

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN051
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Name of Service:	The Playhouse
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Address of Service:	7 The Wells, Cortober, Carrick on Shannon, Co. Roscommon
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Eircode:	N41 PH31
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Name of Registered Provider:	Breda Durr
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	16/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	45	PM	41
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy
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

This full day care service is located on the outskirts of the town of Carrick on Shannon. A full day care service from 8.00hrs to 17.30hrs, and an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care pre-school programmes are offered. The service caters for children aged between 0 to 6 years. The service is registered for a maximum number of 48 pre-school children, at any one time. There are four playrooms namely the small toddler room 1, small toddler room 2, the big toddler room located on the ground floor and the pre-school room is located on the first floor. There is a designated kitchen where the main meals are prepared, cooked, and stored on site. There is a sleep room adjacent to the small toddler room 1 with five cots and a second sleep room with four cots for the younger children's sleep provision. Additionally, stackable beds and sleep mats are available for any older child requiring sleep provision. Quiet rest areas with child size seating are available for children to rest or opt out of an activity if he/ she wishes to do so. There are outdoor play areas to the rear and side of the premises for children's fresh air, exploration, and play.

Staffing

The registered provider works in the service daily and is the designated person in charge. There is a named deputy person in charge. There are thirteen staff working directly with the children. Thirteen staff hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 to 7, in Early Childhood Care and Education. The staff have documentary evidence of ongoing training and education. Additionally, there is a designated chef/cleaner, who works in the service kitchen.

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 regulations 9,11,22,23,25,26 and 28. 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 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, deputy 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,*

(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*

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(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The deputy person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and the registered provider was in attendance at 09:40hrs.

Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available on the premises at all times when the pre-school children were present.

(2)(a) and (b)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider on the day, it was determined that no new staff have commenced in the service since the previous inspection on 30th of October 2025.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. 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.

(d) Two of the staff had worked outside the jurisdiction, for six months or more, while over the age of 18 years of age and had the required police vetting.

(4) Thirteen staff who were working directly with children, held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), at a Level 5 to 7, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the thirteen staff.

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)-

(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) At all times during the period of the inspection, the registered provider ensured that the adult child ratios were adhered to.

(2) Documentary evidence indicated that adult child ratios were adhered to.

On the morning of the inspection, there were 45 pre-school children aged between 1 to 5 years.

- Fourteen children were aged 1 to 2 years 6 months.
- Eleven children were aged 2 years 6 months to 3 years 6 months.
- Twenty children were aged 3 to 5 years.

There were nine staff directly caring for these children. The registered provider also assisted in the administration part of the inspection and a relief person provided relief to assist in the rooms as required for staff breaks.

In the afternoon there were 41 pre-school children aged between 1 to 5 years.

- Fourteen children were aged 1 to 2 years 6 months.
- Eleven children were aged 2 years 6 months to 3 years 6 months.
- Sixteen children were aged 3 to 5 years.

There were eight staff directly caring for these children.

There was also a designated chef preparing, cooking meals and snacks and performing kitchen duties.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were two staff on the premises while the pre-school was operating.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- There was a healthy eating policy. There was evidence that the foods consumed were adequate, nutritious, and varied.
- The registered provider advised that healthy eating was promoted within the service by ongoing staff training, visual aids, and adherence to best practice guidelines.
- Before 9.00hrs, the children had the opportunity for breakfast consisting of cereal, toast and water or milk to drink.
- At 12.00hrs, the main meal of pasta, mashed potato and mincemeat and bolognese sauce was offered.
- It was advised by the registered provider that at 15.00hrs, the evening snack would consist of spaghetti hoops, toast and brown bread and a selection of fruits and water to drink would be provided.
- At the main meal and evening snack the children had the opportunity for seconds and or an alternative.
- Cutlery, plates, and crockery were offered for children's meal / snack times.
- Clean and safe drinking water was at a low-level and accessible to children in each playroom.

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 main entrance door was secure to prevent unauthorised entry.
- The external play area to the rear and side of the premises were secure so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area.
- Fire doors throughout the building were unobstructed.
- All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to the children.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were wall mounted and secured to prevent any trip or strangulation hazard.

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- The heating system was thermostatically controlled, to ensure the temperature was maintained between 18°C to 22°C.
- Blind cords were securely fastened thereby preventing any potential risk. Windows had restrictive access devices as a safety precaution.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- Locks have been fitted on the low-level presses in the small toddler room and the big toddler room.

