

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015SO053
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Name of Service:	Lollipop Lane Ox Crescent
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Address of Service:	24 Ox Crescent, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
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Eircode:	F91 Y952
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Name of Registered Provider:	Louise Kilbane
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	16/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	23	PM	23
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello
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

Lollipop Lane Ox Crescent is a private full day care early years service. The service caters for children aged 1 to 6 years, operating from 7:45am to 6pm five days per week, 48 weeks per year. The service is located in an adapted two storey building in a residential estate in a rural town in South Sligo. There are three care rooms in operation. On the first floor is 'Buds' catering for children 2.8 years upwards, with the ground floor containing two care rooms named 'Seedlings room' with children aged between 1 and 2 years, and 'Sprouts room' catering for children aged between 2 and 3 years. Also situated on the ground floor is a nappy changing area, sanitary accommodation, a sleep room, staff room, an office, laundry area and a kitchen. An outdoor play area is available to the side/rear and the front of the building.

Staffing

Ten adults are employed in the service, of which six adults provided direct care to the preschool children on the day of inspection. The person in charge is office based and provides support to staff covering breaks in the service throughout the day. One adult works in the kitchen. The registered provider does not 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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 15, 16(k), 20, 22, 23 and 27. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 (k). As a result, the scope of the inspection included the sprouts and seedlings room.

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 person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN1522	16/06/2026	The required international police vetting was not available for one adult who had resided outside the state for a period of more than six consecutive months and had direct access to children. It is acknowledged that a basic disclosure was in place.
Status	Action was taken by the registered provider following service of the notice and the provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the inspectorate	

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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

There was a person in charge and a person available to deputise as required.

(b)

A review of the roster confirmed that the person in charge or deputy person is available throughout the operation of the service.

(c)

There was a clear line of governance in place including room leaders, childcare workers and supervisors. On discussion with staff, they were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

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(2)

There are ten adults employed in the service and all ten files were reviewed.

- (a) Nineteen written and verified references from a past employer were available for review.
- (b) One written and verified reference from a source other than a past employer were available.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all ten staff members.

The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting had been obtained for five staff members who had resided outside the state for a period of six months or more as an adult.

(4)

Evidence of completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent was on file for six staff members and four staff members held a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (d)

See Statutory notice section in relation to Improvement Notice IAN1522 served.

(3)

All vetting procedures had not been completed prior to a staff member working directly with a preschool child as outlined in (2)(d) above.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the registered provider stated:

(2)(d)

International child protection certificate was applied for and received.

(3)

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A note has been made on our staff files folder to ensure any future staff who have resided in the UK have a ICPC and staff will not work directly with children until international vetting has been processed and all other vetting completed.

Supporting documentation submitted

- International police vetting submitted.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions submitted by the registered provider. The non-compliance identified under regulation 9 (2)(d) and (3) has 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)-

(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)

There were five adults working directly with 23 children on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service. In addition, the person in charge and deputy person in charge provided break cover and assisted in duties in the rooms.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

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- 'Sprouts Room': 5 children aged between 2-3 years were cared for by one adult.
- 'Seedlings Room': 4 children aged between 1-2 years were cared for by one adult.
- 'Buds Room': 14 Children aged from 2-3 years were cared for by Three adults.

In the afternoon the following ratios were observed:

- Sprouts Room': 5 children aged between 2-3 years were cared for by one adult.
- 'Seedlings Room': 4 children aged between 1-2 years were cared for by one adult.
- 'Buds Room': 14 Children aged from 2-3 years were cared for by Three adults.

(8)(a)

Evidence of attendance records demonstrated that there was at least two adults available at all times during the operation of the service

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;*
- (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.*

(2) A registered provider of a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or of 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 particulars specified in subparagraphs (a), (d), (e) and (f) of paragraph (1).

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(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.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service.

(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(a-i)

Nine records of the children attending the service were reviewed. The required information including the authorisation to collect the child, details of illness or special needs of the child, emergency contact and record of immunisations were fully completed for each child.

(3) (c)

The records in writing were available for inspection by the early year's inspector.

(4)

The person in charge confirmed that the records are retained for the required period as set out in the regulations.

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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

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(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

(4) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises by a parent or guardian of a child but only in respect of information concerning that child.

Compliance Information

(1)(k)

A random sample review of accidents and incidents that had occurred within the service between 01 January 2026 and the 15 June 2026 were reviewed. All records contained evidence that parents/guardians had been informed of the accident and incident and that all incidents had risk assessments completed.

(2)(b)

The person in charge is aware of the regulatory requirement to retain these records for a period of two years after the child in which the record relates to leaves the service.

(3)

These records were made available to the inspector on the day of the inspection.

