

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN045
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Name of Service:	Pebbles Childcare
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Address of Service:	Shercock Road, Cabra, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	A82 X6A0
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Name of Registered Provider:	Pauline Grimes
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	20/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	39	PM	26
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Inspection undertaken by:	D. Murray & AM. Cunningham
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).

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Description of service

Pebbles Childcare is a privately operated Early Years' Service which provides full day, part-time and sessional care and education to children from 1 to 6 years. A school aged service is also provided. The service operates from 7:00am to 17:30 pm and eligible children can participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE). The service consists of four care rooms as follows:

Upstairs:

The **Wobbler** room facilitates the care of children from 1 to 2 years.

Downstairs:

The **Toddler** room accommodates the care of children from 2 to 2.8 years.

ECCE room 1 provides care and education for children from 4 to 5 years attending a sessional ECCE service from 9:30am to 12:30pm with some children availing of full day care service.

ECCE room 2 provides care and education for children from 2 years 8 months to 4 years attending a sessional ECCE service from 9:00am to 12:00pm with some children availing of full day care service. Additional facilities include a kitchen, office, sanitary accommodation and three outdoor play areas located to the rear and side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider who works in the service employs 16 staff members who all work directly with the pre-school 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

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- 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-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.

Additional Information

The inspection was carried out following receipt of a concern received to the Early Years Inspectorate on the 08/07/2026.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Statutory Notices		
Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IA:2261	20/07/2026	No police vetting was available for a staff member who had resided outside the country for 6 consecutive months as an adult.
Status	The registered provider submitted a corrective and preventative action which was accepted and addressed the Statutory Notice.	
Improvement Notice IN:2283	20/07/2026	There was a lack of supervision in the grass outdoor area to the rear of the premises when children were using the plastic slide. Five children were on the slide at the same time, the slide was not anchored to the ground.
Status	The registered provider submitted a corrective and preventative action which were accepted and addressed the Statutory Notice.	
Improvement Notice IN:2286	20/07/2026	At 13:20, a child was placed down to sleep in a cot with a bottle of milk. The child was unsupervised.
Status	The registered provider submitted a corrective and preventative action which were accepted and addressed the Statutory Notice.	

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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*
- (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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*

Compliance Information

(1) (a) The service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

Following discussion with the registered provider and review of the staff roster it was confirmed that 2 new staff members were employed since the last inspection on the 23/09/2025. These staff files were reviewed.

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(2) (a)&(b) Four validated written references were available from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures have been obtained for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all staff.

(d) Police vetting was not required for the 2 new staff members who had not resided outside the state for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) All childcare staff members had a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d) Refer to Statutory Notice section in relation to the Immediate Action Notice 2261 served on an existing staff member. This was a non-compliance on the last inspection 23/09/2025 which remained outstanding.

(7)(a) There was no written evidence to indicate that staff were provided with appropriate information and training as noted by the following;

- a meeting or training had not been documented between management and staff members after a serious incident occurred;
- that retraining of staff on the actions to follow in the event of a serious incident was carried out;
- that staff were made aware of the outcome of the review of the serious incident that had occurred.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(7)(a) A staff meeting was held on Tuesday 28th July 2026. Actions to follow in the event of a serious incident were thoroughly discussed. The staff were also made aware of the outcome of the investigations and measures to be put in place to ensure all policies and procedures are implemented in the future. All staff were updated on the services policies and procedures.

Supporting documentation submitted

(7)(a) Minutes of staff meeting and issues discussed.

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Summary Comment

The registered provider has given assurances that the staff member without appropriate police vetting is no longer working directly with the children. The corrective action regarding Regulation 9(7) has been accepted. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the following written policies specified in Schedule 5 were available.

- Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Accident and Incident Policy.
- Outdoor play Policy
- Child Supervision Policy.
- Risk Management Policy.
- Complaints Policy.
- Notification of Incident Policy

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)-

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(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) During the period of the inspection there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the service. On arrival to the service there were 11 staff members with 2 additional staff members rostered on at 12:30pm caring for 39 children. The registered provider was also available to provide assistance as needed. Four staff members were on statutory leave.

(2) The following adult to child ratios were observed in the care rooms:

- The Wobbler room had 3 adults with 6 children ranging in age from 1 to 2 years, 5 children were attending on a full day care basis while 1 child was on induction and was only staying for 2 hours.
- The Toddler room had 2 adults with 9 children ranging in age from 2 years to 2 years 8 months, 4 children were attending on a full day care basis, 3 were attending on a part time basis and 2 children were attending for sessional hours only.
- ECCE room 1 had 2 adults with 13 children ranging in age from 4 to 5 years, 9 children were attending on a full day care basis, 2 children were attending on a part time basis, and 2 children were attending for sessional hours only. Additionally, 3 school age children were present.
- ECCE room 2 had 2 adults with 11 children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 4 years, 5 children were attending on a full day care basis while 6 children were attending for sessional hours only.

(8) (a) According to the staff roster the registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(k) While a record of a serious incident was available, there appeared to be conflicting information between the accident/incident record and the staff member's account.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(k) At the staff meeting on the 28/07/26 the recording and reporting of a serious incident was discussed and all staff were updated on the Accident and Incident Policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

Minutes of staff meeting and issues discussed.

Summary Comment

The registered provider has addressed the non-compliances. The response received has been reviewed and accepted.