

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL314
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Name of Service:	The Village Creche
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Address of Service:	St Anne's Square, Portmarnock, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D13 C625
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Name of Registered Provider:	Brenda Rooney, Kelly O'Reilly
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	26/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	37	PM	27
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency Unit 4&5 Nexus Building Block 6A, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Á Dunne & E Hosford
Title:	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).

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Description of service

The Village Creche is located in Portmarnock, Co Dublin, operating from a two-storey converted residential property with six care rooms provided on the premises. The service is registered to provide full day care, part time and sessional care from 7.30am-6.00pm Monday to Friday, currently the service operates from 7.45am to 5.30pm. The service is registered to accommodate a maximum of 64 pre-school children from 0 to 6 years of age and participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme from 9.00am – 12.00pm during term-time for 38 weeks each year. The Tweenie Room 1, Montessori Room 1 in the morning which becomes the School Age room in the afternoon, a cot room, office and additional care room are located on the ground floor, with the Tweenie Room 2, Montessori Room 2 and Montessori Room 3, located on the first floor. There are two enclosed outdoor play areas provided in the service, one located to the front of the premises and the second area located to the rear.

Staffing

The two registered providers, six childcare staff, a cleaner and two students who attend to complete an educational work placement programme for college but are paid as employees are all employed in the service. One transition year student who attends on work experience was not 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

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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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 24, 27, 28 and 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child, Regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of child.

Regulation 11 Staffing levels was assessed across all rooms.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included all rooms - Tweenie room 1, Tweenie room 2, Montessori room 1, Montessori room 2 and Montessori room 3.

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 registered providers, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN 1001	26/05/2026	IN issued to the registered providers as a record of Garda Vetting was not available for one adult who had access to children but who was not present on the day of inspection.

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Status

The registered providers submitted corrective and preventative actions which addressed the Notice and therefore were accepted.

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.

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Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The registered providers were the designated persons in charge of the service, with one or both present on the premises on a daily basis when the service is in operation.
- (b) One of the two registered providers was present when the inspectors arrived unannounced on the day of inspection. The second registered provider arrived on the premises later in the morning and both were present in the service for the remainder of the inspection.
- (c) A clear management structure was evident in the service and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) It was confirmed by the registered providers one new staff member had been employed in the service as a cleaner and kitchen assistant and two students who were attending the service to complete their work experience were employed as paid staff since the last inspection on the 13 October 2025. These three files were reviewed.
- (a) One written reference for one adult from a past employer was available.
- (b) One written reference for one adult and two written references for one adult from a source other than a past employer were available.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for eleven adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was not required for the three adults as they had not lived outside of the State for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(a)
- Two written and validated references for one adult were not available from a past employer
 - One written reference for one adult from a past employer was not validated
- (b) One written reference for one adult and two written references for one adult from a source other than a past employer were not validated.
- (c) See Statutory Notice section in relation to Improvement Notice 1001 served.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were not carried out in full prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service for example garda vetting was not available for one adult, two written and validated references were not available for one adult and four written references available were not validated.

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(4) Documentation was not available to show that two adults who worked directly with children attending the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a) (b) All staff members files now hold two written references. All references are validated. The employment and appointment policy and procedure have been updated in line with TUSLA best practice and guidance on recruitment. A New Staff Personnel Records Checklist has been implemented.

(3) The services Employment policy and procedures have been updated. As an index reference a new Staff Personnel Checklist Sheet is in place so cross referencing can be completed to ensure staff files are complete and that nothing is omitted. The service will refer to the new index format and the updated Recruitment policy and procedures regularly to ensure new employees files up to date.

(4) One staff member obtained the letter from DCYA approval for permission to work.

The second staff member is still in process from the college; however, they will not be returning until the DCDE letter is submitted. The service has updated the Employment and Appointment policy and procedure and will implement the new Staff Personnel Records Checklist.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2) (a) (b) (3) Written and validated references, Employment and Appointment policy, Staff Personnel Record Checklist.

Summary Comment

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

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)-

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(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) The registered providers ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.
- (2) The following adult to child ratios observed in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced:
- In Tweenie Room 1, there were 5 children aged 1-year 4months to 2 years being cared for by 1 adult all day.
 - In Tweenie Room 2, there were 6 children aged 2 to 3 years being cared for by 1 adult all day.
 - In Montessori Room 1, there were 7 children aged 3 years to 4 years being cared for by 1 adult in the morning.
 - In Montessori Room 2, there were 11 children in the morning and 8 children in the afternoon, aged 4 years to 5 years being cared for by 1 adult.
 - In Montessori Room 3, there were 9 children in the morning and 8 children in the afternoon, aged 4 years to 5 years being care for by 1 adult.
- (8)(a) The registered providers ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times, as evidenced in staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained in the service.

