

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN023				
Name of Service:	Regina Bushell T/A Grovelands Childcare				
Address of Service:	Corran Riada, Monksland, Athlone, Co. Roscommon				
Eircode:	N37 W3Y1				
Name of Registered Provider:	Regina Bushell				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	30/06/2026				
No of pre-school children:	<table> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>49</td> <td>PM</td> <td>43</td> </tr> </table>	AM	49	PM	43
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy and S. Killeen
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

This privately owned preschool service is located on the outskirts of Athlone town, in Co Roscommon offering full day care, part time and sessional ECCE care. The service offers a childcare service from 8:00 to 18:00 for children aged between 0-6 years each day from Monday to Friday. This service has 6 playrooms, two designated sleep rooms and a kitchen area. Five of the care rooms are on the ground floor, the sunflower room, bluebell room, mulberry room, sycamore room and chestnut room. The willow playroom is on the first floor. There is a large well-resourced outdoor play area at the rear of the building. The service is registered to cater for 114 preschool children. It is also registered as a school aged service.

Staffing

The registered provider is supernumerary and not on the premises daily. There is a person in charge and deputy person in charge. There were 27 adults employed in the service.

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 an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25, 26 and 28.

The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, director of operations, deputy persons 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.*

(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

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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) The registered provider ensured that
 - (a) There was a designated person in charge and two named adults to deputise in their absence.
 - (b) The designated deputy person in charge was available on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
On a review of staff attendance records the person in charge or deputy person in charge was always present in the service.
 - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service. A governance chart displayed outside of each care room was reviewed. On discussion with staff members, they were aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- (2) Following the last inspection held on 27/06/2025, 28 staff files were reviewed and satisfactory. It was advised by the deputy person in charge that three staff have ceased employment in the service and six additional staff had commenced in the service since the inspection conducted on 27/06/2025 and work directly with the pre-school children.
A total of six files were reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for two staff members whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review. These were renewed.
 - (a) Eleven written validated references were available from past employers for six of the adults.
 - (b) One written validated reference was available from a reputable source for one adult.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 27 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 from the police authorities in other states were available for 5 adults who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.
- (4) Evidence of completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent was on file for the recently appointed staff members.

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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) (a)) *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 were an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service. There were 11 adults working with 49 children in the morning and 11 adults working with 43 children in the afternoon.
- (2) The ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times throughout the inspection. On the morning of the inspection;
- At the time of the inspection, there were no children present in the Sunflower room. The children assigned to this room were in the process of transitioning to the bluebell room.
 - In the Bluebell room, there were 6 children aged between 18 months to 2 years been cared for by 2 adults.
 - In the Mulberry room, there were 13 children aged between 2 to 3 years been cared for by 3 adults.
 - In the Sycamore room, there were 13 children aged between 3-4 years been cared for by 3 adults.
 - In the Chestnut room, there were 17 children aged between 3-4 years been cared for by 3 adults.
 - The Willow Room was being utilised by school age children.

On the afternoon of the inspection;

- In the Sunflower room there were no children in attendance.
- In the Bluebell room there were 6 children aged between 18 months to 2 years been cared for by 2 adults.
- In the Mulberry room, there were 10 children aged between 2 to 3 years been cared for by 3 adults
- In the Sycamore room, there were 10 children aged between 3-4 years been cared for by 3 adults.
- In the Chestnut room, there were 17 children aged between 4-5 years been cared for by 3 adults.

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- The Willow room was being utilised by school age children.

(8) (a) The registered provider ensured that there were always at least two adults on the premises when children were present in the service.

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) Basic Needs:

The deputy person in charge described how they provide balanced meals and snacks each day, all of which are prepared on site. This was further evidenced by a review of the menu plan, discussions with the chef and staff members, and direct observation of snack and lunchtime within the care rooms. The main meal on the day of inspection consisted of bacon, peas, corn, carrots, cabbage, gravy, and potatoes, which incorporated all the required food groups. The meal was accompanied by jugs of fresh water and served family-style at the tables. Individual dietary preferences were respected, with tailored alternatives provided for children who are vegetarian or have food allergies. Furthermore, due to identified nut allergies, the service operates as a strictly nut-free environment.

Meals and snacks were timed appropriately throughout the day, and children were provided with cutlery and crockery appropriate to their age and stage of development. Staff were observed to sit at the tables with the children and have child led discussions during mealtimes, offering support and encouragement when needed. Children's sanitary accommodation was available adjacent to each of the pre-school rooms facilitating easy access. Younger children were routinely brought to the nappy change areas in a respectful, and sensitive manner. Children were changed outside of this routine should it be required. Older children who were toilet-trained were observed to be independent in their toileting and were provided with assistance if required. Staff members were observed interacting warmly with the children, responding appropriately to their verbal and non-verbal cues, and providing meaningful responses. Staff members demonstrated a sound awareness of how to appropriately manage children's behaviour and minor disagreements were dealt with promptly.

All care rooms were laid out with various materials and resources to create interesting areas of play for the

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children according to their age and stage of development. Low level shelving was provided to allow children choice over the equipment and materials they played with. The defined interest areas were well resourced with supportive equipment providing ample opportunities for children to engage in meaningful play. Interest areas included home corners construction areas, book areas, transport, farm, and art areas.

