

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021DY002
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Name of Service:	The Nest Ranelagh
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Address of Service:	47 Ranelagh Road, Ranelagh, Dublin 6
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Eircode:	D06 C2P3
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Name of Registered Provider:	Colm Bowers
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	41	PM	39
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate 2nd Floor, Unit 4/5 The Nexus Building Blanchardstown Corporate Park Ballycoolin Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	L Jameson and C Kerrigan
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	Not applicable.
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Description of service

The Nest Ranelagh is a full day care service located in a residential area in Dublin 6. The service operates from the ground floor of a period building which has been adapted to accommodate a childcare service and is open from 7:30am-6pm Monday to Friday. The service offers care and education to children aged 0-6 years and participates in the early childhood care and education (ECCE) scheme from 9:15am-12:15pm daily. The service consists of four care rooms: the Tweenie room caters for children aged 1-1.5 years, the Toddler room caters for children aged 2-3 years, Montessori room 1 caters for children aged 3-4 years and Montessori room 2 caters for children aged 4-5 years. The service also has a cot room, sanitary facilities, a staff room, and a kitchen which is located in a cabin at the rear of the service. Two enclosed outdoor play areas are available to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider employs thirteen adults to work in the service including the designated person in charge, the deputy person in charge, nine early years educators, a chef and a cleaner. On the day of inspection, the designated person in charge, nine early years educators, the chef and a student were present when the inspectors arrived unannounced in the service. The registered provider does not work in the service.

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 and premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the following:

Regulation 9 Management and recruitment

Regulation 11 Staffing levels

Regulation 19 Health, welfare and development of child

Regulation 21 Equipment and materials

Regulation 23 Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 First Aid

Regulation 26 Fire Safety

however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 27 Supervision. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

As a result, the scope of the inspection included the Tweenie room and the Toddler 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.

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Additional Information

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on the day of inspection in relation to concerns under Regulation 23 - Safeguarding the Health, Welfare and Development of Child. These findings are listed under Regulation 25 - First Aid. A response which adequately addressed the concern was received on 13/05/2025. See body of report for details.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the 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, 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

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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) The service had a designated person in charge and named persons to deputise as needed.
 - (b) The designated person in charge and persons to deputise as needed were rostered to be present all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on.
 - (c) The service had a clear management structure and staff were aware of their own role and responsibilities.
- (2) A review of the roster and conversation with management showed that the registered provider currently employs thirteen adults. The full staff record of nine adults who had been employed since the last inspection and one student were reviewed along with the Garda vetting disclosures of two staff members that had expired since the last inspection.
 - (a) Thirteen written and verified references were available from past employers.
 - (b) Seven written and verified references were available from a source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for the eleven adults employed in the service and one student. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was available for nine adults who had lived in a country other than Ireland for a period of six consecutive months or more as an adult.
- (3) Evidence was available to demonstrate that the procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out in relation to ten adults before employment commenced.
- (4) Evidence was available to show that the nine adults who worked directly with the children held 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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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.*

Compliance Information

- (1) There were a sufficient number of staff members working directly with the children on the day of inspection.
- There were nine staff members working with forty-one children in the morning and seven staff members working with thirty-nine children in the afternoon.
- (2) The adult child ratios were maintained for the duration of the inspection.

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-*
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The following practices were observed on the day of inspection which supported the health, welfare and development of the children attending:

- Staff members were observed to positively reinforce the children's achievements with recognition, praise and encouragement. Any minor disagreements that occurred between the children were dealt with in a positive and calm way and the children were supported to resolve any conflict that arose.
- Mealtimes were observed to be a sociable and pleasant event, with staff members engaging in meaningful conversations and offering support and encouragement to the children, for example, staff members in the Tweenie room sat alongside the children on low level chairs, assisting the children during dinner time.

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- Staff members were observed to tend to children's individual personal needs promptly, assisting with hand washing and blowing noses. Nappies were changed at scheduled times and more frequently when required.
- Children's artwork, photographs, family walls and birthday charts were displayed throughout the care rooms, supporting the children's sense of identity and links between home and the service.
- The service used an electronic application to communicate with parents and update them on their child's day including activities, mealtimes and toileting.

Non-Compliance Information

1. At dinner time, a child in the Toddler room was observed to ask the staff members for more food. Additional portions of dinner were not available to the child when requested. The inspector observed the staff members telling the child that there was no more food. Extra servings of food should be available to the children in the event that they are still hungry at mealtimes.
2. Resources in the Tweenie room were inaccessible to the children, limiting their choice and opportunities for play. Evidenced by the following:
 - A selection of books were stored on high level shelving and the windowsill in the care room.
 - A selection of soft, plush toys were stored in baskets, on top of a shelving unit.
 - Foam blocks used to develop gross motor skills were stacked on top of one another in the corner of the care room.
3. Children in the Tweenie room were observed to play in the big outdoor area on the morning of the inspection. During this time, the children did not have access to age and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment which were stored in the small garden to the rear of the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The chef has been instructed to prepare extra food, so additional portions are available if needed. Additional dry food is also available in case any child remains hungry after receiving extra portions.
2. Resources are available with visual markers to clearly indicate where each toy box belongs on the shelves at the children's level. Management will regularly monitor the rooms to ensure this practice is being followed.
3. Children in the Tweenie room will use the small garden during the day. If the Tweenie room wishes to use the large garden, appropriate equipment and materials will be relocated to support their play.

