

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC348
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Name of Service:	Rising Stars Childcare
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Address of Service:	Old Cork Road, Mallow, Co Cork
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Eircode:	P51 DW98
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Name of Registered Provider:	Dusanka Valentic, Niamh O'Leary
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	06/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	33	PM	31
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher
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

Rising Stars Childcare is a private early years service registered for full day, part time and sessional care. The service operates from a detached building that is located in the outskirts of the town of Mallow in Cork. The service caters for children aged 0 to 6 years and children currently attending are aged from 1 to 6 years. The Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) operates from 9:00 to 12:00. A school age care service is also available but was not in operation on the day of inspection. The service operates from 07:30 to 18:00 Monday to Friday. The service operates from two floors, with the six care rooms located downstairs, one of which is used for school age care. Two kitchens, a reception area, one dedicated sleep room and sanitary facilities are also available downstairs. Staff sanitary facilities are located upstairs. The children have access to a large outdoor play area which is divided into four, located to the rear and side of the premises and a car parking area is located to the front of the service.

Staffing

There are 19 adults attached to the service, including the two registered providers, who are service based. On the day of inspection, 12 were present in the service, including one registered provider, centre manager and the deputy. Twelve staff were working directly with the children 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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child and safety. 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 children, one registered provider, person in charge and staff who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Improvement Notice IN 1908	06/08/2026	The service provided evidence that seven staff members held up to date First Aid Response (FAR) training but on review of the roster, it was noted that a staff member trained in first aid responder was not immediately available to the children at all times.
Status	The registered 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*

(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) The registered providers had appointed a person in charge and a deputy.
 - (b) The centre manager and the deputy were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived and one of the registered providers arrived during the inspection. The inspection was facilitated by the registered provider and centre manager.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the centre manager, it was determined that one new staff member had been employed since the previous inspection and worked directly with the children. A total of one file was reviewed. It was also determined that two staff members Garda vetting's were due for renewal and required review.
- (a) Of the two required written and validated references, one had been provided by a past employer.

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- (b) Of the two required written and validated references, one had been provided from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all three 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 records were not required for the one staff member as they had not lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer, as adults.
- (4) The staff member held a letter of qualification recognition from the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

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 the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care of the children in attendance at all times.
- (2) The service maintained the minimum ratio required as per regulation in the care rooms. The ratio was as follows:
- The Baby room, there were two adults caring for eight children in the morning and two adults caring for seven children in the afternoon.
 - The Toddler room, there was one adult caring for three children in the morning and one adult caring for two children in the afternoon.
 - Room one, there was one adult caring for five children in the morning and one adult caring for six children in the afternoon.

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- Room two, there was one adult caring for five children in the morning and one adult caring for five children in the afternoon.
- The ECCE room, there were 3 adults caring for 12 children in the morning and 3 adults caring for 11 children in the afternoon.

(8)(a) The service operated with at least two adults present at all times. This was observed on the day of inspection and was evident through examination of the staff roster.

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.*

Compliance Information

(1) The service had 55 children registered in the service and a sample of 10 of these were inspected. All the records inspected were found to contain the required information as listed from (a) through to (i).

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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

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of relevant documents.

Basic needs:

- The main hot meal and snacks were provided by the parents and guardians. These were observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- Children were observed to have hot meals which consisted of potatoes, pasta, rice, a variety of mixed vegetables and meat such as chicken, beef or salmon. After the hot meal, yogurts were also served. The service had alternative food to offer to children if needed on the day of the inspection.
- Staff interacted with the children during snack time and were observed helping and assisting the children where necessary. Children in the Baby room were encouraged to self-feed and were assisted as needed.
- Drinking water was accessible to the children in each of the care rooms and outdoors.
- A relaxed unhurried atmosphere was evident at food time, as the children chatted and interacted with one another.
- On the day of inspection, the care rooms had access to outdoors and staff stated they encouraged outdoor play as much as possible. The children were observed to go outdoors a number of times from each care room for the duration of the inspection.
- Nappy changing was carried out at regular intervals and as required. Each child's dignity and privacy were observed to be respected with one child being changed at a time. Supervision and assistance were provided for the children who accessed the sanitary facilities.
- Children had the opportunity to rest or relax in an area with vinyl couches, cushions or mats in each care room.

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Supporting relationships:

- The staff were observed to lower down to floor level with the children and engage in play. Children were encouraged and praised, in a warm and caring manner, in each of the care rooms and outdoors while completing tasks. For example, the adults sat with the children to read books or to play hairdressing and assisted with chalk drawing outdoors. The staff were also observed interacting with the children through playing with moulding dough, water play and blowing bubbles.
- Staff were observed to converse and listen attentively as children spoke about their pet dogs, holidays, trains and helicopters.
- A staff member was observed to offer reassurance to an upset child by lowering to their level and comforting them.
- Various methods of communication were used to link with parents and guardians such as communication at collection and drop off, phone calls and emails. Parents were observed to come to the door of the service to collect their children, and positive interactions were observed between parents/ guardians and the staff in the service.
- Children's identity and belonging was fostered through the display of artwork, family photos and a birthday calendar on the care room walls. Photographs of parents attending the service to partake in discussions or activities with the children were also displayed, demonstrating partnerships established with the parents.

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 was secured appropriately. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition.

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- The blind cords on the windows were fitted with safety clips.

Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before meals and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available in the kitchen and some of the care rooms for the storage of perishable foods.
- Lidded, foot pedal operated bins were in use for the disposal of waste during the inspection.

Administration of medication:

- Staff in each care room informed the inspector that no regular medicine was being administered to a child currently in the service.
- Temperature reducing medication was stored in the refrigerator and was in date.

Safe sleep:

- Two areas in the service were used for sleeping, namely the Baby room and the sleep room. The sleep room was used by children from the Baby room and the Baby room was used for children over 2 years old who were sleeping on stackable beds. The air temperatures were recorded between 20.4°C and 22°C while children were sleeping in each area, maintaining the temperatures at the required level of between 18°C and 22°C for children above 12 months.
- Staff were noted to maintain sleep records and checks were completed at 10-minute intervals. The inspector reviewed 10 sleep records, and these were recorded to be carried out correctly.

Fire safety:

- The fire exit doors were free from obstruction on inspection.
- Fire extinguishers were wall mounted.

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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) There were four first aid boxes and a bag which were sufficiently stocked and available in the service. These were safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) The first aid supplies were always accessible, should they be required.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) See statutory notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IN1908 served.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,

(b) an employee, and

(c) an authorised person.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation

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(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) According to the fire drill record, the most recent fire drill took place on 1 July 2026.
- (b) A list of the number and type of firefighting equipment on the premises was available. Records from fire safety companies indicated that the firefighting equipment was last serviced on 11 March 2026 and that the wired smoke alarm was tested on 18 May 2026.
- (4) The service's fire evacuation procedure was displayed on the wall in each care room and near the exit door in the reception area.

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

Children were supervised primarily by sight at all times, with enough qualified staff on-site to effectively monitor the children both indoors and outdoors. Closer supervision was provided during risky activities like using the slide. Children that were sleeping on stackable beds were continuously supervised on the day of inspection.