Equipment and resources to support fine motor and cognitive development were easily accessible to children on low level shelving. Access to a good range of age appropriate and stimulating books was promoted in library areas. The playrooms were observed to be comfortable and inviting, providing a suitable and engaging space for preschool children. Adult sized chairs were available to staff in the sunflower room to ensure comfort when cradling and caring for children throughout the day.

Free movement of the children was facilitated in the daily routine of the service. Short periods of adult initiated activities were interspersed with free play so that children could choose their own activity and move between the different interest areas in the rooms at their leisure. Children's need for rest was also appropriately accommodated in the care rooms. Rest areas were available in the older children's room with child size couches and soft matting. There were designated sleep rooms for the younger children in the Sunflower, Bluebell and Mulberry rooms.

Older children were supported and encouraged to take responsibility for their personal care, in ways that match their individual level of independence. This included toileting, wiping their noses, dressing themselves for outside and getting their plate and cup from the shelf as snack and dinner time. The service fostered an understanding of healthy habits such as regular handwashing and using tissues when required. Staff were at hand to guide and support when necessary.

Children were offered a sense of belonging through the provision of individually named places for their personal belongings outside each playroom and by displays of artwork and photos of each child with their families. Children were enabled to engage positively with each other and were encouraged to be helpful, to take turns and share play resources with other children.

The outdoor play area is located at the rear of the preschool and is directly accessible from the preschool rooms. It is securely enclosed with walls and large wooden fencing, ensuring a safe environment for children.

The area is well-equipped and features a combination of artificial grass, shock-absorbent surfacing, and tarmac. It is divided into three separate sections to accommodate the different preschool rooms. Play equipment includes a large climbing frame with slides, a playhouse, a mud kitchen complete with kitchen accessories, and a seating area with benches and picnic tables. A variety of bikes, trikes, and scooters were also available for the children. Each

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section of the outdoor area has a partially covered space, allowing children to engage in outdoor play during inclement weather.

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:

- On arrival to the service the external doors were secure to prevent an unauthorised person entering the service and children from exiting the service unnoticed. A buzzer system was in place to facilitate admission to the service.
- Internal doors were secured to prevent children accessing unsafe areas and store cupboards containing hazardous objects and materials were secured and out of children's reach.
- Cleaning products used in the service were securely stored so as to be inaccessible to the pre-school children.
- Risk assessments on indoor and outdoor play areas were completed daily and noted to be maintained up to date. There was no evidence of hazards in the indoor or outdoor area.
- Toys and play equipment appeared in good repair and all electrical flexes and cables were in good condition and out of children's reach.
- Materials were observed to be in a good state of repair.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C.
- The outdoor area was secured with walls and a bolted gate to prevent children from exiting unsupervised.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children attending the service by way of a child gate at the door.
- Grapes were observed to be cut in half, reducing the risk of choking to the child.
- Cleaning products and equipment were stored out of the reach of children.
- Blind cords were secured.

Infection Control:

- Thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable handtowels were available in the sanitary facilities.
- Children were observed to wash their hands after toilet visits, after outdoor play and before lunch.

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- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to and after mealtimes in all of the care rooms.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available within the service for safe disposal of waste and leak proof foot operated pedalled nappy disposal bins were provided in the nappy changing areas.
- The service was visually clean with cleaning records and risk assessments completed daily and available for inspection.
- The sanitary and nappy changing areas were clean and mechanical ventilated.

Administration of Medication:

- On discussion with the staff members in the service, they were knowledgeable about the service medication administration policy.
- Detailed Individualised support plans are in place and accessible for all children who required them.
- Medication consent and administration logs were available for review, with all entries fully completed in accordance with the service's policy.

Safe Sleep:

- The service provides two dedicated sleep rooms, located directly off the Sunflower and Bluebell rooms, equipped with cots for children under two years of age. Staff conducted and recorded 10-minute sleep checks, monitoring each child's breathing, position, and colour.
- Stackable beds are utilized in the Mulberry room to accommodate the rest and sleep requirements of older children.
- All cots are maintained in good condition, spaced at least 50cm apart, and fitted with mattresses that meet recognized safety standards.
- Clean, breathable cellular blankets are exclusively used for children under two years.
- The room temperatures were maintained within the recommended range to ensure a safe and comfortable sleep environment.
- Every playroom features a dedicated rest or quiet area, allowing children to relax or opt out of activities as desired.

Fire Safety:

- Fire evacuation routes were clearly displayed on the wall of the care rooms.
- Emergency fire doors remained unobstructed on the day of inspection.

Outing:

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- There were no outings on the day of the inspection, however when asked staff were aware of the requirements and had a clear understanding of the outings policy and procedure.

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

(1) On the day of inspection there were seven staff members trained in first aid responder training. There was always a member of trained staff available to the preschool children.

(2)(a)(b) There were three fully stocked first aid boxes available to staff caring for the children attending the preschool service.

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-
(c) an authorised person.

(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 procedure was in place to practice and record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated the 12/06/2026.

(a) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the service was on file. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated 05/09/2026.

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(b) The records for the smoke detection system indicated the last service occurred in 23/06/2026.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) was available and open to inspection by-

(c) an authorised person.

(4) On the day of inspection, a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were observed to be displayed in a conspicuous place within the premises.

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 adequate insurance was in place for the full day care service for 114 children up until 27/03/2027.