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Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.
2. Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.
3. No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 19.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

- Low level tables and chairs were available for use by the children which allowed them to engage in tabletop activities and meals comfortably.
- Play materials in the care rooms included musical instruments, books, puzzles, a selection of battery-operated toys, magnets and construction toys were available to the children to facilitate a range of play experiences.
- Cosy areas were available in the care rooms to provide children a comfortable place to rest or engage in quiet activities.
- Equipment in the outdoor play areas provided opportunities for children to develop coordination and gross motor skills, the following was observed:
 - Two seesaws, a large slide, a playhouse and a variety of bicycles and ride on toys were available in the big outdoor play area.
 - Two seesaws, a small slide, an activity centre, a small climbing frame, a ride in car and scooter were available in the small garden.

Non-Compliance Information

1. Practices that restricted opportunities for imaginative and spontaneous play experiences were observed as follows:
 - Supporting props and equipment for kitchens in the Tweenie and Toddler rooms were not available.
 - Supporting props and equipment for the kitchen and playhouse in the big outdoor play area were not available.

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- Chalk or mark making materials were not available for use with chalkboards in the big outdoor play area.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Additional kitchen toys have been added to ensure children have materials for both indoor and outdoor play. Chalk is always available in the garden storage and is made accessible to the children during outdoor play. A box clearly labelled "kitchen toys" will be placed in the Tweenie room, Toddler room and Garden. Staff members will inform management when additional chalk is required.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 21.

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 entrance door leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent the children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. A buzzer system was in place which was managed and monitored by staff members.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

- The care rooms and sanitary areas were equipped with warm water, liquid soap and hand paper towels. Staff members were observed to support children with handwashing at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available in the care rooms and sanitary areas to ensure the hygienic disposal of contaminated materials.

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- Cots were placed 50cm apart.

Administration of Medication:

- Anti febrile medication was observed to be in date, stored in the correct packaging and out of the children's reach. No children were observed having medication administered on the day of inspection

Safe Sleep:

- Staff members were observed to physically check and record the colour, breathing and position of sleeping children every 10 minutes.
- The lights were observed to be dimmed and the blinds drawn in the sleep rooms, facilitating a calm environment for sleeping children.
- Cellular blankets were used.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The following was observed in the big garden on the day of inspection, which posed a potential risk pinch or injury to children:
 - A panel on the gate that formed part of the emergency evacuation route was observed to be broken.
 - Chalkboards with serrated edges were accessible to the children. Exposed screws were also accessible where pieces of the equipment had broken off.

Infection Control:

- A child from the Toddler room was observed to have their nappy changed on the floor of the sanitary accommodation and without a nappy changing mat. This does not support effective infection control and poses a potential risk of cross contamination. It is acknowledged that a nappy changing mat was available in the service but was not used in this instance.
- Children were observed to use each other's blankets during the transition to sleep time, while others were observed to fall asleep in the wrong beds, posing a potential risk of cross contamination.
- A foot operated pedal bin was observed to be overflowing with contaminated material in the children's sanitary accommodation opposite the staff room.

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Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. All potential pinch or injury risk has been removed, and the broken gate panel has been repaired. Risk assessments are completed daily, and staff members report unsafe materials and equipment to management.

Infection Control:

2. A changing mat is available and easily accessible for use and will be used to change the child on the floor when needed.
3. Children sleep on designated beds with corresponding sheets to prevent cross contamination. Staff members will ensure that beds are prepared properly, and correct sheets are used for each one. After use, the sheets are stored in clearly labelled containers.
4. The bins will be emptied twice daily or when they are full. Staff members will monitor bins when accompanying children to the toilet and empty them regularly to prevent overflow. Management to conduct spot checks.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence and documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Infection Control:

2. Photographic evidence and documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.
3. Photographic evidence and documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.
4. No evidence submitted. This will be reviewed on the next inspection.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 23.

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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

- (2)
- (a) The first aid box available in the service was suitably equipped and stored in a conspicuous location on the premises.
 - (b) First aid boxes were available for the children in attendance in the event of an emergency.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) Documentary evidence was available to show that two adults held in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificates, however, no adult was immediately available to the children in the event of an emergency between 07:30am – 08:30am on the day of the inspection. This was evidenced in the scheduled attendance in the service's staff roster and staff sign in record. An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the service in respect of this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) Management reviewed and amended the staff roster for the week to ensure that an adult was immediately available to the children at all times during the service's operating hours. Management will ensure that there is an adult trained in FAR on the premises and immediately available to the children at all times during operating hours in the event of an emergency.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentary evidence in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 25.

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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 firefighting 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 record was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service. The records indicated that fire drills were carried out monthly. The last recorded fire drill took place on 10/04/2025.
 - (b) A record was kept of the maintenance of the fire extinguishers in the premises which was certified as having been serviced most recently on 04/02/2025.
- (4) The evacuation procedure was conspicuously displayed on the premises which contained details in relation to the procedure to be conducted in the event of a fire or emergency in the service.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1)
- (b) Documentary evidence was not available to demonstrate a maintenance check had been carried out on the smoke alarms in the previous twelve months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1)
- (b) A maintenance check was carried out on all smoke alarms and will be checked quarterly going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 26.

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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

The registered provider did not ensure that preschool children attending the service were supervised at all times.

1. Three children were observed to exit their care rooms, close the door behind them and proceed down the corridor to use the sanitary accommodations unsupervised by staff members. This was evidenced by the following:
 - One child from Montessori 1 was observed to be unsupervised by staff members for a period of 8 minutes before returning to their care room.
 - One child from Montessori 2 was observed to be unsupervised by staff members for a period of 2 minutes before returning to their care room.
 - One child from Montessori 2 was observed to be unsupervised by staff members for a period of 5 minutes before returning to their care room.

This posed a potential risk to the children's safety and welfare.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

All children are accompanied to the toilet by a member of staff, following our toileting policy. Management is available to accompany children to the toilet in the event that a member of staff is preoccupied.

Supporting documentation submitted

Documentation in relation to the above has been reviewed.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider are sufficient to address the non-compliance under Regulation 27.