

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WH043
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Name of Service:	Belvedere Hills Nursery & Montessori Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Belvedere Hills, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
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Eircode:	N91 K2HC
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carmel Reynolds
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection: Day 1	12/08/2026
Date of Inspection: Day 2	13/08/2026

No of pre-school children Day 1	AM	48	PM	47
No of pre-school children Day 2	AM	54	PM	54

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
Inspection undertaken by:	C.O' Connor Hughes
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

The service is registered as a full day care service and accommodates children from 0 to 6 years of age. The service operates between the hours of 08:00 and 17:45 on a Monday to Friday basis. A registered school age service is provided.

The Early Years' Service is located in an adapted two storey dwelling consisting of five care rooms, three sleep rooms and a kitchen on the ground floor. Two care rooms, an office and staff room are located on the first floor of the premises. Five pre-school rooms namely Pod A baby room, Pod B wobbler room, Pod C toddler room, Pod D FDC room, Pod F FDC room were in operation on both days of the inspection. Pod E caters for school age children and was also in operation. Pod G, a school age room was closed for the summer period.

On-site parking and set down facilities are available to the front of the service. An outdoor play area is located at the back of the service. A sheltered area is provided in the outdoor play area. The service is located in a residential area in the town of Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

Staffing

The registered provider employs twenty-two adults in the service. The deputy person in charge facilitated the inspection on both days of the inspection.

Day 1 The supervisor and seventeen adults were working directly with children.

Day 2 The supervisor and sixteen adults were working directly with children.

A cook provided snacks and meals for children. The designated person in charge was not present in the service and the registered provider does not work with children. The deputy person in charge and supervisor attended the closing meeting on the 13 August 2026.

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:

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- 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/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Regulation 9- Management and recruitment - (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (3)(4)

Regulation 11 -Staffing levels - (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 19- Health, welfare and development of child - (1)(b)

Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and play

Regulation 21- Equipment and Materials

Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 24- Checking in and Out and Record of Attendance – (1)(3)(4)

Regulation 25- First aid - (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26- Fire Safety Measures (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(4)

Regulation 27- Supervision

Regulation 28 – Insurance

Regulation 32- Complaints (1)(2)(3)

However, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29 (c). These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 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 - compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform

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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 deputy person in charge, supervisor, staff and children who were present on both days 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.*

(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.

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(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 designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

The deputy person in charge was present for the duration of the inspection.

(c)

Clear management structures were in place which identified the manager, deputy manager and supervisor roles in the service.

Following a review of previous inspection findings, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider, it was determined that ten new staff had commenced in the service since the last inspection on the 3 July 2024.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written validated references were available in respect of ten new staff members from a previous employer and sources other than a previous employer.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the ten new staff members.

In respect of the registered provider and nine staff members the service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years and which required renewal since the last inspection on the 3 July 2024.

(d)

Police vetting was available in respect of two new staff members who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(3)

The designated person in charge ensured that all staff had completed vetting procedures carried out prior to the employment of staff in the service.

(4)

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The new staff members working directly with children attending the service and held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Levels 5 to 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.

(2)

Day 1

There were forty-eight pre-school children and eight school age children supervised by seventeen adults in the morning. Forty-seven pre-school children and eight school age children were in attendance in the afternoon supervised by seventeen adults.

Day 2

There were fifty-four pre-school children and fourteen school age children supervised by sixteen adults in the morning and in the afternoon.

(8)(a)

The staff roster reviewed indicated that two adults are on the premises at all times.

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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-

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

There was a calm and happy atmosphere in the service. Children enjoyed freedom of movement as they played in the various interest areas in the indoor and outdoor environments supported by the staff members. Suncream to protect children's skin, sunhats and appropriate light clothing was worn by children when going to play outdoors. Small group activities were observed as staff interacted and joined in the children's imaginative and creative play activities. The younger children slept in a in a restful atmosphere in the adjacent sleep rooms in Pod A and Pod B. Children slept on low level beds in Pod C. Regular nappy changes were carried out for children attending Pod A and Pod B and Pod C. Good communication with children and staff was observed during nappy changing. Babies were observed to crawl freely and explore their environment. A baby settling into Pod A was settled in on a phased basis in line with the service's settling in policy discussed with the staff member.

Children were encouraged to be independent as they washed their hands before dinner supervised by staff members. Younger children's clothes were protected as they wore bibs while eating their main meal. Older children were observed to use the toilet independently and wash their hands.

