

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015CC106

**Name of Service:** Coachford Community Playschool

**Address of Service:** Main Street, Coachford, Co. Cork

**Eircode:** P12 VX47

**Name of Registered Provider:** Kathleen Flanagan

**Service type:** Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 30/04/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	13	PM	7
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**Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Estuary House,  
Henry Street,  
Limerick,  
V94 XT5F

**Inspection undertaken by:** S O'Brien

**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).

**Conditions if applicable** N/A

### Description of service

Coachford Community Playschool is a registered community based early years sessional service, which has been in operation since 1997. The early years service is situated in the village of Coachford, Co Cork and operated from the first floor of a two-storey community building. The service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years and also offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. The service operates between 9am and 12pm, Monday to Friday. There is one main care room with an adjoining kitchenette. Children's sanitary facilities are located adjacent to the care room and adult sanitary facilities are available on the ground floor. The service does not have a designated outdoor area but has access to the local GAA astro turf pitch for outdoor play.

### Staffing

There are four staff members employed in the service including the registered provider, who is based in the service. On the day of inspection, two staff members were working directly with the children.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9: Management and recruitment, Regulation 10: Policies and procedures of a preschool service, Regulation 11: Staffing levels, Regulation 15: Record of a preschool child, Regulation 19: Health, welfare and development of child and Regulation 23: Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 25: First aid. 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 decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

## Additional Information

On 01 May 2025, an Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider under Regulation 23 Safety. On the day of inspection, there was no staff member present who held an in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training certificate. Further information can be found in this inspection report under Regulation 25: First aid  
On 07 May 2025, the registered provider outlined the steps to mitigate the risk identified.

## Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

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

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

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

#### Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) The registered provider was also the designated person in charge. A named person was able to deputise if needed.
- (b) The registered provider was not present in the service on the day of inspection. The named person was available and on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service and the staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

- (2)
- Four staff members files were reviewed including the file of the registered provider.
- (a) Four of the eight references available were from a past employer and were validated.
- (b) Four of the eight references available were from a reputable source and were validated.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all four staff. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting disclosures were available for two staff members who had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) All four staff members held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 6 on the national qualifications framework or a qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent.

## Part III – Management and Staff

### Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### Compliance Information

The following policy was reviewed:

- Outings policy.

The policy contained the information required to guide staff in their care practices for children.

### 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.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) There were adequate staff available to care for the preschool children in attendance in the service.

(3) In the morning session, there were 13 children aged from 3 to 5 years being cared for by 2 adults. In the afternoon session, there were 7 children aged from 2 years 9 months to 4 years, being cared for by 2 adults.

### 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.*

### Compliance Information

(1) A sample of 12 children's records were assessed and all forms were completed and contained the required information outlined from (a) to (i).

## 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

#### Basic needs

- The children were observed freely moving around the care room and outdoor area during the inspection.
- The staff informed the inspector that every Wednesday, the children take part in food tasting. The children were observed eating toast and butter.
- Snacks were provided by the parents and guardians of the children. Individual water bottles were freely available to the children throughout the inspection.
- Children were observed washing their hands after toileting and outdoor play and before snack.
- Children were observed washing their teeth after snack time to promote oral hygiene.

#### Supporting relationships

- The children were encouraged to be independent and learn self-help skills, such as buttering toast and washing their teeth.
- During activities, the staff were observed chatting to the children in a kind a respectful manner and ensured they were at the child's level when communicating.
- Children were given time to sit and enjoy their snack in a relaxed environment.
- A family wall was on display in the care room to promote each child's sense of identity and belonging.

### Programme of Activities

- On arrival to the service, the children were observed reading story books and chatting to the staff.
- A food tasting activity promoted children to try new foods.
- The children were observed walking to the local astro turf pitch which promoted physical development.
- Balls, tyres and a parachute were available to the children and children were observed developing their imagination as well as small group play.
- The children in the afternoon session, were observed playing with plastic bricks in small groups.
- The children were also observed free playing within the care room.

### 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 external door to the service located downstairs, was secured with an alarm to alert staff when opened. This prevented any unauthorised entry to the service. A staff member greeted the inspector downstairs on arrival to the service.
- The stairs had suitable handrails, was adequately lit and the floor covering was observed to be in good condition during the inspection.
- Window openings were out of reach to children.
- Blind cords were observed to be out of reach to children during the inspection.
- Toys and play equipment were observed to be in good condition on inspection.

##### Infection Control:

- The care room and sanitary areas were naturally ventilated through open windows.
- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were available in the children's and staff sanitary areas.
- Children's lunches were stored in a refrigerator to prevent perishable foods from spoiling.
- Lidded, foot pedal operated bins were available in the care room and sanitary facilities.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were clear and unobstructed during the inspection.

## Outing:

- The service used the local astro turf pitch for outdoor play.
- Staff stated they ensured that children were safe at all times especially while crossing the road.

## 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.*

### Non-Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection, an in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training cert was not available to be reviewed by the inspector. The inspector was unable to determine if a staff member working directly with the children was currently trained in first aid. This posed a risk to the children in the event of a medical emergency taking place in the service.

An Immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider in relation to the immediate risk to children on 01 May 2025.

On 07 May 2025, the registered provider submitted evidence of an in date First Aid Responder training cert for one staff member who works directly with the children.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated in their response that FAR training has been booked for staff that needed updating. The expiry dates of the training will be recorded.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

The statement from the registered provider is accepted as evidence.

### Summary Comment

The documented evidence submitted to the inspectorate was reviewed and has met the regulatory requirements.

## 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 that the service was adequately insured. The insurance policy commenced on 28 March 2025 and expired on 27 March 2026.