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 service provided meals and snacks at regular intervals, and a hot meal is prepared in the kitchen for the children. On the day of inspection, the inspectors observed a hot meal of chili con carne with rice served to the Tweenie room 1 & 2 children at 11.35am and served to the Montessori rooms 1, 2 and 3

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children at 12.40pm. At 2.30pm afternoon snack was served which was hummus, breadsticks, cucumber and carrot sticks. At 4pm, tea was served of ham rolls with butter. The children had access to their water bottles on low shelving which allowed them the opportunity to take a drink if thirsty. The children were given sufficient time to relax and eat their snacks and meals in an unhurried manner. The Montessori rooms 1, 2 and 3 children brought their own snacks from home for the morning snack between 10.45 and 11 am with diced fruit provided by the service at this time for the younger children.

- Nappies were changed regularly and in a timely manner. Staff provided prompting, supervision and assistance as necessary to the children who were toilet trained.
- Children's need for sleep and rest was met through the provision of comfortable rest areas available. Cots and low beds with individual bedding were available to the children who required sleep. At sleep time, the Tweenie room 1 and cot room provided a restful environment for sleep.
- All children played outdoors during inspection and were observed being dressed appropriately in advance of moving outside. The Montessori rooms 1, 2 and 3 children ate dinner at picnic benches provided in the larger outdoor play area under the supervision of adults, with lots of chat and laughter heard during this social activity.

Supporting relationships:

- The registered providers and staff members were observed to be warm and respectful and were responsive in their interactions with the children.

Physical and material environment:

- The materials and equipment provided to the children in the Tweenie room 2, Montessori rooms 1, 2 and 3 were suitable to the age and stage of development of the children present. Children had the freedom to choose from materials and equipment available to them.
- Low level shelving and child sized furniture supported children's independence.
- Cosy areas were present in all rooms offering a quiet comfortable area for children to rest and relax during the day.
- Two separate enclosed outdoor areas were provided in the service, one located to the rear of the service which is designated for use by Tweenie rooms 1 and 2 and one located to the front of the service which is used by the Montessori rooms 1, 2 and 3 children and the school aged children. The smaller area used by the younger children was surfaced with artificial grass and was directly accessible from the Tweenie Room 1 and the adjoining corridor with a tunnel, a seesaw, push along toys, a ride in car and a playhouse present for play. The larger area to the front of the service which was accessed from the main hallway and

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from Montessori Room 2 was surfaced with artificial grass, with some paving along the side of the building. A wooden climbing frame with a slide, a plastic playhouse, ride on toys, a low-level slide, a seesaw, four wooden play kitchens, trikes and children's picnic benches were present.

Non-Compliance Information

Physical and Material Environment:

- The materials and equipment provided to the children in the Tweenie room 1 did not support child led initiation of play and the extension of their ideas and imagination. For example.
 - The layout of the room was poor with no clear designated areas of interest evident.
 - Toys and supporting materials were stored on high shelves out of reach of children, for example; stacking shapes, wooden jigsaws and mini cars, not promoting child led play.
 - The play kitchen and dolls house were empty and not supplied with suitable toys and props and any available equipment was stored out of reach of the children.
 - Seven cause and effect toys requiring batteries were not working, removing the play and developmental purpose of the toy from the children.
 - A picnic basket, tractor and pink pot had pieces missing which reduced the children's enjoyment and sense of completion.
 - No sensory toys or creative play areas were present.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- The service has held a meeting with Tweenie room staff to discuss ongoing development for the classroom, on 17 June 2026. Areas of interest have been introduced which are available to the children at all times and enhanced the idea of themed areas such as home and construction. A stock of batteries is now available for toys. The sensory table is available to the children throughout the day and changed on a weekly basis. The service has been in contact with an external agency for support in developing this room.

Staff will take part in course to further the environment meets the childrens needs. Management will continuously check in that room is child centred.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Photographic Evidence, Minutes of staff meeting held 17 Juen 2026, Certificate for course completion.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non compliances identified under Regulation 19 have been adequately addressed.

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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.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- On the unannounced arrival at the service by the inspectors, the entrance gate leading into the outdoor play area of premises was appropriately secured with a lock and a bell to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises throughout the inspection.
- The two outdoor areas were safe and secure environments with play equipment and materials clean and suitable for use by the children.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children throughout the inspection.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of children.
- Staff belongings were not accessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities for hand hygiene included thermostatically controlled water, soap and paper towels and pedal operated lidded bins for disposal of paper waste.
- Handwashing was observed in the Tweenie room 2, Montessori rooms 1, 2 and 3 after bathroom visits, after outdoor play and before and after mealtimes.
- Clean single use hand drying cloths used to dry hands after handwashing were hygienically dispensed and disposed of after use into lidded pedal bins throughout the service. There was a clear process in place to identify the clean and dirty one-use cloths.
- Nappy changing facilities were available for the children and nappy changing was completed for the children, at set times or when required in accordance with the service policy.
- Soothers were stored in individual labelled boxes.
- Washable wipeable covers were present on the mattresses in six cots in cot room and sheets were clean on each mattress.
- During sleep time, cots and low floor mats were positioned with the recommended 50 centimetres between each child.