At 11:45 approximately, children enjoyed the dinner consisting of chicken and broccoli pasta bake presented by the cook. Children's faces were cleaned by staff after their meal. Children were offered drinks of water regularly during the inspection.

The staff were positive towards children and were familiar with each child, their personalities and their daily routines. Staff used children's individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities and at mealtimes. Children were happy and content with their carers. The children were encouraged to be independent, and their choices were supported. Staff were observed to offer support and praise to each child for their involvement in activities. The children were supported to be self-caring, suitable to their age and stage of development. Good teamwork between the staff members was observed during the inspection.

The service communicates with the parents in the following ways; a verbal handover is given on collection.

Communication diaries are in place in Pod A detailing the child's daily routine of feeding, nappy changing and sleep routine. Information and updates are shared electronically to the parents. The child's learning journal

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depicting the child's play and work activities are shared with parents at the end of the pre-school term. Staff stated child development observations are shared with parents on a regular basis.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

- (1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and
 - (b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or
 - (b) Where no such space is provided, the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis to a suitable outdoor space.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Suitable and adequate play and work equipment were provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, sensory, tabletop activities, arts and crafts, home corners and physical play.

(b)

Separate sleep rooms were available adjacent to Pod A and Pod B. Another sleep was available for use as required. The sleep rooms were equipped with ten standard cots for use by children under the age of two. Low level beds were available for children over two years of age to sleep in Pod C. Soft furnishings provided rest facilities in the pre-school rooms for any child who wished to avail of rest and relaxation.

(3)(a)

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An outdoor play area was located to the rear of the service which was safe and secure surrounded by high walls and fencing. Two separate play areas were available. An all-weather surface was in place. A sheltered area was available for children's use. Toys and equipment included a large climbing frame with a slide, a small slide, a basketball hoop, a wooden car, a wooden wigwam, a variety of bikes and trikes. Other toys for physical play were available for children's use. A storage shed was available to store toys and equipment.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

There was a variety of suitable and sufficient play materials and equipment to support children for various forms of creative, manipulative, sensory, imaginary and free play in the indoor environment in the service.

The tables and chairs were child sized suitable to each child's age and development. Equipment was well maintained, durable and easy to clean. Materials were accessible to children on low level open shelving and drawer units. Personal belongings and bags were stored individually for each child.

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 to the service was secure. Access to the service is via a doorbell and a key code system at the front entrance. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents. Daily indoor and outdoor safety checklists were maintained for each pre-school room. The inspector signed the visitors book on both days of the inspection.

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Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Cleaning schedules were available and reviewed. Warm water, paper hand towel and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. The water temperature recorded at the wash hand basins was 38.2 degrees Celsius.

The two nappy changing procedures observed were carried out as per the service's nappy changing procedure. Children's nappies and creams were stored individually in the sanitary accommodation.

Soother and baby bottles of formula were stored correctly for children attending Pod A and Pod B. Refrigerators were noted in the pre-school rooms and maintained with the correct temperature limits.

Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the sanitary accommodation and in the pre-school rooms for the hygienic disposal of waste.

Natural ventilation was available through openable windows in the pre-school rooms. Air conditioning units were in operation in the pre-school rooms on the ground floor for the hot weather. Mechanical ventilation was in working order in the sanitary accommodation and nappy changing room in Pod B. Openable windows were in place in the nappy changing room in Pod A.

Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature and stored safely in the service. The medication documentation was available and reviewed. Upon discussion the staff member described correct medicine administration practices in Pod A. Health care plans were available for children that may require medication in the service.

Safe Sleep:

A record of the colour, position and breathing of sleeping children was noted in the electronic handheld tablet in the service and recorded every ten minutes. Staff were observed to physically check children in Pod A and Pod B sleep rooms.

Fire Safety:

Fire exit routes were unobstructed on the ground and first floor of the service. A fire assembly point was noted to the front of the premises.

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Outing:

A risk assessment was available and reviewed for the annual outing that is undertaken from the service to a pet farm.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Three blind cords were not secured on the three windows in Pod B. It is acknowledged that the blinds were not accessible to the young children. Upon the request of the inspector the deputy designated person in charge took a corrective action and secured the blinds.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The three blind cords identified in Pod B were secured immediately during the inspection by the Deputy Designated Person in Charge. All three blind cords are now securely fastened and inaccessible to children. All window blinds throughout the service have been checked to ensure that blind cords are appropriately secured. Going forward, the security of blind cords will form part of the regular room safety checks. Any unsecured blind cord identified will be reported to the Person in Charge and secured immediately.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence of secured blind cords.

