

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DY217
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Name of Service:	The Playhouse Preschool
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Address of Service:	Santry Community Resource Centre, Domville Court, Santry, Dublin 9, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D09 E338
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carol Black, Michelle Farrelly
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	35	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 180-189 Lakeshore Drive, Airside Business Park, Swords, Co Dublin.
Inspection undertaken by:	N McEndoo
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

The Playhouse Preschool was established in 2002 and moved to Santry Resource Centre in 2007. The care rooms are on the ground floor of Santry Community Resource Centre. The service is in a residential area of Santry and offers sessional childcare to children from 2 years to 5 years old. There are two care rooms, reception area and a kitchen area. Both rooms have separate entrance and exit doors. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. Opening hours are from 9.00am to 12.30pm, Monday to Thursday for 41 weeks of the year. The outdoor area consists of a covered area directly off room 2 and an artificial grass area at the back of the premises.

Staffing

The service employs nine adults in total. On the day of inspection, there were eight adults present all working directly with the children. They included two registered providers, five practitioners and one adult employed by an external organisation to provide further support to children.

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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 10, 11, 25, 26, 27 and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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, 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-

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- (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) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
- (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
- (c) There was 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.

(2)

On the day of inspection, eight adults were present, which included two registered providers, one adult employed by an external organisation and five adults who were employed to work directly with the children.

The following vetting information was available for nine adults:

- (a) 11 written validated references from past employers for seven of the adults.
- (b) Four written validated references from a reputable source for four of the adults
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all adults. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

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(d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another state was available for one adult who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.

(4)
Eight of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)
(a)(b) On the day of inspection, two written validated references were not available in respect of one adult, one to be from a previous employer. One written validated reference from a past employer or reputable source was not available in respect of a second adult.

(3)
It was not possible to determine if the procedures specified above in paragraph (2) were carried out for three adults prior to being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(4)
On the day of inspection evidence for one adult was not available to confirm that they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider confirmed that all existing staff files are currently organized and verified. Any future hiring will follow a checklist of the documentation required and that regular audits will be scheduled to maintain ongoing compliance.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of references submitted

Evidence of start dates submitted.

Evidence of qualification submitted.

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Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted have been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 have been adequately addressed.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the following written policies specified in Schedule 5 were comprehensive to ensure the welfare and safety of the children attending the service.

- Behaviour Management policy.

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) An adequate number of adults were working directly with the pre-school children attending the service during the inspection.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained in the service on the day of inspection. There were 35 children present in the service being supervised by nine adults during the inspection.

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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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for nine adults. However, one of these vetting disclosures was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider confirmed that Renewal of Garda vetting has been applied for one adult. Files will be regularly checked to ensure they are in order.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Evidence of renewal application submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted have been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have not been adequately addressed and remain outstanding. Evidence of Garda vetting disclosure for one adult to be submitted to the inspectorate once received by the registered provider.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

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Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, available to the children at all times while attending the preschool service. There were two adults employed who held in date FAR certificates, with expiring in October 2027.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a)(b)
Suitably equipped first aid boxes were securely stored, and clearly identifiable, in each care room. However, the first aid supplies within were not regularly checked for expiring items or replenished as required.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider confirmed that both first aid boxes have been checked and replenished as required. These will be checked at least once a month to make sure everything is in order.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of new stock purchased submitted.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted have been reviewed. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 25 have 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.*

Compliance Information

(1)
(a) A procedure was in place to practice and record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated the 24th March 2026.
(b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on file.

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Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment and the fire detection system was dated 3rd March 2026

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

The required adult-to-child ratios were maintained at all times during the inspection. The adults were observed positioning themselves within sight and sound range of children, allowing for good supervision. The indoor environment was organised to facilitate continuous visual and auditory supervision, enabling the adults to remain attentive and responsive to children's needs. Whilst in the outdoor play area, the adults arranged themselves to ensure clear lines of sight and sound, supporting effective supervision and promoting the safety and wellbeing of all children in attendance.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured adequate insurance was in place for the preschool service. Insurance cover was in place for two preschool sessions, with up to 22 children in each session. The expiry date of the insurance was noted as the 27th of March 2027.