

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN050
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Name of Service:	Rainbow Kids Ltd
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Address of Service:	Kill Community Centre, Tullyvin, Cootehill, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	H16 XE02
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Name of Registered Provider:	Siobhan McKenna
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	19/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	10	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84
Inspection undertaken by:	S Mc Kenna
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).

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Description of service

Rainbow Kids Ltd has been operating as a community-based childcare service since May 1977. The service provides a sessional service to pre-school children aged 3 – 6 years. The service operates from 9 am to 12:30 pm each weekday and caters for a maximum of 22 pre-school children.

The service is conducted from a single-storey community centre located in a rural area of Tullyvin Co Cavan. There is one care room, sanitary facilities, an office and a separate kitchen provided in the service. An enclosed outdoor play area is located at the front of the premises, and the children also have access to the community hall.

Staffing

There were 3 staff employed in the service: 2 staff working directly with the children and 1 person employed for administrative duties. A transition year student was also 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/ and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding

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Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 24 Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance, Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures, Regulation 27 Supervision and Regulation 28 Insurance.

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*

(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 designated person in charge, who is the service manager, and a named person to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the service manager, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation, the designated person in charge or the named person in charge was on the premises.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on the inspection and through discussion with the service manager onsite, it was determined that 1 new staff member and 1 student had started in the service since the last inspection.

The references on file for 2 staff were compliant upon the service's last inspection; therefore, they were not reviewed upon this inspection.

(a) (b) Following review of the 1 new staff and 1 student file, the following was available;

A total of 3 written and validated references from a previous employer.

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One written and validated reference from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting for 1 staff member reviewed upon the last inspection met regulatory compliance; therefore, they were not reviewed upon this inspection. One staff member whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal, and the 1 new staff and 1 student vetting records were reviewed as follows;

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 1 new staff member and 1 student, and a renewal had been obtained for the 1 staff member whose vetting was due for renewal.

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

(d) Employment records of 2 staff members were reviewed at the services' last inspection, and regulatory compliance was achieved; therefore, they were not reviewed upon this inspection.

A review of the employment history for 1 new staff member and 1 student demonstrated that one adult had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. The required police vetting was available.

(4) Documentary evidence reviewed at the last inspection for 1 childcare staff, and upon this inspection for 1 new staff member, confirmed that the 2 staff employed to work directly with children held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications. A qualification for the admin person and student is not required, as they are not employed to work directly with preschool children.

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.

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Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(3) The adult-to-child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection.

Two adults cared for 10 children aged 3 years 4 months to 5 years 2 months in the Preschool room.

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

The following examples demonstrate how children's learning, development and well-being were facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs

The service provides an early morning snack at 10am, which contained chopped fruits, dry cereal hoops and buttered crackers. The children take in their own drinks from home along with a snack for 11.15am. At the second snack time, the staff also sat and had their food with the children and used this time as a social event, engaging in conversations with the children. The children were observed to use the toilet independently, with adult support provided when needed. Nappy changing occurs in line with the children's routines. Spare clothing was available for the children, and aprons were provided for messy play activities. The children took part in outdoor play and were observed to be dressed appropriately for the weather on the day. Rest areas included a wooden bench with soft cushions, which provided an area for children to take time out to rest during their day.

Supporting Relationships

The staff demonstrated sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for children through the use of soft, gentle tones while interacting with the children and recognising and acknowledging children's own individual preferences. The

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staff were observed to help children find positive solutions to problems that occurred during their play, such as turn-taking and sharing of dress-up materials and toys. Conversations between staff and children were observed about the children's home life, demonstrating a strong relationship and awareness among the staff and children, regarding the children's lives outside of the service. The staff and children spoke fondly about their preschool friend who had gone to another country but would be back soon. Floor play with magnets, reading stories, and role play in the "Vets" were popular areas of play on the day. The staff and student were observed to sit with and support the children during their choice of play. Communication with families is in person at arrival and collection time. The staff and student were observed to work well together, which ensured that the transitions from different activities and routines were smooth for the children.

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 following safety measures were observed on the day of inspection:

The main entrance to the preschool service was appropriately secured to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. The door remained locked when not in use. The garden area was surrounded by walls and fencing, and the front gate was secured while children played in the outdoor area. Play materials used by the children were in good condition. Blind cords in the Preschool room were adequately secured. Floor coverings were presented in good condition. Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children. Fire exits remained free from obstruction during the inspection.

