

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH030
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Name of Service:	Greenacres Playschool
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Address of Service:	Sandpit Hall, Sandpit, Termonfeckin, Drogheda, Co. Louth
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Eircode:	A92 VW64
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Name of Registered Provider:	Brenda Kavanagh McGrane
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	30/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	38	PM	-
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan
Inspection undertaken by:	S. Skinnader
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

Greenacres Preschool is a privately owned service which is in operation since 2010. It provides a sessional service to children aged 2 years – 6 years. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme and opens from 9am – 12 pm Monday to Friday. This service is located in a rural setting of Sandpit Termonfeckin in Co. Louth. It operates from the local hall and there are 2 care rooms, sanitary accommodation, and an outdoor play area to the back of the building.

Staffing

There are 5 staff members including the registered provider employed in the service who work directly with the preschool 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.

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.

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

(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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

All 5 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection:

(2)(a)

- There were 2 written and validated references available for 2 members of staff.
- One staff member had 2 written references.
- One staff member had 1 written and validated reference and 1 written reference.
- One staff member had 1 written and validated reference.

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(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 5 staff members. The service had adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for the 2 staff members had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction as an adult for a period of 6 months or more.

(4) All 5 staff who worked directly with the preschool children had at least a minimum of a Level 5 childcare qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) and (b)

- One staff member did not have their 2 written references validated.
- One staff member did not have their 2nd written reference validated.
- One staff member did not have a 2nd written and validated reference.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All references for all staff have now been sought received and reviewed and verified. All future references will be double checked and verified by registered provider.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate has reviewed the registered provider's response. This is accepted and the non-compliance has been addressed.

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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) On the day of inspection when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there were 2 rooms in operation and there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.
- (3) The adult: child ratios observed in the care rooms were correct,
- In Preschool 1 there were 2 adults caring for 16 preschool children aged 3 - 4 years of age.
 - In Preschool 2 there were 3 adults caring for 22 preschool children aged 4 - 5 years of age.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

- (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;*

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- (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.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
- (c) an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) – (i) A sample of 10 children's registration forms were reviewed. A form was available and completed for all the children in attendance.

(3)(c) The written records of the children's registration forms were available for inspection by the authorised officers

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(h) Documentary evidence was available of the daily attendance of each child in the service and included the arrival and departure times of each child.

(i) A weekly staff roster was available in the service and was reflective of the staff present in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

(k) A sample of 5 accident and incident forms were reviewed. Two of the 5 records reviewed were incomplete. For example;

- One form did not have a staff or manager signature indicating they had reviewed the information.
- One form did not have a parental signature indicating that they had been informed of the incident and reviewed the information.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Staff meeting held to retrain staff and to inform them that all forms must be signed and parents informed. All forms must be signed by the registered provider.

A staff meeting was held to rectify the oversights and room leaders informed to verify and check all forms for signatures both by parents and managers.

Summary Comment

The Inspectorate has reviewed and accepted the registered provider's response. The non-compliance has been addressed.

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

There were 2 care rooms in operation on the day of the inspection.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service.

Basic Needs:

- All lunches and drinks were brought in by the children and stored in the fridge. Lunches were a variety of sandwiches, rice cakes, fruit, crackers and yogurts. Assistance was given to the children who required help with opening lunches and certain foods. The children were not rushed and in Preschool Room 2 it was observed that 2 children were given extended time to eat their lunches.
- Independence was promoted in the rooms with the children encouraged to return their lunch boxes to their bags once finished and to put on their own coats for going home.
- Tissues were available in the rooms and were accessible at the children's level.

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- Independence with toileting was promoted for the children who were toilet trained and nappy changing facilities were available for any child who required their nappy to be changed. Gentle handwashing reminders were given to the children after toileting.
- Transitions between activities and going home were observed to be smooth and no behavioural issues were observed. Staff used rhymes to get the attention of the children such as “hands on top means stop!”.

Supporting Relationships:

- The children actively sought out staff when they needed anything, and the staff responded appropriately. The staff were observed to use gentle tones and positive language when communicating with the children for example “good girl” and “we need to tidy up please”.
- Staff showed a clear knowledge of the children in their care as evidenced from the conversations that were heard with the children in relation to their families, what they were going to do the weekend and holidays that were due to be taken.
- The registered provider stated that the service formed strong links with the local community and families with different visitors to the service for example, the Gardaí, a local family coming in to play music and a local farmer brought ducks in for the children to see. It was also planned that the local lifeboat crew would visit in the coming weeks.
- Communication with parents was informal at drop off and collection. It was also reported by the registered provider that the service held parent teacher meetings and also used social media, a messaging application and email to communicate with parents.
- The service had been proactive in developing their own care plans for children who required additional supports and in also linking with outside support agencies. They provided opportunities for these families to come to the service prior to commencement and also facilitated the local junior infants schoolteacher to come visit prior to these children transitioning to primary school.

Environment:

- There was a wide range of equipment and a variety of age-appropriate toys and materials available in the care rooms. These supported many areas of development such as fine motor skills, role play and sensory development.

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- Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in all rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children enabling them to choose which items they wished to play with.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.

Compliance Information

There was an outdoor area to the back of the service which had a concrete and a safety matted area. It contained a resourced mud kitchen, ride on toys, tyres for balance play, a stoned / construction area with small diggers, a slide, plastic caterpillar tunnel, mirrors on the wall and a plastic playhouse. In addition, there was a picnic bench.

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) The registered provider ensured that there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, on the premises at all times. Two FAR certificates were reviewed.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) and (b) Although there were 2 first aid boxes were available in the service neither contained eye pads.

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Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Eye pads have now been purchased for each first aid box. All first aid boxes will now have a contents list and if anything is used it must be replaced regularly.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response is accepted. The non-compliance has been addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A certificate of insurance was available demonstrating insurance cover for up to 38 children and expiring 27/3/2027.