bunnies, Little Bears, Little Monkeys and Little Voyagers rooms.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, area manager, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

It was confirmed by the area manager and the person in charge that 22 new childcare staff members had been employed in the service since the last inspection on the 3 July 2024. The files of these 22 new staff members and one student file along with Garda Vetting disclosures for six staff members whose file was reviewed on the last inspection were reviewed.

(2)(a) Thirty-Seven validated written references were available from a past employer.

(b) Eight validated written references were available from a source other than a previous employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the 32 staff and one student attending the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for 15 staff employed in the service and 1 student attending the service who had lived outside of the state for six consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Documentation was available to show that the 21 adults 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 or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(a) One written and validated reference from a past employer was not translated.
- (3) Documentary evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures outlined in paragraph (2)(d) had not been adequately completed prior to two staff and one student starting in the service and allowed access to the children.
- (4) Documentation was not available to show that one 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 or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (2)(a) The staff member provided a translated version of the reference. When checking all files, the service will check everything is translated.
- (3) The service will double check files. Labels and checklists will comply with all documents.
- (4) The staff member in question is waiting for their certificate to be processed, so they are no longer included in ratio. The service will ensure that staff have their certificate before placing them in ratio.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)(a) Translated written and validated reference.
- (3) Documentation evidence.
- (4) None

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 (2) (3) have been adequately addressed. The non-compliance identified under 9(4) remains outstanding and the registered provider is required to furnish the information to the inspectorate upon receipt, this will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were maintained on the day of inspection as outlined below.

- **Little Chicks-** (aged 1 year to 1 year 6 months) 3 adults were caring for 10 children in the morning and 2 adults were caring for 10 children in the afternoon.
- **Little Bunnies-** (aged 1 year 6 months to 2 years) 2 adults were caring for 9 children in the morning in the afternoon.
- **Little Cubs** - (aged 2 years to 2 year 6 months), 2 adults were caring for 10 children in the morning and afternoon.
- **Little Bears-** (aged 2 years 6 months to 3 years) 2 adults were caring for 10 children in the morning and afternoon.
- **Little Monkeys-** (aged 2 years 6 months to 3 years 6 months) 2 adults were caring for 11 children in the morning and in the afternoon.
- **Busy Bees-** (aged 3 years to 4 years) 2 adults were caring for 11 children in the morning and in the afternoon.
- **Little Explorers** – (aged 3 years 6 months to 4 years) 3 adults were caring for 17 children in the morning and 2 adults were caring for 15 children in the afternoon.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- **Little Voyagers** - (aged 3 years to 5 years) 2 adults were caring for 21 children in the morning and 3 adults were caring for 18 children in the afternoon.

The area manager, person in charge, administrator, one staff member from another branch and two parttime staff provided support in care rooms during break cover and nappy changing.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that two adults were always present on the premises.

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

- The service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals and a hot meal to the children. Breakfast is served 8.00am to 8.30am and an afternoon snack was served at 4.15pm. On the day of inspection, the inspector observed a hot meal served at 11.00am in the care rooms cooked by the chef, which was vegetable curry with rice and at 2.00pm, afternoon tea was served which was fish fingers, spaghetti in tomato sauce and fruit. Additional portions and alternative food were available to the children when required.
- Water was available in each care room for the children to drink from individual labelled cups.
- The transitions between activities such as sleep time, mealtimes, free play and outdoor play were observed to be calm and relaxed.
- Cots and floor mats with individual bedding were available to the children who required sleep. The cot room and care rooms used at sleep time were darkened to provide for a restful environment.
- Children had access to the outdoor play area during the day of inspection.

Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed to be engaged with and sit with the children during play time and have positive interactions during play activities of free play

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- Staff were observed to have respectful, warm and responsive interactions with the children with clear directions, use of the children names, use of soft tones and positive non-verbal communication strategies such as being at the children's level.
- Communication with Parents was through phone messaging, email, phone calls when required and with verbal updates at drop off and pick up times.

Physical and Material Environment

- The layout of the Little Chicks, Little Cubs and Little Explorers rooms facilitated choices as the toys and equipment were laid out on low level shelving and were visible and accessible to the children.
- Sufficient number of low tables and chairs to accommodate children whilst they played, completed tabletop activities and ate in the room were available. Child sized furniture supported children's independence.
- The materials and equipment provided to the children in the rooms were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment.
- Cosy areas were present in the Little Chicks, Little Cubs and Little Explorers rooms offering a quiet comfortable area for children to play comfortably, rest and relax during the day.
- The outdoor play environment to the rear of the premises was fully enclosed, with an artificial grass surface. Materials available included climbing frames, slides, balls, a tunnel, balancing plank, tyres as a climbing frame, chalkboard on wall, providing learning opportunities for children.

