

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015FL208
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Name of Service:	Mary Doyle's Creche
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Address of Service:	6 Upper Carrickhill Road, Portmarnock, Co. Dublin
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Eircode:	D13 RX20
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Name of Registered Provider:	Mary Doyle
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	08/07/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	11
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	2 nd Floor, 4/5, The Nexus Building, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Ballycoolin, Dublin 15
Inspection undertaken by:	Y Kelly
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

Mary Doyle's Creche is a privately owned full day care service located in Portmarnock, County Dublin. The service is registered to accommodate 16 preschool children between the ages 0-6 years, Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 6:00pm, closing at 5:30pm on Fridays. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE) providing sessional preschool to eligible children. The registered provider operates the service from 3 care rooms adjoined to a private residence. There is also a sleep room, sanitary facilities, and kitchen. A side entrance is designated for access to the service with an enclosed outdoor play space to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

The service currently employs 5 staff members including the registered provider who works directly with the children attending the service. The registered provider was present in the service on the day of the inspection.

Methodology

Tusla 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under the regulations 9, 11, 15, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28: however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under regulation 16. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 15 Records of a Preschool Child.

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 registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN number: 2141	08/07/2026	IAN issued to the registered provider as Garda Vetting was not available for 1 staff member who was present in the service and working directly with the children on the day of the inspection.
Status	Action was taken by the registered provider immediately following service of the Notice and the provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate.	
Immediate Action Notice IAN number: 2142	08/07/2026	IAN issued to the registered provider as International Police Vetting was not available for 1 staff member who was present in the service and working directly with the children on the day of the inspection.

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Status	Action was taken by the registered provider immediately following service of the Notice and the provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions which were accepted by the Inspectorate.
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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.*
- (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 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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Compliance Information

(1)(a) There was a designated person in charge of the service and there was a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The registered provider was present and in charge of the service when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service at 09:40am.

(2) The full staff files for 4 adults were reviewed to include 4 staff members who work directly with the children. Garda vetting for 5 adults was reviewed.

The following was recorded:

(a) Three written validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Two written validated references were available from a reputable source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for 4 adults whose files were reviewed. Garda vetting disclosures demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring the service to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International Police vetting was available for 2 adults who had lived outside of the state for a period of more than 6 months.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 2 staff members whose files were reviewed and who may work directly with the children in the service held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(c) See Statutory Notice section in relation to the Immediate Action Notice IAN 2141 served.

(d) See Statutory Notice section in relation to the Immediate Action Notice IAN 2142 served.

(3) The procedures as outlined in paragraph (2) were not carried out prior to adults working with or having access to children in the service, as evidenced by the following examples:

- Garda vetting disclosures in relation to 1 adult prior to this adult having access to and contact with the children.
- International police vetting in relation to 1 adult prior to having access to and contact with the children.
- Three written validated references not obtained in relation to 2 adults prior to these adults having access to and contact with the children.

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- Validation of 2 references, as stated above, not obtained in relation to 1 adult prior to this adult having access to and contact with the children.

(4) Documentary evidence was not available for 2 adults who work directly with the children in the service to confirm that they held at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed eligible by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(2)(c) Garda vetting has been submitted for 1 staff member. The file will be fully completed before the staff member starts work again.

(2)(d) International police vetting was submitted for 1 staff member.

(3)

- Garda vetting for 1 staff member has been submitted.
- International police vetting for 1 staff member has been submitted.
- One validated reference for 1 adult was submitted. Reference has been printed and validated and placed in the file.
- Two staff members have ceased working in the service and therefore 2 validated written references for 1 adult and validation of reference for 1 adult no longer required.

(4) Both of these staff members are no longer on the premises and do not work for the Creche. Both adults are currently studying QQI level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education and will have completed the course by February 2027.

Preventive Action

(2)(c) Continuous effort is taken to try and hire extra staff members to cover staff holidays. One person is currently completing a QQI level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education level 5 to help facilitate this ongoing issue. Also, a member of staff has been hired to carry out administrative duties. Part of these duties include ongoing auditing of the staff files. After a new intake of staff and every 3 months this will be carried out. A list is already available of all items required to be contained in the staff file.

(d) An administrator has been hired to audit the staff files on a regular basis.

(3) A staff member has been hired in an administration role to ensure all staff files are audited on a regular basis.

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Files will be audited every three months and after every new staff member commences work in the service.