(4)

The service demonstrated that these records were made available to the parent of the child to which the record relates to by way of signed signature.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

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Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The service consisted of three playrooms each one assigned for use by different groups of children. There were adequate and suitable indoor play facilities available in each room for the age range of children attending. The rooms presented as bright and visually appealing spaces with an orderly arrangement of play equipment and materials set into clearly defined areas of interest. These included arts and crafts, construction, small world items, dress up props, play kitchen areas, library's, sensory tables, relaxing areas, problem solving toys and wide range of manipulate play resources. Open low level shelving units enabled all items to be readily accessible to the children, and suitable sized tables and chairs were available for tabletop activities.

The seedlings room catered for children aged one year to two years contained a play area for younger children starting to walk. This area included soft floor matting, wall mounted toys, baskets with play items, a ball pit and a shatter proof mirror. Interest areas such as a kitchen area, sensory play area, and a cosy area with reading materials and boxes containing small world toys, blocks, shape sorters and musical instruments.

The Sprouts room catered for children aged two years to three years and provided a small room for 5 children which created a welcoming environment. The room was designed to stimulate the imagination of the child with a variety of resources and equipment suitable to the age and stage of the child. Open shelving at children's height equipped with baskets of resources allowed for children to choose activities.

The Buds room located on the first floor of the building also catered for children aged two to three years and accommodated up to 15 children. This room was equipped with various interests to provide a variety of play opportunities including role play and imaginary play with home corners and dress up areas. Construction areas, arts and crafts, and sensory tables. Opportunities for fine motor development was created with threading, shape sorters and a variety of tabletop activities.

This service had a designated secure outdoor area located to the rear and side of the property. This area was equipped with houses, mud kitchens and construction areas. A storage shed equipped with ride on toys, foot balls and a variety of outdoor equipment supported gross motor skill development.

(1) (b)

There were one designated sleep room in the service, one off the seedlings room which contained three standard cots. Each cot was fitted with a mattress containing the required safety label which had a waterproof covering. A storage unit provided individual storage of bed linen for each child.

There were also five stackable floor beds for use in the sprouts room which were laid out after dinner for a scheduled rest time.

Rest areas and cosy corners were provided in all three rooms.

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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

The registered provider ensured that adequate and suitable nutritious food and drink was available for each preschool child.

All meals are provided by the service in line with the service healthy eating policy.

Morning snack includes a variety of chopped fruit and yoghurt, the main meal of the day included pasta tomato sauce and sausage. The main meal of the day is provided by the sister service located in the same town. The service has a healthy eating policy in place operating a three-week rolling menu to include varied and balanced meals across the week.

Meals are served family style with tables set with tablecloths and cutlery. In the older children's rooms, children help themselves to the food served in large dishes and are encouraged to try new foods.

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 into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- Large gates and a high fence secured the area.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.

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Infection Control:

- There was adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes and after messy play and snack times in all care rooms.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean, with cleaning schedules displayed and up to date in each care room.
- Children were observed to wash their hands regularly including before snacks and meals.
- Nappy changes were carried out in line with infection control procedures.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff described how they were familiar with the administration of medicines policy and described the steps they would take prior to administering medication. The inspector reviewed a sample of administration of medication records and found that these had been completed in adherence to the service policy.

Safe Sleep:

- The service had a designated sleep room with a total of three standard cots.
- Stackable floor beds were available for those over two years of age.
- Floor beds were available for children over 15 months if required.
- The sleep room temperature measured 19.7°C on the day of inspection which is line with the required safe sleep temperatures

Fire Safety:

- All emergency doors were observed to remain free from hazards on the day of inspection.
- Fire evacuation plans were displayed in each care room.

Non-Compliance Information

Safe Sleep:

1. The inspector observed the sleep checks in the 'seedlings room' between 11:15 and 12:10. Children were checked through a viewing panel. However, no physical sleep checks were completed throughout this time. Contrary to the written sleep record where it was recorded at 11:25, 11:35, 11:45 and 11:55 the position, breathing pattern and the temperature to touch of the three children in the sleep room.

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Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Safe Sleep:

1. Staff have been retrained in how to monitor children while they are sleeping including the 10-minute physical checks. These 10-minute physical checks are used alongside the viewing plane in the seedlings room. The safe sleep policy has been updated and a copy provided to all staff members.

Supporting documentation submitted

Safe Sleep:

- Updated sleep policy submitted to inspectorate.
- Evidence of training submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

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

Throughout mealtimes children were observed to be supervised adequately with staff members sitting alongside the children promoting independence and offering support if required.

Indoor and outdoor play was supervised adequately by staff members positioning themselves to ensure children were in view at all times. The use of floating staff allowed for staff members to carry out nappy changes and meet children's basic needs while ensuring other children were supervised in the care rooms.