

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2024KE005		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Little Rascals Rathangan		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Lodge, Bracknagh Road, Rathangan, Co. Kildare		
<b>Eircode:</b>	R51 XK83		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Laura Maloney		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	26/11/2024		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency Suite 7, Vista primary Care Ballymore Eustace Road Naas, Co. Kildare W91X38W		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F. Maher		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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>	N/A		

### Description of service

Little Rascals Rathangan, provides sessional care and education to pre-school children aged 2-6 years and opens from 09:15am – 12:15pm, Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the pre-school year.

The service operates from a single-story refurbished stone building on the Bracknagh road in Rathangan Co. Kildare. Two pre-school rooms, a kitchen and office are provided. Outdoor play facilities are located to the front of the premises. Parking is available in the courtyard to the front of the building.

### Staffing

Three adults are employed in the service including the registered provider and person in charge, the three adults were working directly with the children 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 announced and focused on the area of governance, health, welfare and development of child. 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, 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

(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)

The service had a person in charge and a named person to deputise.

(b) Both the person in charge and a named person who could deputise were on the premises during the inspection.

The files of three staff members employed were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source other than a past employer, were available in respect of three adults employed.

(c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all adults employed in the service.

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

(d) Police vetting was not required as no adult had resided outside the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months whose records were reviewed.

(4)

Of the three staff records reviewed the adults employed and working directly with children attending the service held at least 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 by the Minister.

### 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)

There were 9 children attending the service being supervised directly by three adults.

(3)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the inspection as specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6.

### 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 of children**

The service promoted healthy eating, and the staff incorporated regular discussions around healthy foods during term time to encourage the children to try different foods and textures. Parents provided the morning snack for their child which consisted of bread rolls and sandwiches with healthy fillings, fresh fruit, vegetable pieces and cheese with water to drink. Children were afforded plenty of time to eat their snack and were not rushed.

The staff members advised they were very observant of any foods that had the potential risk of choking and immediately halved or cut food into smaller pieces. The children had access to their individual water containers throughout the morning and a supply of fresh drinking water was available in the kitchenette.

Regular hand washing and practices were observed throughout the morning as needed. Self-toileting was supported and the children were supervised as necessary. Aprons were available for messy play activities to protect the children's clothes. Children enjoyed freedom of movement within the pre-school room and in the outdoor play area.

##### **Supporting relationships around children**

Children were observed happy, content and relaxed within the pre-school environment. Staff members ensured children in their care were supported in all aspects of their physical, emotional and social wellbeing and demonstrated warmth and affection in all interactions with the children. Staff were observed being very respectful towards the children in their care and positive body language and gentle voice tones were used.

First names were used between staff and the children and children were listened to and encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings. Each child had a scrap book with photographs displaying the children engaging in various activities throughout the term and staff had documented their observations in the book which will be shared with parents at the end of the year.

Information was shared with parents and guardians at the drop off and collection times and a mobile phone application updated parents on various items of interest during the year. Individual meetings can be arranged with parents as requested/necessary.

## Physical and material environment

The larger pre-school room was currently in use and was equipped with low level child sized tables and chairs and resourced with suitable age-appropriate play and learning materials including puzzles, jigsaws, dolls, dolls buggies and clothes, building blocks, animals, cars, train set and books. There were adequate props for the home corner and construction area and plenty of art and craft materials for cutting, gluing and sticking including paper and crayons, paint and playdough. Materials and equipment were easily accessible on low level open shelving units in the room. Interest areas included a kitchen/home corner, dress up, construction and library area.

The outdoor play equipment included a swing set and slide, small tunnel, wooden climbing frame with a climbing wall and slide and there was plenty of space on the grass surface for the children to run and play games.