

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2025KE006
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Maap Childcare Limited - Mullen Park
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Mullen Park, Greenfield, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
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<b>Eircode:</b>	W23 K7KC
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Annette Akerlind, Audrey Murray
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	28/01/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	35	PM	35
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Rd, Naas, Co Kildare.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	Emer Mulhern and Olivia Quill
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Maap Childcare Limited – Mullen Park opened in November 2025. It is 1 of 15 private early years services operated by the registered providers. It is registered to accommodate a maximum of 87 pre-school children aged between one and six years. The service operates from 07:00 to 18:30 Monday to Friday and offers full day, part-time and sessional education and care. The service is in a purpose-built, two-story building in a housing development in Maynooth, Co. Kildare. The premises includes six care rooms, a cot room, sanitary facilities and two outdoor play areas. Five care rooms were in use on the day of inspection.

### Staffing

There are 14 staff members employed to work in the service including the area manager, service manager, assistant manager, a chef and a staff member who works with school-aged children. Nine staff are employed to work directly with the pre-school children with managers available to assist and provide break cover.

### 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 areas of governance and 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the managers, 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)

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

(b) The person in charge was always on the premises during the inspection. The staff roster provided for the person in charge or the named deputy to be present at all times of opening.

(c) The management structure was clearly documented. The service had a service manager and assistant manager. The service manager reports to an area manager who oversees several of the company's services. The area manager in turn reports to the registered providers. Staff demonstrated an awareness of their individual roles and the lines of authority.

(2) In addition to staff outlined in the introduction, the inspection included a review of records for the registered providers, two additional company Area Managers that may have contact with the service and a student who undertakes work experience two days per week.

(a) & (b) Records were available to evidence references had been appropriately considered for each adult.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all adults. Garda vetting disclosures had been renewed for all adults who had been employed by the company prior to the opening of the new service in accordance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, which requires services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was required and available for twelve adults.

(3) All records outlined under regulation (2) above were dated prior to the adult's start dates.

(4) All adults employed to work with pre-school children held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at a minimum Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be 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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children. There were 9 staff members allocated to work directly with 35 children. The assistant manager, service manager and area manager also worked with the children and provided break cover.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratio requirement for the age of children and type of service provided was always maintained.

(8)(a) There were always more than two adults present during the inspection. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two adults to be present at all times of opening.

## 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

##### Basic Needs

The children moved freely within their allocated rooms, engaging in free play and activities. They wore coats appropriate to the weather when playing outdoors. Meals and snacks were provided at regular intervals. Bibs were available to prevent the children's clothes from getting soiled or wet.

Staff supported the children to manage their personal care. They assisted the children to clean their hands and faces. The children used the toilet as they needed with younger children's nappies checked and changed at regular intervals. Children who required sleep were provided with cots or beds appropriate to their age and stage of development. They were made comfortable for sleep with their outer clothing and shoes removed and soothers given to those who used them.

Staff were attentive to a child who displayed signs of being unwell. They provided him with comfort, checked his temperature regularly and communicated with his parent by phone and in person when they collected him from the service.

##### Supporting Relationships

The adults were observed to be kind, gentle and respectful in their interactions with the children. They told inspectors that they are assigned to the same care room daily. This supports the building of relationships with children and families. The staff demonstrated familiarity with the children commenting on their likes and dislikes. Positive behavioural strategies were used during all interactions with the children. The adults recorded children's individual information including nappy changes, food and sleep on an app which they said is used for two-way communication with parents/guardians.

### Non-Compliance Information

The registered providers did not ensure that children attending the Cruiser room (aged 1-2 years) had appropriate access to drinks. The inspector observed nine children have snacks and dinner without receiving any drinks. At 10:21 an adult gave a beaker of water to a child who appeared to be indicating they wanted a drink. She then offered drinks to some of the other children who were playing nearby. Two children were not offered any. These children were placed to sleep at approximately 13:00. Failure to provide drinks to young children can place them at risk of dehydration.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

Additional signage promoting water and healthy eating has been implemented in the specific classroom identified, as well as across all other rooms. A clearly designated water station has been introduced to reinforce visual prompts. The location of water has been moved to a more visible and easily accessible area to ensure children can access it at all times. Staff members in the Cruiser room were instructed to re-read the company's policy and procedures in relation to daily food and water intake. Staff were reminded to offer water at multiple intervals throughout the day, including during mealtimes. It was reinforced that supervising water intake is more effective when children are seated together, allowing better monitoring of hydration.

To prevent this from reoccurring we have added to our staff induction regarding hydration, dehydration and the responsibilities of all staff and management to provide drinks and not wait for children to seek refreshments. This has also been added to the list of responsibilities for managers and kitchen staff to monitor the refill of drinks containers throughout the day.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Supporting documents were submitted in keeping with the stated actions.

### Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed to appropriately address the non-compliance.