

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2018KY502
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Name of Service:	Greta's Childcare
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Address of Service:	Annascaul Sport's Centre, Annascaul, Tralee, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 AE4Y
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Name of Registered Provider:	Greta McCarthy
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	12/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	6
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy
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

Greta's Childcare is a private early years service that is registered to provide full day care, part-time and sessional care to children between the age of 0 to 6 years. Currently the service is catering for children over 1 year. The service offers school aged care. The service operates between the hours of 8:00 am and 6:00pm Monday to Friday inclusive. The service operates from 1 playroom on the ground floor of the Annascaul Sport's centre. The children attending have access to a designated outdoor play area located at the side of the building.

Staffing

There is a total of 4 staff attached to the service, of whom 3 work directly with the children. This includes the registered provider and 1 staff member for administration duties.

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 the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ 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 -

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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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and*
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major

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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 registered provider is the designated person in charge and a deputy had been assigned to deputise in their absence.
- (b) The registered provider was working at the service when the inspector arrived and remained for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the registered provider, it was determined that no new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. In addition, Garda vetting for one staff member whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal was requested for review. A total of one file was reviewed.
- (a) & (b) Not applicable as no new staff members had been employed since the last inspection.
- (c)
- The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for one staff member who required it.
- (d) Not applicable, as no new staff member had been employed since the last inspection.
- (4) The 3 staff members working directly with the children had minimum of Level 5 or above in Early Childhood Education and Care qualification as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there were an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The minimum ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day.

The required adult to child ratios were observed as follows:

In the morning, there were 3 staff caring for 12 children aged between 1 year and 3 years attending the service on a part-time and on a full day care basis.

In the afternoon, there were 3 staff caring for 6 children aged between 1 year and 3 years attending the service on a part-time and on a full day care basis.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 staff members were on the premises during the hours of operation as evidenced in the roster for the week.

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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)

Basic Needs:

- On inspection, the outdoor space was used during the day. Under staff supervision, the children were observed to move about freely in the area, they engaged in a range of free play and movement for example on the ride on toys and playing with the soft balls
- The children were offered the choice to move between the playroom and the outdoor area as they wanted to. The inspector observed children requests to move between both areas were promptly accommodated.
- During the inspection, the staff encouraged the children to engage with a wide range of materials, activities and equipment, based on the children's own choices, interests and their age and stage of development.
- The staff sat on the floor and at the low-level tables during the various play activities observed on inspection. They facilitated opportunities for the children in individual, small and large group activities and play as evidenced for example with making puzzles and matching games, building with blocks, movement to songs and rhymes the use of chalks on the wall mounted chalk boards.
- The children who were independently using the toilet had unrestricted access to them, located outside the playroom under supervision from the staff as required.
- In conversation with the staff, the children's individual toileting needs are accommodated in consultation with the parents, such as children that were transitioning from using the potty to using the toilet.
- The children were encouraged and supported to help themselves to their drink's bottles accessible placed on the drinks station on a low-level shelf in the playroom.
- The inspector observed the staff issuing reminders to children to take drinks from their individual water bottles during the day outside of the mealtimes.
- The service had a supply of bottled water on the premise for the children attending.

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- The food served in the service is provided by the parent/guardians.
- At the meal observed, each of the children had enough time to eat and enjoy their food without being rushed in any way.
- The food was re-heated as needed, for example pasta dishes served for lunch.
- The food observed included for example yogurts, sandwiches, rice cakes and a selection of fruit.
- After lunch, the inspector observed the stackable beds were placed in the playroom for children to rest and relax under staff supervision.
- Children who did not wish to rest were playing, with staff supervision provided.

Supporting Relationships:

- The staff comforted the children who required re-assurance and came down to their level speaking in low, soft tones to the children.
- The staff members were observed to have a positive and caring relationship with children.
- The service had planned for a dress-up activity later in the week in line with commencement of the annual Rose of Tralee festival.
- Since the last inspection, Better Start, Quality Development Service, have completed a quality support programme with the staff in relation to the care and support of children while attending the service.

Physical & Material Environment:

- The playroom was colourfully decorated with for example a selection of photographs of the children participating in various activities while attending the service, some of the children's artwork and a red rose floral display in line with the annual Rose of Tralee festival.
- The toys and play materials provided were accessible to the children on the open shelving, on racks and on the floor in the playroom.
- Additional toys and play materials that were stored on higher shelving in the playroom were rotated as seen on inspection.
- There was a rest/relaxation area in the playroom that consisted of soft interlinking matting and cushions to facilitate children to rest and relax throughout the day as they needed to.

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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 main entrance door to the service was secured upon the inspector's arrival preventing unauthorised adults from entering the service and preventing children from leaving the service unsupervised.
- The cleaning products observed were stored on high level shelving in the sanitary/nappy changing room and within the secure kitchen area.
- There was a secure gate in place preventing access by the children to the kitchenette area in the playroom.
- The temperature of the warm water at the wash hand basins in the children's sanitary accommodation /nappy changing unit was recorded below the required temperature of 43 degrees Celsius.
- There was a record of the daily temperature of the warm water at the wash hand basins in the children's sanitary accommodation maintained and displayed on the wall. The record evidenced the temperature was maintained below the required 43 degrees Celsius.
- The feeding chairs observed were fitted with secured harnesses.
- The outdoor perimeter of the play area was secured with high metal fencing, walls and gates with sliding bolts with padlocks.
- There was no dangling cables observed accessible to children in the sleep room.