Infection Control:

The inspector observed the following infection control measures in practice within the service:

Warm water, liquid soap, bins and paper towels were provided at each wash hand basin for children's use. Sanitary areas were ventilated with openable windows. The children's lunch taken in from home, was stored in the fridge until snack time. Cleaning schedules were in place, and the care room and sanitary areas were presented in a clean condition.

Non-Compliance Information

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General Safety:

1. The door to the kitchen was propped open following the second snack time. Hazards present in the kitchen, such as a kettle and sharp utensils, (used when staff are preparing snacks and lunches), present a risk of injury to a child.
2. Large wooden planks were stored in an area within the indoor hall assigned for use by the preschool children. The wooden planks were standing up against a door and not secured, posing a risk of injury to a child.
3. At the first morning snack time, which is provided by the service, children were observed to choose where to go in the care room with their snack bowl, which contained dry cereal hoops, chopped fruit and buttered crackers. Some children sat on chairs and played in the home corner area, and some children were observed walking around the room, eating, which poses a choking risk to a child.

Infection Control:

4. A bin used in the Preschool room to dispose of waste requires children and staff to lift the lid to place waste into the bin, poses a cross-contamination risk.
5. Hand washing practises were inadequate before the children had their first morning snack. The children were observed to be instructed by staff to "sanitise their hands" before their snack. The use of hand sanitiser does not replace handwashing before children eat. It is acknowledged that before children had their second snack, they all washed their hands in the hand-wash sinks before eating.

Corrective 7 Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The staff are aware that the door into the kitchen must be kept closed at all times to avoid children having access to dangerous kitchen appliances and utensils. A sign has been placed on the door to remind staff to close the door at all times, and the prop for the door has been removed. Staff will ensure to keep the door to the Kitchen closed at all times. Staff are aware that the Health and Nutrition Policy has been updated with this requirement.
2. The wooden planks were removed from the hall. The Community Hall Committee and the Caretaker of the hall were contacted, and they have agreed that going forward no items such as these wooden boards will be left in the hall where the children have access to play.
3. While children are eating their morning snack at preschool they are no longer allowed to move around the room and they are asked to sit down with their snack bowl to avoid a risk of choking. All staff are aware that

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children are not allowed to move around the room while eating their food. The Health and Nutrition policy has also been updated to include this.

Infection Control:

4. The bin in the preschool room which required staff and children to lift the lid every time they needed to dispose of waste has been replaced with a new pedal bin. This reduces the risk of cross – contamination. The Infection Control Policy has been updated to ensure that all bins in the service will be pedal bins. Staff are aware of the update to the policy.
5. Following on from the inspection, all children are now asked to wash their hands in the hand-wash sinks before they receive their morning snack. Hand sanitiser is no longer used as a method of cleaning hands before eating. The Infection Control Policy has been revised and updated to include that children will have to wash their hands prior to having their morning snack. All staff are aware of this requirement and that the use of the hand sanitiser is not an adequate way of cleaning hands before eating.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photo of the door closed and the sign in place. The photo of the hall area where the planks were stored is no longer present. Updated policy.

Infection Control:

Photograph of the new bin in place, children washing hands and updated policy.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 23.

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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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider uses written records which detailed each child's arrival and departure time daily.
- (3) (a) The registered provider ensured that only preschool children, a person dropping off or collecting a preschool child, an employee, or an unpaid worker could enter the premises upon the staff's approval.
- (b) A visitor log book is maintained. The inspector was requested to sign in upon arrival.

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 record of the monthly fire drills that take place was available. The most recent fire drill was recorded on 30 April 2026.
- (b) The annual maintenance certificate for the smoke alarms was dated 16 July 2025.

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(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed on walls and doors in the preschool, which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (b) The maintenance records for the fire extinguishers indicated that they were last serviced in 2023 and not annually as required by fire safety best practice.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

We have engaged the services of Cavan Fire Protection Services. The Fire extinguishers were replaced with new CO2 and water extinguishers. Fire extinguishers are now placed inside the main entrance with new signage and protective covers. Cavan Fire Protection Services will carry out annual checks and maintenance of the Fire Extinguishers to prevent this non-compliance from occurring again. The Fire Safety Policy has been updated to include this information.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of fire extinguisher service certificate dated 25 May 2026. Updated Fire Safety policy.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 26 (1) (b).

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

On the day of the inspection, the inspector observed the staff members appropriately supervising the children in attendance. The staff worked well together, ensuring that they were positioned adequately to supervise all the children in the indoor care room, and while in the outdoors and indoor hall, ensuring all children were in sight at all times.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for 22 pre-school children attending the service on a sessional basis. The policy showed that the service had insurance in place from 28 March 2026 to 27 March 2027.