(4) The service will no longer cover staff holidays with people only studying the course. A new staff member will begin in the role of cover staff for holidays once the course is completed in February 2027.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Garda vetting for 1 adult.
- International Police vetting for 1 adult.
- Creche Administrator Role and Acceptance letter from staff member.
- Written validated reference for 1 adult.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances under Regulation 9 have been addressed.

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

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that there were 2 adults on the premises at all times.

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Non-Compliance Information

(2) The registered provider did not ensure that the adult to child ratio was maintained in the service as evidenced by the following:

- There were 2 qualified staff members to 16 children aged between 1 year 6 months to 4 years 11 months working in the full day care service. There was a cover staff member that was rostered to work in the service from 9.30am to 13.00pm. However, this staff member has no qualification and does not form part of the adult to child ratio requirements. During the following times; 11.00am to 11.15am and 11.30am to 12.00pm when this staff member was covering lunch breaks the adult to child ratio requirements were not met.
- There were 2 qualified staff members to 11 children aged between 1 year 6 months to 4 years 11 months working in the full day care service. There was a staff member rostered to work from 1.00pm to 6.00pm in the afternoon. However, this staff member has no qualification and does not form part of the adult to child ratio requirements. During the following times; 2.00pm to 2.30pm and 3.00pm to 3.15pm when this staff member was covering lunch breaks the adult to child ratio requirements were not met.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(2) The full-time staff member who was on holiday has returned. The service is currently recruiting for a cover staff member. Every effort is being made to cover staff during these situations. One student currently completing a QQI level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education will be a part-time staff member to cover holidays and sick leave once qualified.

Preventive Action

(2) Registered provider will ensure that qualified staff will cover holiday leave.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Job advertisement.
- List of children attending Montessori.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance under Regulation 11 has been addressed.

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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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.*

Compliance Information

(1) On review of 12 children's registration records, the required information and details were available. The following information was included:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child.
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service.
- (c) a provision for the date the child ceased to attend the service.
- (d) the name and address of an emergency contact of the child that 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.

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(3)(c) Records were open to inspection by an authorised person. All records requested by the inspector were available for review.

Non-Compliance Information

(i) Three out of the twelve children's records sampled did not contain the information required under Regulation 15 (1)(i) *"written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency."*
A non-compliance identified under regulation 15 under (i) was identified at the last inspection on the 25/06/2024. The corrective actions submitted following that inspection failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(i) All forms have been corrected and now are compliant with regulation regarding parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in an emergency. One child's file has been completed, and two children have left the Creche.

Preventive Action

(i) The service has hired a new administrator to ensure compliance in this area. This member of staff will be required to audit files of all children registered in the creche every three months and after a new child starts in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Completed Child's Record.
- Creche Administrator role description.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance under Regulation 15 has been addressed.

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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:

(a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) In respect of 1 adult, there was no recorded history of past employment and relevant experience available for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(1)(a) This staff member is no longer working in the service.

Preventive Action

(1)(a) No person will work as cover staff unless fully finished qualifications and all staff files have been completed. The new administration member of staff will be responsible for ensuring this does not occur again.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Acceptance letter of Creche Administrator role.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance under Regulation 16 has been addressed.

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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

(1)(a) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

Basic needs:

- Children were observed to sit and eat together and chatted socially during this time and staff offered help to children as needed and engaged in conversations with the children. All meals are provided by parents of the children attending.
- Children's water bottles were accessible to the children in both the indoor and outdoor environments and children were observed to access water bottles independently.
- Nappy changing occurred at scheduled times and more frequently as required throughout the day. Staff members engaged positively with the children during this time using it as an opportunity for one-to-one interactions with the children. Toilet trained children were provided with discreet supervision and support.
- There was a cot room with 5 cots available for children under two years that required sleep in the service.
- Children were observed to move freely in the space choosing materials.
- All the children attending the service were given the opportunity to spend time in the outdoor area during the inspection.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Staff demonstrated warm and caring interactions with the children. Children were offered comfort and support when needed. There was a welcoming atmosphere in the service. The staff sang songs with the children during the day. It was evident that the staff and the children had developed close relationships and staff chatted to children about going to primary school.
- Parents were welcomed at arrival and collection times and given updates on their children's day.