Safety checklist.

Summary Comment

Evidence submitted and reviewed by the Early Years Inspector met the regulatory requirement.

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-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

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

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(1)

The records of arrival and departure reviewed verified that each child attending the service was checked in and out of the service by a staff member.

(3)(a)

All entry to the service with the exception of (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) was approved by a staff member.

(4)

The visitor log is retained throughout the annual operation of the service.

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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

(1)

One adult was qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises from 08:30 to 17:45 on a Monday to Friday basis. Two adults held a paediatric first aid qualification.

(2)(a)

First aid boxes were identifiable and available in the pre-school rooms on the ground and first floor.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to children in the pre-school service.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

An adult qualified in First aid response was not available in the service from 08:00 to 08:30 on a Monday to Friday basis or to cover for annual leave for the person qualified in first aid response.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Following the inspection, staffing arrangements were reviewed and amended with immediate effect. The staff member currently qualified in First Aid Response (FAR) has agreed and will be present on the premises for the full opening hours of the service, from 08:00 to 17:30, ensuring FAR cover is available at all times while children are present.

This arrangement will remain in place until additional staff have completed FAR training.

Two further staff members have been booked to complete FAR training on 15/10/2026 and 05/11/2026 respectively, providing additional FAR qualified cover within the service, including cover for annual leave and other absences. Management will monitor FAR qualifications and renewal dates and will review FAR cover when preparing staff rosters and approving annual leave.

Supporting documentation submitted

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Amended staff roster.

Confirmation of FAR training application with relevant dates noted.

Summary Comment

The corrective action taken addresses the non compliance in respect a person qualified in first aid response present in the service for the hours of operation.

The non compliance remains outstanding until the extra staff members are qualified in FAR. The registered provider will submit the FAR certificates to TUSLA Early Inspectorate upon receipt.

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
- (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)

A written record for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 12 August 2026.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises were serviced on the 9 April 2026 and 1 July 2026 respectively.

(2)

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The records were open for review by (a)(b)(c).

(3)

The registered provider ensured the fire records were maintained for a period of 5 years.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the pre-school rooms.

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 by the adults at all times in the indoor and outdoor environments and when using the sanitary accommodation during the inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2027.

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Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated

Non-Compliance Information

(c) The required ambient room temperature of 18 to 22 degrees Celsius were not maintained in Pod F on the first floor.

Day 1

At 15:05 the room temperature was recorded at 24.1 degrees Celsius.

Day 2

At 13:45 the room temperature was recorded at 25 degrees Celsius.

It is acknowledged that it was very hot weather on both days of the inspection and staff took every opportunity to keep children hydrated, using water play and ice activities to keep the children cool and ensuring children wore appropriate light clothing.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

(c) Corrective and Preventive Action

Following the inspection, management reviewed the temperature control arrangements in Pod F. A new heating and cooling system is to be installed to enable the ambient room temperature to be effectively regulated during periods of hot weather. In the interim, room temperatures will continue to be monitored, and staff will continue to take appropriate measures to ensure the comfort and wellbeing of the children, including ventilation, hydration and adapting activities and clothing appropriately during periods of warm weather.

A new heating and cooling system will be installed to provide effective temperature control within Pod F and assist in maintaining the required ambient room temperature of 18–22°C throughout the year. Room temperatures will continue to be monitored and recorded. Where temperatures approach the upper limits, staff will take appropriate action, and management will ensure that the heating/cooling system is adjusted as required. The system will be maintained and serviced as required by the contractor to ensure it continues to operate effectively. Time frame 2 to 4 weeks.

Supporting documentation submitted

Contractor's quotation for the supply and installation of a new heating and cooling system.

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Summary Comment

The non compliance remains outstanding. The registered provider shall submit the evidence of the new heating and cooling system to TUSLA Early Years Inspectorate when the works are completed.

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.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- The service's complaints policy was available and reviewed. The relevant details in respect of (a)(b)(c) were noted in the policy.
- (2)(a)(b)
- Records indicate that the service held information in respect of (a) and (b).
- (3)
- The complaints record was open to (a)(b).