

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KE026
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Name of Service:	Milltown Playschool
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Address of Service:	1334 Milltown, Newbridge, Co. Kildare
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Eircode:	W12 WY45
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Name of Registered Provider:	Geraldine Kelly
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	19/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Child & Family Agency, Suite 7, Vista Primary Care, Ballymore Eustace Road, Naas, Co Kildare, W91 X38W.
Inspection undertaken by:	E. Mulhern and R. Phillips
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).

Conditions if applicable	N/A
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Description of service

Milltown Playschool is a privately operated, sessional early years service for children aged 2 - 6 years. The service opens from 08:45 to 11:45 Monday to Friday. It is located in a purpose-built premises beside the registered providers home in Milltown near Newbridge, County Kildare. The service consists of one room with adjoining sanitary facilities. A designated outdoor area is available at the rear of the premises. The children played in the registered providers garden at the front of the service on the day of inspection.

Staffing

The registered provider works directly with the children alongside another staff member.

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 areas of governance, health, welfare and development of child and safety. 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

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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.

Additional Information

A regulatory compliance meeting was held with the registered provider on 10 April 2026 due to repeat non-compliance with regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child. Corrective and preventive actions were subsequently submitted by the registered provider and are included in the report.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff member 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.*

(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-

- (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.*

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The registered provider was the person in charge and a second staff member was appointed to deputise in their absence.

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(b) The person in charge and person to deputise were rostered to be present at all times of opening.

(2)(c) The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.

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 worked directly with the children. There were two adults working directly with 15 children aged 3 and 4 years.

(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 at least two staff members on the premises throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for a minimum of two staff to be on the premises at all times of operation.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

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(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a) – (i) Records in writing were available in relation to 18 children who are registered to attend the service. A sample of 12 records were inspected, and these included the required information.

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

The children's learning, development, and well-being was supported by the registered provider, staff member and the environment. The children were guided towards independence with personal care including accessing their belongings, using the toilet and handwashing. The children were divided into two groups after a period of play in the morning. They alternated playing indoors and outdoors and ate their lunch together in their group with an adult. The lunch was relaxed with plenty of time provided for the children to eat and drink.

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The children were observed engaging in child-led play. There were some defined interest areas including a home corner and dress-up area where children engaged in imaginative play. There were materials for construction, small world play and books to support language development. The registered provider reported the designated outdoor area at the rear of the garden was not in use recently due to a storm potentially effecting the play equipment. She reported the front outdoor space was in use to provide the children with some outdoor time on a temporary basis. The inspector observed the registered provider and staff member interacting kindly with the children throughout the inspection.

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:

Equipment and materials were appropriately maintained and suitable to the ages and stages of the children. Hazardous items including cleaning products and cables were secured out of children's reach. Emergency exits were kept clear and there was a signed assembly point at the front of the service. Monthly fire drill records were available, and staff demonstrated an awareness of the procedures to evacuate safely in the event of a fire.

Infection Control:

The premises and equipment appeared clean and cleaning schedules were available. The sanitary facilities were equipped to support handwashing. Children washed their hands at appropriate times including after using the toilet, after outdoor play and before eating. Pedal operated bins were in place for the appropriate management of waste.

Administration of Medication:

The registered provider reported that none of the children had received medicine while attending the service. The registered provider demonstrated an awareness of how to administer medicine safely if required including obtaining written parent/guardian consent, having the second adult witness the administration and making a record.

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Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The premises was not adequately secured to prevent a child leaving unsupervised as outlined.

a) The front door to the pre-school room was locked on the inside with a low-level thumb-turn lock. The lock could be easily opened by a child. The door led to a driveway which had an open gate onto a road. This posed a risk of injury should a child leave the service unsupervised.

This risk was identified on previous inspections dated 9 January 2018, 21 April 2021 and 26 March 2025. Following the inspection on 26 March 2025 the registered provider stated that the service had requested guidance from the fire safety officer on what type of lock to implement and this would be updated over the summer if not sooner once an appropriate solution was recommended. The registered provider also stated a notice was on the service notice board outlining the gate closure times and the registered provider and staff member had familiarised themselves with it. The actions were not evidenced on inspection.

b) Children were brought to play outside at the front of the premises from 10:00 – 10:49. Although, the registered provider closed the gate at this time, the gate was not secured and could easily be opened by a child, leading directly onto the road.

2. The fire alarm maintenance certificate documented that the smoke alarm system was due for inspection within four weeks of 23 December 2025. The registered provider reported that this had not been carried out. This posed a risk of the alarm not operating effectively in the event of a fire.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1.

(a) I have installed a new lock on the entrance door that is out of the children's reach.

(b) A new smaller lock has been sourced for the gate. This lock fits better and after it is bolted, two keys will be kept in the Playschool.

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2. Certificate of servicing has been updated. Date to book next service has been added to the diary.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Supporting documents were submitted in keeping with the stated actions.

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Summary Comment

The actions have been deemed to address the non-compliance. The registered provider must ensure that any measures taken to secure the premises are in keeping with fire legislative requirements.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) A record was available of the children's daily attendance including the time they arrived at and left the service.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) A person with a recognised certificate in first aid training was available to the children throughout the inspection. The staff roster provided for a trained person to always be available to the children.

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(2)

(a) The service had a suitably equipped first aid box which was stored in a conspicuous position.

(b) The first aid box was always available for use by staff.

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 written record was available detailing monthly fire drills that had been carried out in the service. The most recent fire drill record was dated 3 March 2026.

(b) Records were available in relation to the fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarm. The most recent dates of testing were 7 May 2025 and 23 June 2025 respectively. Further information in relation to the smoke alarm is detailed under regulation 23 above.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire was displayed in a conspicuous position.

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 inspectors observed that the children were appropriately supervised. This included when they were eating, playing indoors and outdoors and using the sanitary facilities.

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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

A certificate was available detailing insurance for 18 children on a sessional basis effective from 28 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.