

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC333
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Name of Service:	Rainbow Childcare
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Address of Service:	Millbrook, Seskin, Bantry, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P75 VH24
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Name of Registered Provider:	Laura Andrews
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	12
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Administration Building, St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork, T23X440
Inspection undertaken by:	D Cotter
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

Rainbow Childcare is registered to provide a full day care, part time and sessional care to children aged from 0 – 6 years from 08:30am to 16 :30pm daily. Currently the service closes at 15:30pm daily. The service, located in a rural residential estate, occupies a detached bungalow which has been adapted as a childcare facility. There are three care rooms in total, namely the Baby room, Creche room and Preschool room. There is a designated sleep room, sanitary accommodations for both staff and children, an office and kitchen.

The children have direct access to secured outdoor play area.

Staffing

There are 6 staff associated with this service, including the registered provider, who is not service based. The five staff work directly with the children. There were 4 staff present on the day of inspection.

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 -

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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 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.*

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(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) The service had a named person in charge and a deputy that could deputise as required.
- (b) Both the named person and the deputy named person in charge were on duty when the inspector arrived at the premises and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in place and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2) A total of six recruitment files were reviewed.

- (a) Nine of the required written and validated references on file were from past employers.
- (b) Three of the required written and validated references had been provided by sources other than previous employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all six staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting had been acquired in respect of two staff who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months. Verified translations were not necessary.
- (4) All staff working directly with children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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

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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)
The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children on the day of inspection.

(2)
On the day inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations.
The rooms were in operation as follows

Morning:

- The baby room had 3 babies under 1 year being cared for by 1 adult.
- The creche room had 7 children aged between 1-3 years being cared for by 2 adults.
- The preschool had 4 children aged between 3-5 years being cared for by 1 adult.

Afternoon:

- The baby room had 1 baby under 1 year being cared for by 1 adult.
- The creche room had 7 children aged between 1-3 years being cared for by 2 adults.
- The preschool had 4 children aged between 3-5 years being cared for by 1 adult.

(8)
On the day of inspection, it was evidenced through discussion with staff and by the staff roster that there were always at least two people on the premises.

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

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Compliance Information

(1)

(a) Supporting Relationships:

- The adults were observed to show positive regard for the children in all the care rooms on the day of inspection. The children were encouraged and praised during tasks in a warm and caring manner for example when children played in the sand trays, used the slide, and helped to tidy up.
- Staff informed the inspector that the service operated in partnership with the parents and guardians, communicating in person with parents or guardians at collection or drop off, sending photographs to parents and contacting via telephone if needed.
- The atmosphere was observed to be relaxed in the care rooms at all times during the inspection and teamwork was evident between the staff and the children.
- Staff gave extra time and support to children who required it on the day of inspection. For example, children who were upset, were observed to be given additional support to help them settle.
- The hallway to the service was decorated with a family wall and individual photographs of the children and staff. This promoted a sense of belonging and wellbeing.
- The service reported a strong working relationship with their local County Childcare Committee and other external agencies such as the County Council. These relationships contributed positively to the care of the children.
- Staff reported that they were involved with the community of Bantry and take part in the local parade each year. This was further evidenced through the photographs in the hallway depicting the children and staff through the years.
- A home like ethos was observed in the service, transitions were kept to a minimum, and children were free to mix with other age groups which all supported a sense of connectedness and wellbeing for the children.

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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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised.
- The external doors were secured to restrict unauthorised access.
- The doors leading into the staff sanitary accommodations and offices were kept secured and these areas were not accessible to the children.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelves out of children's reach.
- Heavy furniture in the care rooms was anchored securely.
- Low lying glass panels on windows and doors were fitted with visibility strips.
- There were no electrical cables or flexes in reach of children.
- Play equipment and resources, both indoors and outdoors, appeared to be clean and well maintained.
- High chairs in the kitchen area were well maintained and had been fitted with safety harnesses.

Infection Control:

- Children had access to suitable handwashing facilities, with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towel dispensers. Water temperatures were recorded throughout the service between 35.3°C and 43°C.
- Handwashing was observed before mealtimes, when the children came inside and after using the toilet facilities.
- Staff were observed to disinfect nappy changing mats between uses and also to wash their own hands, along with the children's hands.
- Children had their own clearly labelled basket containing their nappies, wipes and barrier creams.
- Staff were observed to wear disposable aprons and gloves during nappy change times.
- Lidded foot operated pedal bins were in use for the hygienic disposal of waste.
- Children's bags and outdoor clothing were stored off the ground, on shelves and hooks.
- A clean supply of linens was available on site and staff reported that cot sheets were laundered on site as needed.
- Cots were fitted with waterproof mattress protectors.

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Safe Sleep:

- The inspector observed that staff conducted physical sleep checks on sleeping children, and a record was kept.
- Staff remained with the children who slept on floor beds in the Creche room.
- Cots and sleep mats were spaced the required 50cm apart.
- Suitable sleep equipment was in use for all children in relation to their age and stage of development.
- Recommended air temperatures were maintained within the designated sleep room. In the cot sleep room, an air temperature of 21.3°C was recorded while a child over the age of 12 months was sleeping.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits observed were free from obstruction.
- Wall tethered firefighting equipment was available throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was insured, with insurance for 22 children until 27 March 2027. The records detailed the category of service covered which was full day care, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

Compliance Information

- (c)
- Each care room and sanitary area had windows opened to ensure ventilation.
 - Each area of the service was adequately lit, the sleep room had curtains drawn to dim the lights. Natural light, along with overhead lighting was observed in each area of the service.
 - The service appeared to be free from mould and mildew.

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(d)

- A routine cleaning schedule was in operation in the service.
- The premises was well maintained with no obvious areas in need of repair.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) The complaints policy for the service stated that a complaint could be made to the manager of the service or to any member of the Board of Management and staff stated that they were open to receiving complaints from parents or guardians.
- (b) The policy further stated that any such complaint would be investigated fully.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

- (c) The policy failed to mention how complaints are responded to, managed, progressed, recorded and closed. There was no information available on how complaints would be stored or how the complainant would be kept informed of the process. Failure to correctly share this information with parents could act as a barrier to parents or guardians who wish to raise a complaint.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

In their written response, the registered provider stated that an updated complaints policy has been put in place and been distributed to all service users.

Supporting documentation submitted

The updated policy was submitted.

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Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified under Regulation 32 has been adequately addressed.