Non-Compliance Information

Physical and Material Environment

1. In the Busy Bees room, the equipment and materials were not available to the children and inviting areas of interest were not set up or appealing as spaces for the children to engage and explore to develop their learning opportunities and experiences, for example:
 - Support equipment for play in the play shop or in the play kitchen was not available or accessible to the children.
 - Dolls house was empty with no supporting equipment available.
 - The car port was place on top of the play shop, with no cars or trucks available.
 - Jigsaws were empty with no available pieces.
 - Dolls and dress up costumes stored in boxes in the construction area.
 - No soft mat provided on floor for children to sit on when doing activities.

Programme of Activities

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

2. In the Busy Bee room, there was no clear programme for child led activities. Children were not given choices regarding their play activities. At 10.43 am the inspector observed the staff member informing the children that they were all going to play magnets. No alternative activity was given to the children. Play activities in a care room should be child led and not adult led.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The Busy Bees room has been rearranged and set up in sections for the children to engage in learning and supporting them.

There was an order placed which arrived on the day of inspection of new materials to add to the Busy Bees room.

New materials introduced with a new laid out and management spoke with staff at staff meeting held 22 April 2026 and are researching training courses for staff.
2. New materials have been provided to the Busy Bees room. A staff change and child led activities introduced. Management had a meeting with staff on 22 April 2026 about interaction with children and encouraging child led activities.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographic Evidence.
2. Receipt of toy purchases and minutes of staff meeting 22 April 2026.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 19, has been adequately addressed.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors, the entrance door leading into the premises was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- No trailing flexes were observed, cleaning agents were stored out of reach of children, blind cords for blinds on windows were observed to be safe and out of reach.
- Room temperatures were kept between the recommended 18 °C to 22°C.

Infection Control:

- Nappy changing facilities were available for the children and nappy changing was completed for the children, at set times or when required in accordance with the service policy.
- At all handwashing facilities for hand hygiene in the service thermostatically controlled warm water, soap and paper towels and pedal operated lidded bins for disposal of paper waste were available.
- Twenty-five mattresses had washable wipeable covers and safety labels present.
- During sleep time, cots, floor beds and floor mats were positioned with the recommended 50 centimetres between each child.

Safe Sleep:

- Children were facilitated to sleep in cots, contour floor beds or floor mats in the cot room or care room, with each child provided with suitable bed linen for sleep.
- Staff maintained 10-minute sleep checks on each child to include their colour, breathing and position. The temperature of the room was also recorded to ensure it was maintained within the recommended 18°C to 22°C for over 1-year olds.
- The service adhered to best practice sleep guidelines issued to the sector in September 2023 regarding consultation and written agreement from parents prior to positioning children under the age of 2 years on low contour beds. The required documentation was available to demonstrate that a risk assessment had

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

been completed for one child and that parents had been involved in the decision to place their child on a low contour bed.

Fire Safety:

- The designated emergency exit doors were clear and unobstructed.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

- Infection control practices observed were at variance with the service policy and best practice guidelines, leading to poor infection control, for example.
 - In the Busy Bee room, handwashing was not completed after outdoor play in the garden.
 - In the sanitary facilities of the Busy Bee room, the toilet rolls were not in dispensers.
 - The outdoor play area contained discarded paper and tissues while children were playing in the area.

Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were not carried out in the service, for February 2026, December 2025, October 2025 and June 2025, leading to a safety risk in the event of an evacuation.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

- Staff in Busy Bees' room were spoken to regarding hand washing.
Toilet rolls on the holders are now in place.
More bins were provided; signs have gone up and meeting was held with all staff 22 April 2026.
Staff and cleaners were reminded to be more aware of tissues and papers in the garden. Extra bin and signs gone up.

Fire Safety:

- Area manager to sign off every month on fire drills. Area manager met with manager and deputy manager about how important it is to have a fire drill and to follow our policies and procedures. Area manager will check each month and sign off on the records.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

- Photographic evidence

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Fire Safety:

2. Minutes of Staff meeting 22 April 2026 and a fire drill template.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23, has been adequately addressed.

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 written record was reviewed by the inspector for fire drills completed and the last fire drill was recorded as being carried out on the 15 April 2026.
- (b) The number type and maintenance record for the firefighting equipment was available. demonstrating they were last serviced in April 2025 and the maintenance record for the smoke alarms were available, demonstrating they were last serviced on 14 November 2025.
- (4) The fire drill procedures were prominently displayed throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An insurance certificate reviewed demonstrated that the service was insured for a maximum of 122 children per session with an expiry date of 27 March 2027.