Infection Control:

- The sanitary /nappy changing facility had thermostatically controlled hot water, dispensing soap and paper hand towels.
- Handwashing was observed by the children after using the toilet.
- There were cleaning records complete and maintained up to date for the care room, the sleep room and the sanitary/nappy changing areas.
- There was an adequate supply of disposable gloves and plastic aprons provided for nappy changing, stored on a high-level shelf near the nappy changing unit.
- There was a sealed, lined foot pedal bin used for the disposal of used nappies.

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- The children's barrier cream, wipes and nappies were individually labelled, stored on the high-level shelving in the nappy changing area.
- In conversation with the staff members, the inspector was informed that the cots are currently for children's individual use.
- The bed linen observed on inspection was clean, dry and individual to each child.
- During the inspection, the windows in the playroom, in the sleep room and in the sanitary accommodation were open to aid natural ventilation.

Administration of Medication:

- Through conversation with staff, the inspector was informed that no child was in receipt of medication on the day of the inspection.

Fire Safety:

- As observed by the record of the fire drills displayed, it was noted the drills were carried out alternating between the morning and the afternoon, on a monthly basis. The last conducted fire drill took place on 10.8.'26.
- A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of fire was clearly displayed in the service.

Safe Sleep:

- Staff were observed to conduct 10-minute physical checks on one child who was sleeping. The checks recorded the colour, position and breathing that were documented in the designated sleep record book.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. On occasions during the inspection the fire exit door leading to the outdoor play area was observed to be open, while children were playing there. When open, the door was swaying loosely, posing a risk of injury to the children. The corrective action submitted following the last inspection on 17 February 2025 failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.
2. The door of the office adjacent to the playroom was not secured. There was a ventilation unit with a cable attached stored on the floor and staff handbags accessible to the children posing a risk of injury.
3. The cupboard doors enclosing the washing machine and dryer located in a designated space in the sanitary accommodation were not secured posing a risk of injury to children.
4. Whole grapes were served during the mealtime observed posing a choking risk to children. The inspector alerted the registered provider, the grapes were removed, chopped and returned to the child.

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Infection Control:

5. Not all the children's drink's bottles were labelled posing a risk of cross infection.
6. The practice of children washing their hands after nappy changing and of staff washing their hands after changing their gloves in between nappy changing was not observed. This was at variance with the nappy changing procedure on display on the wall beside the nappy changing unit and posed a risk of cross infection. The corrective action submitted following the last inspection on 17 February 2025 failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.
7. An area on the surface of the vinyl nappy changing mat was torn impacting the ability to adequately clean it posing a risk of cross infection.
8. The grid of the mechanical vent located in the nappy changing area was observed to be unclean increasing the risk of poor ventilation and posing a risk of the spread of infection.
9. An unlidded bin was in use in the children's toilet cubicle instead of a lidded, pedal operated bin, posing a risk of cross infection. The corrective action submitted following the last inspection on 17 February 2025 failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The staff were informed that the fire exit door is to always remain closed. The door can be opened by using the release button and the bar at the same time to gain access to the outside area. A new alarm was fitted on the fire door on 2.9.'26. The fire exit door now remains closed when everyone is in the outside area.
2. A new lock and door handle for the office door was fitted on 30.8.'26. The door can now be locked at all times, the key is placed at a height out of the reach of the children and accessible to the staff.
3. New child locks were purchased and fitted on 4.9.'26 to prevent children gaining access.
4. The nutritional standard in preschools document was reviewed by all staff at a staff meeting, where the importance of healthy eating and food safety for children was discussed. Staff will ensure to check all lunch box contents and that fruits are suitably diced to prevent any risk to children.

Infection Control:

5. A labelling machine was purchased to attach labels to all the drinks bottles and lunch boxes. Staff were advised at a staff meeting on 2.9.'26 when the children's bags are unpacked each day, that all items are to be checked and labelled.

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6. The manager reminded staff of the correct nappy changing procedure and given a copy of this at a staff meeting on 2.9.'26. The nappy changing procedure will be adhered to at all times.
7. A new nappy changing mat was purchased. The mat will be checked regularly and replaced as needed.
8. The vent was cleaned. It has been included in the cleaning checklist.
9. A new pedal bin was purchased. Pedal bins only will be used in the future.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. The statement is accepted as evidence.
2. A photograph of the door handle and the key stored on a high-level hook nearby.
3. A photograph of the secured locks on the cupboards.
4. The statement is accepted as evidence.

Infection Control:

5. The statement is accepted as evidence.
6. The statement is accepted as evidence.
7. A photograph of the new nappy changing mat in place.
8. A photograph of the clean vent and the updated cleaning checklist.
9. A photograph of the lidded pedal bin in place.

Summary Comment

All documentation received was examined. The requirement for the regulation has been met.

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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

Compliance Information

(2) (a) The first aid box was stored at high level in the secured kitchenette

Non-Compliance Information

(1)
The registered provider had not ensured that an adult trained in first aid response (FAR) was accessible to the children at all times. There was one staff member with an expired FAR certificate and one staff member with an in date FAR certificate.
As evidenced through discussion with the registered provider and by the one available staff roster open to inspection for week beginning 10 August 2026, it was not determined if the person with the valid certification was available at all times for the duration of the opening hours of the service. This posed a risk to children who may require first aid treatment.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1) A second staff member completed FAR training and a third staff member will be trained

Supporting documentation submitted

The certification for the staff member in question who completed FAR training and copies of the staff rosters demonstrating that a staff member with FAR training was on duty during the hours of operation.

Summary Comment

All documentation received was examined. The requirement for the regulation has been met.