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Safe Sleep:

- The sleep needs for three children aged between 1 and 2 years of age, were facilitated with access to cots for sleep.
- The sleep needs of children over two years of age were met through the provision of low floor sleep mats.
- Ten-minute sleep checks were completed by staff on children sleeping in the cot room and in the Tweenie 1 room.
- The temperature of the cot room and Tweenie room 1 was recorded by staff on the sleep check record and maintained between 18-22 °C while children slept.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Trailing flex of a portable heater was accessible to children in Montessori room 2 and a trailing flex of a phone charger was accessible to children in the hallway of the service. Access to trailing flexes increases risk of injury to a child.

Infection Control:

2. In the Montessori room 2 and room 3, perishable food items such as cold meats, cheese and yogurts, brought from home, consumed by the children were not refrigerated on arrival to the service. This increased the potential risk of food borne infection.
3. Handwashing was not observed to be completed in the Tweenie room 1 before mealtimes.

Safe Sleep:

4. While it is acknowledged 10-minute sleep checks were being completed on children while sleeping, the process of using a tick mark to note the detail about colour, position and breathing of each child is not acceptable to demonstrate required detail for the sleep check of each child, when the colour should be noted as normal, pale or flushed, position should be noted as front, back, on left or right side and breathing should be noted as normal, slow or fast.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Portable heater was removed from the Montessori Room 2 and the socket in the hall is only to be used for the Hoover. No charging of phones or devices are allowed. Clear signage above socket to prevent use for charging devices.

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Infection Control:

2. A fridge has been implemented and is now available and in use every day.
3. Staff meeting held 17 June 2026 to discuss Tweenie room routine and the importance of handwashing before mealtime. Management will continue regular checks that handwashing is part of the children routine as per policy and procedure.

Safe Sleep:

4. A new form for sleep checks is now in place; all staff have had training regarding filling out new forms. Forms are regularly checked by management.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic Evidence

Infection Control:

2. Photographic Evidence.
3. Photographic Evidence

Safe Sleep:

4. Sample of New sleep check sheet and example of one completed.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

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

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(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered providers ensured that the attendance of each preschool child was noted and accurate for arrival and leaving times.
- (3) The registered providers ensured that no one other than (i),(ii), (iii) or (iv) entered the premises without their entry being approved by them or a staff member.
- (3)(b) A visitor record was maintained on the day of inspection whereby the two inspectors signed in on arrival and on leaving the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

1. The registered providers did not ensure that pre-school children attending the service were appropriately supervised at all times, leading to a risk of possible injury through choking or an accident while children are left unattended, as follows:

From 2.59pm to 3.14pm, in the Tweenie room 1, when the staff member was changing the nappy of each child one by one in the sanitary facility, the two children that remained in the care room were left unsupervised by an adult and not visible to the staff member by sight or sound, leaving the children to play alone in parts of the room and climb a wooden climbing frame with no direct adult supervision or assistance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Afternoon nappy changing time is now from 2pm to 2.20 pm and 2.45pm to 3pm when floating staff are free. If a child nappy is soiled at other times, staff member will call management for extra supervision. Staff meeting held 17 June 2026 with Tweenie staff re nappy change time. Management will take the responsibility of supervising children during nappy changing when additional support is required for supervision.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. Minutes of staff meeting held 17 June 2026 with Tweenie staff.

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Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non compliances identified under Regulation 27 have been adequately addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered providers ensured adequate insurance was in place for the full day care service for 85 children up until 27 March 2027.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

Compliance Information

(c) The service was observed to be kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) The service was not observed to be adequately maintained and repaired, as follows:

- In the sanitary facility beside the Montessori room 3, one hot tap was loose on two wash hand basins.
- In the sanitary facility opposite the Tweenie room 2, the hot tap of the one wash hand basin was ceased, and no water was coming out of the tap.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (d)
- Wash hand basins are now repaired. Landlord to replace during the summer months.
 - Cable tie has been removed to the tap is back in working order. Management will check the taps each morning to ensure they are in working order.

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Supporting documentation submitted

(d) Photographic Evidence and Daily risk assessment.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non compliances identified under Regulation 29 have been adequately addressed.