Infection Control:

- Children were observed washing their hands after toileting / nappy changing, outdoor play, messy play and after blowing their noses. The children washed their hands under supervision prior to their snacks and mealtimes.
- The children's belongings for nappy changing were individually labelled and in designated storage containers.
- The children's barrier creams were clearly individually labelled and stored within the nappy changing area.
- The nappy changing area had a leak-proof, sealable airtight container for the disposal of nappies.
- The nappy changing policy was displayed on the wall of the nappy changing area.
- A cleaning and disinfection schedule was presented and available for inspection. There were cleaning schedules and records for the playrooms, sanitary areas, and outdoor areas.
- Tabletops, highchairs and work surfaces were cleaned with disposable paper towels and disinfectant spray.
- The playrooms were observed to be kept adequately ventilated with the windows left open whilst maintaining the room temperatures at the required levels.
- Adequate supplies of disposable tissues were readily available in the playrooms.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was stored inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- The staff advised that the suncreams are supplied by parents and guardians, stored in the service and with dates of expiry checked on a regular basis.
- On discussion with staff in the pre-school rooms staff informed the inspector of two children have medication. Detailed care plans were in place for these children.
- The staff were aware of the instructions and storage requirements of the medication.
- Staff advised that the suncreams supplied by parents and guardians, and stored in the service, with dates of expiry checked on an annual basis.

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Safe Sleep:

- There were two designated sleep rooms for younger children's sleep provision. Stackable beds and sleep mats were available for older children requiring sleep if required. On the day of inspection, children were observed sleeping on demand.
- The sleep policy detailed the correct temperature, lighting, ventilation, space between cots and child safety requirements.
- The inspector observed and documentary evidence indicated that the staff physically checked sleeping children every 10 minutes. The service kept documented sleep records. Records for sleeping children included a record of the room temperature and the position, colour and breathing of the child (as per the safe sleep for under 2's best practice guidelines for childcare services policy) and the signature of the staff member who checks the sleeping child.
- A digital probe thermometer was available in the sleep room and used as the method of recording the sleep room temperature and therefore taking remedial action when temperatures were above 20 °C and below 16 °C.
- A supply of clean linen was available for each child.
- Age /tog appropriate sleeping bags and or cellular blankets, that allow air to circulate were used for sleeping children under 2 years of age.

Fire Safety:

- Records on file demonstrated that fire drills were carried out frequently which helped to ensure that adults and children were familiar with the procedure in the event of an actual fire.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for the fourteen staff members. However, two of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years and were not in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. There were soft floor tiles in the outdoor area which were raised in places and could pose risk of tripping.

Infection Control:

3. In the small toddler room, there was a large floor mat with evidence of being frayed and torn thereby preventing effective cleaning.

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Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider submitted a written response to the office of the early years inspectorate to state

1. The two garda vetting's have been processed. The staff files will be checked on a regular basis to ensure they are complete and in date.

Infection Control:

2. The soft matting in the outdoor area has been secured to prevent a trip hazard and these will be checked fortnightly to ensure they are secure and not pose a trip hazard.
3. The large floor mat in the small toddler room has been repaired to enable effective cleaning.

Supporting documentation submitted

General safety

The registered provider submitted

1. Photographic evidence of the garda vetting's for two staff members.

Infection control

2. The secured matting in the outdoor area
3. The repaired floor mat in the small toddler room.

Summary Comment

The early years inspector has assessed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to address the non-compliances under Regulation 23.

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 service provided evidence that there were ten staff trained in first aid for children available to the children, attending the pre-school service.
- (2)(a) The first aid boxes were safely secured in an easily accessible position on a high shelf in the preschool rooms.
- (b) The first aid boxes were readily accessible to the adults in the event that a child required treatment and in a conspicuous position with content items within date.

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

- (a) A written record was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was dated 13th of March 2026.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type, and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service dated 4th of September 2025 and the fire alarm with the annual service dated 26th of April 2025
- (4) A notice of the drill procedure was displayed in each of the preschool rooms and in the hallway of the service.

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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

There was evidence of certification of adequate insurance which had an expiry date 27th of March 2027

The insurance for 48 pre-school children was for a full day care service, included the following:

1. - public liability insurance,
2. insurance against fire and theft,
3. buildings insurance,
4. insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.