

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL059
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Name of Service:	Charlies Childcare
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Address of Service:	Malahide United FC, Coast Road, Malahide, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	K36 YA97
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ronnie Carroll
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	02/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	43	PM	43
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Nexus Building Block, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	S Cully & AM Coyle
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

Charlie's Childcare is one of a multiple of Early Years services owned by the registered provider in the North Co Dublin area. This service is located in the clubhouse of Malahide United Football Club consisting of seven care rooms. On the day of the inspection the Preschool 2 room was closed. The Preschool room 1 and Preschool room 2 rooms are located in one section of the building, where an office is also located. The Toddler and Wobbler room are accessed through a separate entrance to the rear of the premises. The Senior Toddler room and Preschool room 3 are located in a separate modular building on the premises. A sleep room is located adjacent to the Wobbler room. A separate modular building is used as a staff room. There are 2 fully enclosed outdoor play areas available to the children.

Staffing

There are 22 staff employed to work in the service to include a manager, assistant manager and an area manager who is based in the centre. Eighteen staff are employed to work with the preschool children, of which 5 were staff who are usually based in one of the registered providers other services but were present on the day. One staff member works solely in the kitchen with responsibility for catering duties. The registered provider does not work on the premises on a daily basis.

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.

Additional Information

This inspection was triggered following receipt of information by the Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, area manager, 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-

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- (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 has a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.
- (b) The designated person in charge was present and in charge of the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced on the morning of the inspection. The area manager was also present.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service which outlines staff roles and duties. Staff demonstrated familiarity with the management structure of the service.
- (2) Following a review of the records compiled by the inspectors on the last inspection on 23/06/2025, it was confirmed that there were 7 new members of staff employed in this service since then. These files along with the files for the 5 staff members from the company's other service were reviewed on the day of this inspection. Garda vetting disclosures for all staff and of Chief Operating Officer were reviewed.
- (a) Twenty validated written references were available from a past employer.
- (b) Four validated written references were available from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 23 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all employed staff.

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(d) International police vetting was available for the 12 staff members whose files were reviewed and who had resided outside of the Irish jurisdiction for more than 6 consecutive months as adults.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 12 staff members whose files were reviewed and who work directly with the children in the service held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent.

(7)(a) There was adequate evidence to demonstrate that new staff members, including those who transferred from another branch, received a comprehensive induction training programme specific to the service prior to working with the children. Recently employed staff and staff who had transferred from other branches confirmed that they received training prior to working with children. They were able to describe the content of the training which included children's care routines, medical needs, policies and procedures and child protection training. A review of staff files demonstrated that all staff engaged in on-going training as per the Staff Training policy. All staff held Children's First e-Learning certificates and were familiar with their safeguarding responsibilities and with the reporting process should it be required.

In relation to support and supervision of staff, staff described receiving support throughout the day from management. The manager outlined how daily morning check-ins are carried out to determine if support may be needed during the day. The Area managers carry out formal reviews with new staff at regular intervals following recruitment and annual reviews with all staff as per the Staff Supervision policy. There was also evidence available of regular staff meetings being held in the service.

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 following policies and procedures were reviewed on inspection and were found to be adequate.

- Recruitment
- Complaints
- Staff Training
- Staff Supervision

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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.*
- (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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service as there were 13 adults working directly with 43 children in the morning and afternoon.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced to the service and remained so throughout the inspection.

The following adult to child ratios were observed on the inspector's arrival at 10.55am:

- Preschool Room 2: Closed as ECCE had ended the week previous.
- Preschool room 1: There were 4 children between the ages of 3 to 5 years being cared for by 3 adults.
- Wobbler room: There were 4 children between the ages of 1 to 2 years being cared for by 2 adults.
- Toddler room: There were 12 children between the ages of 2 to 3 years being cared for by 3 adults.
- Preschool room 3: There were 11 children between the ages of 3 to 5 years being cared for by 2 adults.
- Senior Toddler room: There were 12 children between the ages of 2 to 3 years being cared for by 3 adults.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times as evidenced in the staff rosters and staff attendance records maintained in the service.

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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:

- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

Compliance Information

(1)

- (g) The service policies and procedures were available and maintained as per requirement of Regulation 10.
- (i) The service maintained a staff roster which detailed staff present on a daily basis including cover staff.

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.*

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

Following observation of practice and interactions in all open care rooms and through discussion with staff present on the day, it could be determined that appropriate and suitable care practices were carried out. The following was observed:

- Children were provided with a variety of meals, snacks and drinks. Documentation evidenced that the individual routines of younger children were followed while older children ate a regular set time throughout the day.
- Staff were responsive to children's personal care needs such as toileting, assisting with hygiene practices and ensuring children were comfortable. For example, in one care room a child lay down in the cosy area

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while others were playing. The staff member ensured the child was well by taking their temperature and asking the child regularly if they were okay.

- Staff demonstrated familiarity with the children in their care, speaking about their likes and dislikes or their personalities in positive ways. Staff communicated and interacted with the children with warmth and respect. The children also appeared comfortable in the care of the adults, going to them for help, comfort or inviting them to join their play.

(3) On the day of inspection there were no observations of practices that were disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful to children. The children were observed to be happy and comfortable in the setting and with the staff.

In conversation and discussion staff demonstrated familiarity with service policies around behaviour management and child safeguarding.

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

The inspectors observed the staff members appropriately supervising the children in attendance when both indoors and outdoors including during the use of sanitary facilities.

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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 service had a complaints policy in place which detailed the procedure to be followed in order to make a complaint in relation to the service.
- (b) The procedure for how complaints were processed was clear and comprehensive.
- (c) The procedures detailed how the complainant would be kept informed of the manner in which the complaint was being dealt with.