Physical and Material Environment:

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- There was age-appropriate furniture with small child sized chairs and tables for children to sit whilst they played or for mealtimes.
- Children had access to materials which were appropriate to their age and stage of development. Across the 3 connecting care rooms there were resources such as a play kitchen, kitchen resources, and a dolls house to support to support imaginative and interactive play for children. There were transportation materials and construction resources including plastic building bricks for construction play. There were tabletop materials such as jigsaws and matching and sorting activities including pegboards to support fine motor development and early learning numeracy learning. There were foam blocks for physical play and cause and effect toys for younger children.
- The garden was directly accessible from the care room and was available to the children throughout the day. The outdoor area was fully enclosed and surfaced with grass and located at the rear of the service. There was a playhouse, 2 tents, buggy and doll for dramatic and pretend play. There was a balance beam, seesaw, ride in cars, ride on bike and footballs which promoted gross motor and fundamental movement skills. There was a picnic bench and chairs for children to carry out tabletop activities or to rest. Children were given paintbrushes and cups of water to do painting with water in the outdoor area.

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:

- Entry to the service was managed by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely out of the reach of the children.
- Suncream was observed being applied to the children for outdoor play. Each child had their own suncream provided by parents. Children were encouraged to wear sunhats as protection from the sun.

Infection Control:

- Children's lunches and dinners provided by parents were refrigerated to prevent spoiling of perishable items.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and dispensed paper towels were provided

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in the sanitary accommodation of the service.

- Windows were open in the care rooms to allow fresh air to circulate.

Administration of Medication:

- Medications were stored out of the reach of children.
- Children's health care plans were displayed in the kitchen.

Safe Sleep:

- The inspector observed that 10-minute sleep check observations were being performed and documented on sleeping children, noting each child's colour, position and breathing pattern at the time of each check.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits were unobstructed in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

1. Infection control measures were not always followed. The possible risk of the spread of infection was increased due to the following:
 - Handwashing was not always carried out by staff in between nappy changing of children.
 - The nappy changing mat was not sprayed and cleaned with disinfectant in between nappy changing of 2 children.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Infection Control:

Corrective Action

1. A meeting has taken place to remind all staff members of the importance of staying vigilant in terms of the importance of continuous hand washing. Even though staff members are extremely vigilant in this area, reminders on hand washing in between each nappy change has been highlighted. During the same meeting the issue of ensuring the nappy changing mat is sprayed between nappy changes was discussed. Signs have also been displayed in a prominent relevant area to aid as daily reminders.

Preventive Action

1. Signs have been placed in an obvious place, which can be easily and regularly seen during nappy changing. Spot checks will be completed by each member of staff at random intervals on each other to help prevent reoccurrence. This was discussed and agreed upon during the staff meeting.

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Supporting documentation submitted

- Staff meeting minutes.
- Photograph of Nappy changing procedure displayed.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance under Regulation 23 has been addressed.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) A daily attendance record was maintained for children who attend full day care, with children signed in and out daily by an employee.

(3)(b) There was a record of visitor details observed to be kept on the day of the inspection. The inspector was requested to sign in and out of the service by the registered provider.

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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) Three adequately stocked first aid boxes were observed in the kitchen of the service.

(b) First aid boxes were stored out of the reach of the children but available to staff as needed.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider did not ensure that there was a staff member with up to date accredited first aid training available to the children attending the pre-school service. There were two staff members including the registered provider trained in First Aid Response (FAR), however this training had expired. It is acknowledged three staff members were trained in paediatric first aid, two of whom were present on the premises on the day of the inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

(1) Two members of staff have been enrolled in a First Aid training course and will complete this course on the next available date.

Preventive Action

(1) The administrative staff member will keep a continued eye on courses and will check regarding the accredited courses are meeting the requirements.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Enrolment in First Aid course.
- Job description of creche administrator.

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Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. It is acknowledged that the registered provider has taken action in relation to First Aid training. However, as the PHECC accredited First Aid training certificates have not yet been submitted, the non-compliance under Regulation 25 (1) still remains outstanding. It is the responsibility of the registered provider to furnish the PHECC accredited First Aid training certificates to the inspectorate when received.

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.

Compliance Information

1 (a) A record of fire drills was available on the premises with the last fire drill dated as having been carried out on the 15 June 2026.

(b) The number, type and maintenance record for firefighting equipment and smoke alarms were available. Firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms were last serviced on the 17 June 2026.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Evidence of insurance cover was available to demonstrate there was cover for a maximum of 20 children for full day care with an expiry date of 27 March 2027.