

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2025FL002			
Name of Service:	Isabella's Childcare			
Address of Service:	C2 Seafield Strand, Greenfield Road, Sutton, Dublin 13			
Eircode:	D13 V299			
Name of Registered Provider:	Ronnie Carroll			
Service type:	Full Day			
Date of Inspection:	26/11/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	9
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Area 1 2 nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K			
Inspection undertaken by:	T Nelson			
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			

Description of service

Isabella's Childcare is a full day care service located in a residential area of north county Dublin and is registered to provide early childhood care and education to a maximum of 22 children aged 2 to 6 years old, Monday to Friday. The service is one of 11 services operated by the registered provider.

Isabella's Childcare operates from the ground floor of an apartment building, and has two care rooms, the Toddler room (2 to 3 years old) and Preschool room (2 years and 8 months to 5 years old). There are sanitary facilities located to the rear of the Preschool room and a fully enclosed outdoor area is located to the side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs four staff to work in the service, including the person in charge, and three staff who work directly with the children. There were seven adults present throughout the day of the inspection including the person in charge, two staff who work directly with the children, a relief staff member from another service operated by the registered provider, an area manager and the chief operating officer. The registered provider does not 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

This inspection was announced and focused on the area of governance and the 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 area manager, 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.

(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

(1) The registered provider ensured that;

- (a) The service had a designated person in charge and named person to deputise as required.
- (b) A review of the roster showed either the person in charge or the deputy person in charge were rostered to be present during the operational hours of the service.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place, and staff reported being aware of this.

(2) The staff roster was reviewed and discussed with the person in charge. A total of eight files were reviewed which included the four staff, a relief staff member, two members of the management team and a visiting play facilitator who was present on the day of the inspection.

The registered provider had completed the following checks:

- (a) Ten validated written references were available from recent past employers.
- (b) Six validated written references were available from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all eight adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Five adults who had lived in a state other than Ireland for six months or more as an adult had international police vetting from that state available for inspection.

(3) Documentary evidence available showed that all of the checks outlined in (2) had been carried out prior to any of the adults having contact with the children in the service.

(4) Of the seven staff who worked directly with children attending the service, two held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, and five held a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

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

The registered provider ensured that:

(1) On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of adults available to the children attending the service to meet their care needs.

- There were four staff available to 11 children present on the morning of the inspection.
- There were four staff available to 9 children present on the morning of the inspection.

(2) The adult to child ratios were maintained correctly throughout the inspection. For example:

- A staff member arrived to provide cover for breaks.
- Staff were aware of the required ratios for the age range of children in the rooms.

(8)

(a) The review of the staff roster and discussion with staff established there was a minimum of two adults on the premises during the service operational hours.

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) The registered provider ensured children's learning, development and wellbeing was facilitated by the following:

(a)

Basic Needs:

- Meals were provided by the service, and staff reported children get regular meals with a breakfast on arrival, a snack at 10.30am, a hot meal at 12.15pm, a tea at 3.00pm and a further snack at 4.30pm. Children were observed to have a hot meal of pork curry with rice, with a suitable alternative meal for a child who had an alternative dietary requirement. Additional portions were available. Drinks of water were visible and accessible to the children throughout the day including during outdoor play.
- Children could move freely through the care room and independently choose an activity, promoting active decision making.
- Toileting was observed to be a respectful and positive experience for the children, and a child who had a toileting accident was tended to immediately and respectfully.
- Children were also encouraged to tend to their personal hygiene, for example they were encouraged to handwash after outdoor play, and to use a mirror to clean their face after dinner.
- Staff were observed to use positive strategies to support children's behaviour such as managing transitions in a timely manner, using verbal and visual cues, giving clear instruction around unacceptable behaviours, and encouraging and praising positive behaviours.
- All children had access to the outdoor play area on the day of the inspection.

Supporting Relationships:

- Respectful and positive interactions were observed between adults and children. The atmosphere in the service was relaxed and child centred.
- Children were encouraged to join in large group activities, facilitating social interactions among the children. Those who did not wish to participate were facilitated to play independently.

- Parents are given updates on the daily activities of their children via a closed online software application. Staff reported that the parents are invited to attend the forthcoming Christmas show.
- Staff reported they were familiar with the children and their likes and dislikes, and this informs planning for activities and meals.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The furniture provided in the rooms was low level and appropriate for children. Toys, equipment and play materials were easily accessible and visible to the children on low-level units which nurtured the children's independence and facilitated their choice.
- Visual imagery was used effectively throughout the care rooms to indicate the daily routine and where things belong. This facilitated communication and can give comfort for children.
- Images of the children and products of their recent mark making activities were displayed in the rooms. This gives a sense of belonging.
- The toys and equipment were grouped into themed interest areas in the rooms which can provide defined spaces to engage children in their play.
- These interest areas included a home area, small world play area, arts and crafts, jigsaws, sorting and stacking toys, block play and library area. These areas and play props promoted a range of play experiences for the children to support their development.
- Children had access to play equipment in the outdoor area such as balance bikes, rockers, blocks for stepping stones. These can promote gross motor development and fundamental movement skills such as balance.

Programme of Activities:

- There were detailed short-term plans available for children learning, and these plans were reflective of the artwork displayed in the rooms.
- Positive strategies such as running commentary, modelling, feedback and encouragement were observed to nurture and promote children's development.